THE POLITICS OF URBAN CULTURAL POLICY

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

Carl Grodach and Daniel Silver
## CONTENTS

List of Figures and Tables \(iv\)
Contributors \(v\)
Acknowledgements \(viii\)

### INTRODUCTION

Urbanizing Cultural Policy \(1\)
Carl Grodach and Daniel Silver

### Part I

**URBAN CULTURAL POLICY AS AN OBJECT OF GOVERNANCE** \(20\)

1. A Different Class: Politics and Culture in London \(21\)
   Kate Oakley

2. Chicago from the Political Machine to the Entertainment Machine \(42\)
   Terry Nichols Clark and Daniel Silver

3. Brecht in Bogotá: How Cultural Policy Transformed a Clientist Political Culture \(66\)
   Eleonora Pasotti

4. Notes of Discord: Urban Cultural Policy in the Confrontational City \(86\)
   Arie Romein and Jan Jacob Trip

5. Cultural Policy and the State of Urban Development in the Capital of South Korea \(111\)
   Jong Youl Lee and Chad Anderson

### Part II

**REWRITING THE CREATIVE CITY SCRIPT** \(130\)

6. Creativity and Urban Regeneration: The Role of La Tohu and the Cirque du Soleil in the Saint-Michel Neighborhood in Montreal \(131\)
   Deborah Leslie and Norma Rantisi

7. City Image and the Politics of Music Policy in the “Live Music Capital of the World” \(156\)
   Carl Grodach
8. “To Have and to Need”: Reorganizing Cultural Policy as Panacea for Berlin’s Urban and Economic Woes
Doreen Jakob

9. Urban Cultural Policy, City Size, and Proximity
Chris Gibson and Gordon Waitt

Part III
THE IMPLICATIONS OF URBAN CULTURAL POLICY AGENDAS FOR CREATIVE PRODUCTION

10. The New Cultural Economy and its Discontents: Governance Innovation and Policy Disjuncture in Vancouver
Tom Hutton and Catherine Murray

Lily Kong

12. Maastricht: From Treaty Town to European Capital of Culture
Graeme Evans

13. Rethinking Arts Policy and Creative Production: The Case of Los Angeles
Elizabeth Currid-Halkett and Vivian Wang

Part IV
COALITION NETWORKS, ALLIANCES, AND IDENTITY FRAMING

Michael Ingergaard

15. What’s in the Fridge? Counter-Democratic Mobilization in Post-Industrial Urban “Cultural” Development
Stephen W. Sawyer

Clemente Navarro

17. Planned and Spontaneous Arts Development: Notes from Portland
Samuel Shaw

18. Local Politics in the Creative City: The Case of Toronto
Daniel Silver
LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

FIGURES

2.1 How Chicago Funds the Arts Under Political Leadership 56
4.1 Seat Distribution in the Rotterdam City Council (45 seats) since 1974 94
4.2 Alderman and Mayors of Rotterdam by Political Party since 1974 95
6.1 Map of Saint-Michel 137
6.2 Cirque du Soleil Headquarters 139
6.3 La Tohu Pavilion 142
6.4 Map of La Tohu 143
12.1 Map of Meuse-Rhine Euregion and Major Cities 271
16.1 Spending Preferences of Spanish Mayors 359
16.2 Tourism and Urban Renewal Issues: Level of Opposition 366
16.3 Tourism and Urban Renewal Issue Networks: Sectors’ Centrality 369
18.1 Percentage Change in Various Types of Expressively Oriented Business in Toronto and Canada between 1999 and 2008 402

TABLES

0.1 Key Variables for Understanding the Politics of Urban Cultural Policy 13
12.1 Maastricht Via 2018 Problematic, Themes and Issues 275
12.2 Summary Evaluation Framework for Proposed Via 2018 Cultural Projects 279
13.1 Los Angeles Film and Media LQ 296
13.2 Los Angeles Arts LQ 297
13.3 Top 20 MSA: Occupations 298
16.1 Spending Preferences of Spanish Mayors and Policy Areas 361
16.2 The Entertainment Machine in Municipalities: Socio-economic and Socio-politic Characteristics 363
16.3 Tourism and Urban Renewal Issue Networks: Most Central Actors 367
CONTRIBUTORS

Chad Anderson is Guest Professor of Public Administration at the University of Incheon, South Korea. He researches urban administration, cultural administration, and human and labour relations.

Elizabeth Currid-Halkett is an Associate Professor at University of South California’s Price School of Public Policy. Her research is in economic development with a particular focus on art and cultural industries.

Graeme Evans is Special Chair of Culture & Urban Development and Director of the Centre for Urban & Euregional Studies (CUES) at the University of Maastricht, Faculty of Arts & Social Science, where he leads a research program with the provincial and city government.

Chris Gibson is Professor in Human Geography at the University of Wollongong, Australia. His most recent books are Creativity in Peripheral Places: Redefining the Creative Industries (Routledge, 2012) and Music Festivals and Regional Development (Ashgate, 2012, co-authored with John Connell).

Terry Nichols Clark is Professor of Sociology at the University of Chicago. His books include The City as an Entertainment Machine, The New Political Culture, and City Money.

Carl Grodach is an Associate Professor at the University of Texas Arlington, USA. His research, which focuses on the urban development impacts of cultural planning and policy has most recently been published in the Community Development Journal, International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, Journal of Planning Education and Research, and Journal of Urban Affairs.

Vivian Wang is a doctoral candidate at the Price School of Public Policy at University of Southern California. Her research focuses on economic geography of cultural industries and the impact of restaurants on urban development.

Tom Hutton is Professor of Urban Studies and City Planning in the Centre for Human Settlements at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver. His recent research output includes The New Economy of the Inner City (Routledge 2008 and 2010); New Economic Spaces in Asian Cities: From Industrial Restructuring to the Cultural Turn (co-edited with Peter Daniels and Kong Chong Ho, Routledge 2012); and Cities and Economic Change (co-edited with Ronan Paddison, for Sage: forthcoming).

Michael Indergaard is Professor of Sociology at St. John’s University (New York). He is the author of Silicon Alley: The Rise and Fall of a New Media District and has published in Urban Studies, Economic Development Quarterly, Urban Affairs Review, and Environment and Planning, A.
Doreen Jakob has studied cultural industries and their role within urban and economic development in Berlin, New York City, Brisbane, and North Carolina. She is currently Research Fellow at Exeter University analyzing craft practices and politics.

Lily Kong is Professor of Geography at the National University of Singapore. She has written widely in social and cultural geography, particularly about religious landscapes, cultural policies and industries, and urban landscapes and the construction of identities. Her recent books include Creative Economies, Creative Cities: Asian–European Perspectives (2009) and Conserving the Past, Creating the Future: Urban Heritage in Singapore (2011).

Jong Youl Lee is Professor of Public Administration, Dean of the College of Social Sciences, and Director of the Institute of Social Sciences at the University of Incheon, South Korea. He researches urban administration, policy studies, cultural administration, and risk management.

Deborah Leslie, Department of Geography, University of Toronto is interested in the role of creative industries in urban economic development. She is currently conducting research on artists and fashion designers in Toronto and is collaborating with Norma Rantisi on a research project investigating the circus arts in Montreal.

Catherine Murray is Professor of Communication at Simon Fraser University, and Associate of the Center for Policy Studies on Culture and Communities. Her research interests include changing cultural governance, cultural work and the creative economy, and political communication.

Clemente J. Navarro is Professor of Sociology at the Pablo de Olavide University (Spain) and Director of the Centre for Local Political Sociology and Policies (CSPL-UPO). His research topics are methodology and research design, and urban politics, policies and governance.

Kate Oakley is Professor of Cultural Policy at the University of Leeds. Her research interests include the politics of cultural policy, work in the cultural industries, and regional development. She also holds a Visiting Professorship at the University of the Arts, London.

Eleonora Pasotti is Associate Professor of Politics at the University of California, Santa Cruz and the author of Political Branding in Cities: The Decline of Machine Politics in Bogotá, Naples, and Chicago (Cambridge University Press, 2009). Her current manuscript explores protest movements in aspiring global cities.

Norma Rantisi, Department of Geography, Planning and Environment at Concordia University in Montreal, Canada is interested in the socio-spatial organization of cultural industries, and is currently conducting a collaborative study with Deborah Leslie on circus arts in Montreal.
Arie Romein studied Human Geography of Developing Countries at Utrecht University, the Netherlands. He has been in the employ of Delft University of Technology since 1999. His current research interests are knowledge-, creativity- and culture-based urban economic policy and development.

Stephen W. Sawyer is Associate Professor of History and founder of the Urban Studies Program at the American University of Paris. He has recently published a series of articles on contemporary cultural policy and local politics in Paris and directed a two-year research project for the city of Paris on urban scenes in the Paris metropolitan area entitled, Une cartographie culturelle de Paris: Les Ambiances du Paris-Métropole.

Samuel Shaw is a PhD candidate in the Sociology department at Vanderbilt University. His research interests include urban and cultural sociology. His dissertation examines contemporary artist careers pathways in two mid-size cities, Portland and Nashville.

David Silver is Assistant Professor of Sociology at the University of Toronto, Canada. His research investigates the role of culture in urban development, and has appeared in Social Forces, Sociological Theory, The Canadian Journal of Sociology, The Cambridge Journal of Regions, Economy, and Society, and Theory, Culture, and Society.

Jan Jacob Trip studied Human Geography at the University of Groningen. He has worked at Delft University of Technology since 1999. His research interests focus on urban-economic development, particularly regarding innovation, knowledge cities, and creative cities.

Gordon Waitt is Associate Professor in Human Geography at the University of Wollongong, Australia. His research interests are social and cultural geographies, cultures of natures, tourism, festivals, travelers, sexuality and gender. His books include Understanding Gay Tourism: Culture and Context (Howarth, 2006) and Tourism and Australian Beach Cultures: Revealing Bodies (Channel View, 2012, with Christine Metusela).
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We warmly thank the contributors to this volume for their patience and efficiency in handling queries and in re-drafting their contributions as well for their anonymous reviews of each other’s initial drafts. The incisive character of this feedback greatly improved the overall quality of the book. We would also like to thank the two anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments on our initial proposal for this book and for seeing its potential. We are grateful to John Hannigan for providing critical commentary on the introduction. We thank Zachary Hyde for invaluable and stalwart assistance in editing the chapters and Jaime Nikolaou for preparing the electronic version of this manuscript.

Carl Grodach and Daniel Silver
INTRODUCTION

Urbanizing Cultural Policy

Carl Grodach and Daniel Silver

A new mayor sends mime troupes to direct traffic in chaotic Bogotá intersections as agents of renewed civic order; an old one builds post-modern sculpture, indie rock festivals, and flower gardens to spearhead Chicago’s post-industrial recovery agenda; blue-haired artists from European cultural capitals like Berlin and Paris to traditional cultural backwaters like Toronto write urban development manifestos; arts and cultural industry organizations from New York to Austin to Wollongong, Australia struggle with city officials and real estate interests over zoning, land use regulations, and definitions of “creative” economic development; the government of Seoul receives a UNESCO award for heritage preservation and attracts tourists with new cultural amenities while violently evicting residents from their homes. These are just a few of the most dramatic cases of what has become a new normal in cities around the globe as cultural policy issues have been thrust into the center of urban politics, and vice versa.

Yet until relatively recently, formal cultural policy was primarily a national-level concern, focused on the promotion and protection of national heritage, the fine arts and, at times, cultural diversity. Federal ministries of culture, with varying levels of interaction with private and nonprofit entities, administer financial support for artists and arts organizations, finance historic preservation, initiate copyright protection laws, and oversee vast national archives and survey museums like the Smithsonian or Louvre. A sizable body of scholarship exemplified by the work
of Bradford, et al. (2000); Cherbo et al. (2008); Miller and Yúdice (2002), and others has captured the shifting nature and key conflicts surrounding cultural policy, but has not explicitly situated culture as an urban policy issue.

However, over the last three decades we have witnessed the rise of a specifically urban form of cultural policy. Early, pioneering work by Franco Bianchini and Michael Parkinson (1993), Allen Scott (2000), Sharon Zukin (1982, 1995), John Hannigan (1998), and others began to capture the importance of symbolic and aesthetic factors in driving urban economic development by concentrating on strategies ranging from flagship museums and redeveloped waterfronts to artistic and cultural employment districts. This work has been crucial in advancing our understanding of the role cultural policies play in urban development. But largely because the phenomenon itself was so new and limited to a relatively small number of cities, they understandably said little about the specific variations in how or why different cities came to adopt the policies they did.

As urban cultural policy has spread beyond the boundaries of the US and Europe and taken on a wide set of objectives, targets, and even definitions of culture, understanding the causes and consequences of divergent policy agendas becomes more important. Cities now routinely look to culture in its diverse manifestations – as the arts, group identity and heritage, and media and design-based industries (e.g. film, music, architecture) – as urban policy tools to address a broad array of urban issues. These range from neighborhood revitalization and community engagement to job creation, talent attraction, and achieving “world city” status. In the process, established concerns such as artistic excellence, cultural appreciation, heritage, arts education, and
accessibility have been remade and reprioritized alongside urban economic revitalization objectives. This has been a global phenomenon, taking place in European nations with a comparatively strong national cultural policy apparatus, countries like the US that have historically maintained weak and ad hoc federal-level cultural policy efforts, and in rapidly developing East Asian countries such as Singapore and Korea.

The emergence and restructuring of an urban cultural policy agenda is a highly politicized process with often contradictory but very real impacts on the economic, social, and spatial composition of cities. For instance, the cultural policy and planning efforts of local governments seeking to revitalize their urban cores and attract the “creative class” have at once brought new development and amenities while intensifying decades old processes of gentrification and displacement. At the same time, cultural policy has been a means of fostering local representation, building connections among diverse citizens, and enhancing the abilities of underrepresented groups to influence neighborhood change. More broadly, political conflicts, coalitions, and compromises have emerged between groups seeking support for artistic excellence and those seeking investment in commercial creative industries, access to cultural opportunities for diverse populations and aspirations for global creative city status, and support for artistic production and opportunities for arts consumption. As the chapters in this book demonstrate, these political tensions have become most pronounced at the urban level, often leading to dramatic and highly publicized clashes that have implications that go beyond the field of cultural policy itself, making it increasingly important to refine and expand our understanding of how to create and implement effective and equitable policies in this arena.
Despite prominent politics surrounding urban cultural policy, academic and policy discussions of urban cultural activity have tended to focus on economic dimensions, asking whether arts, culture, and creative activity really do drive economic growth, and if so, how. However, given the politically fraught nature of cultural policy creation and implementation, urban politics has to be brought into the analytical picture. This book seeks to provide an empirical foundation for understanding the policy process as not only unfolding according to market or industrial logics but as driven by the resources and influence of an array of stakeholders – arts and community activists, culture industries, government agencies, political leaders, property developers, and voters. By providing an opportunity to comparatively study urban cultural policy in a diverse set of contexts, the book expands our knowledge of the political process of urban cultural policy-making, informing future policy-making appropriate for different types of cultural sectors, producers, and places. What common forces are behind so many cities’ decisions to formulate explicit municipal cultural policies? What are the impacts of these policies on urban development and governance? How are these policies negotiated and contested? What, that is, is shared and what is unique in the purposes, practices, and outcomes of cultural policy adopted in New York, Chicago, Toronto, Paris, Berlin, Singapore, or Bogota? This book provides a far-reaching empirical resource for investigating what urban cultural policy means in these diverse political and institutional contexts, enabling a comparative perspective in a field that too often relies on single-case studies.

In this introductory chapter, we first discuss in brief the factors that account for the rise and expansion of urban cultural policy. We then highlight the politicized nature of the field, describing some of the new relationships, coalitions, and conflicts that have emerged in the urban
context. Synthesizing the array of factors that influence the processes and politics behind urban cultural policy, we suggest, helps to see how urban cultural policy and analysis is moving beyond the now familiar creative city script. We conclude this introduction by presenting the organization of the book.

THE RISE AND EXPANSION OF URBAN CULTURAL POLICY

Culture in its various manifestations has emerged as an urban policy target as local governments attempt to negotiate and capitalize on a set of now familiar and significant trends shaping contemporary urban development processes. In particular, with the restructuring of urban economies around knowledge, human capital, and business and consumer services, we have witnessed the rapid growth not only of hi-tech and finance-related sectors, but a simultaneous rise in employment in art, design, film, and other cultural industries across many different places (Currid, 2006; Pratt, 1997; Scott, 2000; Markusen and Schrock, 2006). A global network of cities have made determined efforts to capture these fast growing, high human capital sectors with a range of policy programs that tend to be guided by neo-liberal deregulation and privatization and a reframing of traditional progressive policy goals like diversity, inclusion, quality of life, and sustainability as facets of urban growth.

In the process, as local governments focus on stimulating new markets and development opportunities, the attributes of place become increasingly crucial to their economic agendas. Policy directed at supporting the arts, culture, and creative activity assume a prominent position for cities around the world as a means of altering the dynamics of place and creating locational
advantages by serving at once as an opportunity to remake the physical environment, improve the city image, diversify the economic base, and attract and retain a skilled workforce through enhanced consumer amenities. Yet making the urban core attractive may also marginalize those that do not fit this narrative of economic development including ethnic minorities and the urban poor, not to mention artists. Thus as urban policy lays greater emphasis on place character as a development tool, arts and cultural actors become implicated in economic and spatial polarization and conflict in contradictory ways.

These changes in urban economies and governance, link up with social dynamics in the rise of urban cultural policy. As Silver and Clark (2012) and others observe, there is a growing interest, particularly among young knowledge workers, in an “urban” lifestyle defined by an abundance of consumer amenities, lively street life, and historic, mixed-use environments. This trend has caught the attention of local governments, which increasingly attempt to appeal to this cohort. This emphasis, among others, has set the stage for the emergence of a “New Political Culture” in which amenities, consumption, and lifestyle emerge as political targets and points of conflict, often replacing traditional work-based politics defined emblematically as contests between unions and business, and leading to the realignment or even decline of established growth machines (Clark & Hoffmann-Martinot, 1998).

New policy rhetorics have emerged to capture and capitalize on these trends, but so too have challengers to contemporary urban policy. Perhaps the dominant intellectual perspective that has legitimated the ascendancy of many urban cultural policy efforts is the “creative cities” thesis associated with Richard Florida (2002). According to this position, cultural policy should aim to
cultivate urban environments attractive to members of the “creative class” such as artists, designers, software developers, and other tech workers. Florida’s controversial thesis has generated vigorous academic debate and is roundly criticized for justifying the gentrification of urban neighborhoods and evading social justice issues. But, as we argue below, critics have failed to examine how the creative city thesis has actually been implemented through urban policy, and, as a result, tend to neglect the divergent and emergent policy outcomes that are beginning to define new directions following the creative city era, leaving us with important unanswered questions. How has this concept been selectively implemented and interpreted by city officials, business leaders, and arts organizations? What explains vocal and sometimes influential resistance to “creative cities” rhetoric in places like Hamburg, official acceptance but practical re-direction in places like Austin, Berlin, and Toronto, and more wholesale acceptance through programs like Michigan’s Cool Cities Initiative? The chapters gathered in this book provide a unique opportunity to assess the political fate of one of the most influential approaches to urban development in the last decade. At the same time, by focusing on the emerging coalitions and tactics employed to shape cultural policy, they reveal disruptions in totalizing narratives like the creative city script and thereby provide an opportunity to identify how urban cultural policy is evolving in the process.

CULTURAL POLICY AND URBAN POLITICS: NEW POLICY RELATIONSHIPS, COALITIONS, AND CONFLICTS

The urban political opportunity structure has changed, opening a space for arts and culture to function as a political and economic resource for disparate groups in different urban and national
contexts. For students of urban politics and development, this means integrating arts and cultural issues and actors into analyses of urban governing coalitions, municipal elections, land use disputes, economic development controversies, and more. For students of cultural policy, this means tracing cultural policy decisions to local political culture and acknowledging the associated battles over the shape of arts funding, cultural planning directives, organizational frameworks, service delivery, and the physical location of cultural resources. As the institutionalist literature makes clear, these issues often cohere around key government and non-government actors who compete within established political and institutional frameworks to make policy (DiMaggio and Powell 1983; Healy 2007; Martin 2002; North 1991). In terms of municipal cultural policy, Markusen and Gadwa (2010) identify many of the key actors. These include municipal departments such as cultural affairs, economic development, planning, community services, and parks and recreation; elected officials like mayors and councilors; and non-government actors like cultural industries, non-profit arts organizations, citizen groups, and property developers. We also need to identify the key resources and channels through which these actors attempt to shape policy, highlighting how their different interests, objectives, ideals, and resources affect political controversies surrounding cultural policy.

Where dedicated cultural affairs offices exist, they naturally have become sites for political debate about cultural policy. Often staffed by people with expertise in arts management and with social connections to the world of arts and culture, cultural affairs offices may also work as arts advocates within a city’s internal bureaucratic battles over budgetary priorities. At the same time, as cultural planning exercises have become higher stakes events, other parties increasingly attempt to influence their outcomes. Staff juggle demands from directors of major arts institutions and non-profits, cultural industry lobbyists, community groups, real estate interests, as well as mayors and
councilors. One crucial set of variables in urban cultural policy analysis is thus the organizational framework, resources, responsibilities, ideals, and interactions of cultural affairs departments (Grodach 2012).

While important, cultural affairs departments rarely coordinate all civic arts and cultural programs and many of the most important urban cultural policy tools typically fall outside their purview. Zoning regulations, for instance, can have a major impact on attracting or repelling artists and cultural institutions from particular neighborhoods; similarly, repurposing vacant city buildings for arts and cultural industry uses or including them in commercial corridor development can deeply affect a city’s cultural communities. Yet while city planning and economic development offices often lead these programs, such departments typically have few if any staff with training, experience, or sensitivity to the needs and issues of artists and cultural activity. Conversely, most cultural affairs offices – not to mention cultural organizations and artists – focus more on arts funding and support than on land use policy. Planning and economic development decisions therefore often become points of cultural policy contestation – but also opportunities for innovation – especially as downtown rents have spiked in many cities, making affordable artist live, work, and performance space scarce. As many of the chapters in this book show, how and whether cultural policy stakeholders understand and are integrated into city planning and economic development decisions is a key variable shaping how cultural policy disputes unfold and whether policy is responsive to cultural sector participants.

Elected leaders clearly play central roles in political debate about cultural policy, and many mayors and councilors have become sensitive to arts and cultural issues. In some cases, a new political
leader can dramatically alter a city’s policies to include new cultural emphases (see Pasotti Chapter 3); in others, established mayors or councilors dramatically change course to champion cultural projects or adopt a wider vision for cultural industry development (see Clark and Silver Chapter 2); in still others national leaders have directly intervened in municipal cultural policy decisions (see Lee and Anderson Chapter 5). Given concerns with elections and their city’s position on the global stage, mayor-driven cultural policies may tend toward the large, theatrical, and the spectacular, in some cases alienating local and neighborhood groups. Conversely, mayors may see municipal arts and cultural programs as soft services first in line for cuts or privatization, potentially generating resistance movements and leading cultural planners to formulate policy defensively, with an eye toward emphasizing economic impacts.

In the politics of cultural policy as in other issue areas, answering the question “who governs?” often means looking outside of government agencies and elected officials. Cultural industries can be key players. If they band together, they can play a major role in policy decisions, by for instance garnering new workforce support or zoning variances (see Grodach Chapter 7). Cultural non-profits, both the large arts institutions and smaller community organizations, have a major stake in local cultural policy as well both in terms of direct fundraising and capital improvements. One crucial political flashpoint is thus the degree to which different arts organizations are politically organized and what relationships they establish with one another and with partners outside the arts, such as social service activists (housing, poverty, homelessness), environment and gay rights advocates, or business organizations (see Indergaard Chapter 14). Do they join mayors and civic boosters in international place competition or do they work through independent channels (see Shaw Chapter 17)? These coalitions vary greatly from city to city and often within cities. But the particular
complex will be crucial in determining the efficacy and direction of cultural policy activism.

As cultural policy has increasingly centered on cultural spaces and built form, with cultural district designation and redevelopment projects sparking some of the most public controversies, property developers and related actors with a stake in profiting from the built environment have emerged as key political players and targets. Developers are often closely connected to city redevelopment agencies, and their interests often dominate cultural planning outcomes as Markusen and Gadwa (2010a), Strom (2002), Zukin (1996) and many others have pointed out. Yet this is not always the case. Active mayors, city agencies, and arts groups have resisted or modified developer influence and in some cases developers themselves have sought partnerships with arts and cultural groups (see Silver Chapter 18; Sawyer Chapter 15; Leslie and Rantisi Chapter 6). How, where, and why developers are greeted with resistance, as welcome investment, or partners will inflect the politics of a city’s cultural policy.

Finally, citizens become involved in the politics of cultural policy. Where citizens treat culture as a public good, they are more likely to support a strong cultural policy agenda; in cities divided on the role of culture in public life, cultural policy may become a highly contested election issue (see Romein and Trip, Ch. 4; Navarro, Ch. 16). In some cities, arts groups have organized strong networks of culturally concerned citizens that show up at city hall to protest controversial issues, like proposed cuts to local arts funding, and offer counter-proposals intended to guide official policy (see Grodach, Ch. 7; Sawyer, Ch. 15; Silver, Ch. 18). In general, to understand the politics of urban cultural policy, we need to understand the role of constituents in shaping policy and when and how policy outcomes do or do not reflect their interests and preferences.
Table 1 summarizes and extends these observations about the key variables driving the politics of urban cultural policy as a process. Policy flows through an array of structuring **conditions** that can push the process along specific paths. These include factors such as city size and age, political culture, position in national and international urban hierarchies, historical cultural capital status, the organizational structure and institutions surrounding cultural policy-making, and the presence of particularly strong cultural industries. In addition, the existence and strength of **actors** with a stake in cultural policy matters: the various public agencies, nonprofit entities, artist and culture industry coalitions, arts communities, property speculators and development lobbies, political leaders, and community activists. A third variable encompasses the **channels** and intergroup networks through which policy debate, negotiation, and conflict play out, such as grassroots organizing and protest, planning meetings and plans, media editorializing, lobbying, bureaucratic maneuvering, and claims about access to space. Finally, the material and symbolic **resources** that actors wield in cultural policy debate are central: agency budgets, authority, trained staff, fund raising expertise, city branding campaigns, policy and plan language, cultural buzz, and political rhetoric. These four variables interact to produce not only varying policy **outcomes**, but also can lead to the formation of new coalitions or enemies, new organizations or alienation, new institutional connections or fragmentation, electoral victory or defeat, changes to redevelopment projects, varying levels of cultural participation, increased community solidarity or mutual suspicion, and economic growth or decline.

Taken together, the scope of these variables suggests that the boundaries of the urban cultural policy field are broad, intersecting with an array of actors and organizations that work within their own respective policy fields. Further, this complexity calls into question neat explanations
for policy based primarily on the replication of perceived models of success, the recommendations of celebrated consultants, or simple response to consumer preferences. Cities certainly borrow policy language and programs from other places, and we can recognize the same global processes at work in different places (e.g. neoliberal governance, creative city discourse, the gentrification of urban areas). Nonetheless, as the case studies collected here demonstrate, multiple place-specific issues, conditions, channels, actors, and resources interact in different ways to produce often unique outcomes.
The result is that while some local governments may wield the creative city script as a device to gentrify and brand the city, there are parallel and competing frameworks, discourses, and interests at play. While, over the last decade, the creative city discourse has been an important influence on the language and practice of many local government officials, arts organizations, and cultural industry organizations, in many cities these actors have digested and started to rewrite that script. Entirely new directions for urban cultural policy are emerging. Disparate groups continue to promote arts and cultural activities as amenities for economic growth, but not only this. How other values might reconfigure this economic argument has become perhaps the most persistent theme in conflicts over urban cultural policy objectives and targets. What will the post-creative city look like? The chapters in this book offer multiple points of entry into this question through the lens of political struggle and debate over urban cultural policy, highlighting through in-depth case studies the new policy directions emerging in the process.

OUTLINE OF THE BOOK

Each chapter in this book critically documents and analyzes the production, implementation, and attendant politics of urban cultural policy. We organize them around four distinct themes. In Part I, *Urban Cultural Policy as an Object of Governance*, the chapters investigate the evolving role of urban cultural policy in the larger governing agendas of different urban and national contexts. Kate Oakley’s discussion of London (Chapter 1) traces how the concept of the cultural industries originated there as a social democratic policy tool and evolved into a key component of the city’s
efforts to position itself as a global economic leader, producing some troubling results. Turning to Chicago, Terry Clark and Daniel Silver (Chapter 2) show how “arts and cultural concerns” recently entered into and redefined the city’s historically blue collar, ethno-religious clientelist politics, with major impacts on urban development. Discussing Bogotá, Columbia, Eleonora Pasotti (Chapter 3) explains how different mayoral regimes took advantage of a unique institutional context to adopt artistic and cultural techniques – like mimes in traffic or opera in poor neighborhoods – as policy instruments for creating civic order and mutual respect. Arie Romein and Jan Jacob Trip (Chapter 4) study how evolving national level policy philosophies impact Rotterdam’s cultural policy approach and outcomes, sparking heated national debates where high, popular, and ethnic culture collide at the local level. Finally, Jong Youl Lee and Chad Anderson (Chapter 5) examine how cultural amenities enter the urban policy dialog and obscure the brutal reality of much urban regeneration in Seoul.

The chapters in Part II, *Rewriting the Creative City Script* concentrate on the tensions and contradictions behind the shift in urban cultural policy toward creative city agendas, analyzing cases in which different actors respond to this policy discourse and aim to rewrite standard creative city scripts to incorporate alternative policy goals and rationales. Deborah Leslie and Norma Rantisi (Chapter 6) examine the formation of La Tohu circus arts district in Montreal. They demonstrate the possibility of a public-private initiative resulting in a redevelopment project that encompasses a socially progressive political agenda alongside economic development objectives. Carl Grodach (Chapter 7) examines how in Austin, Texas music community representatives worked through official city policy channels to respond to the cultural policy discourse of “creativity” and to the negative effects on the industry from intensive
central city redevelopment. Doreen Jakob (Chapter 8) examines the contradictions buried in Berlin’s creative city agenda and the subsequent community organizing efforts by artists and cultural workers to rework the city’s cultural policies. Finally, Chris Gibson and Gordon Waitt (Chapter 9) offer a comparative study demonstrating how in Australia city size and location influence how policy-makers frame, interpret, and pursue globally recognized cultural policy agendas.

Part III, The Implications of Urban Cultural Policy Agendas for Creative Production, concentrates on the relationship – and often disconnects – between cultural planning efforts and the on-the-ground life and needs of arts and cultural sector activity. Tom Hutton and Catherine Murray (Chapter 10) study how Vancouver’s unique economic geography and its urban planning and cultural policy frameworks shape the development of the city’s cultural sectors. Analyzing Singapore, Lily Kong (Chapter 11) compares the policy approach and development context of two different arts-led redevelopment initiatives in Chinatown and Little India, showing the results of contrasting policy interventions. Graeme Evans (Chapter 12) looks to Maastricht, Netherlands to study how a city wrestles with an identity crisis in the context of changing national and European politics through its bid for the European Capital of Culture designation. Finally, Elizabeth Currid-Halkett and Vivian Ho (Chapter 13) demonstrate how arts policy in Los Angeles fails to respond to the unique composition of the region’s cultural industries and the policy implications of this condition.

In Part IV, Coalition Networks, Alliances, and Identity Framing, we conclude by analyzing how various arts and cultural sector interests develop and jockey for power. Michael Indergaard
(Chapter 14) analyzes attempts to define and build cultural sectors into New York’s economic development policy together with associated conflicts over space within the cultural sectors and with the FIRE industries. Focusing on opposition to city cultural policy from outside the official policy sphere, Steven Sawyer (Chapter 15) examines the resistance efforts, mobilization strategies, and contradictory results of Paris’ Les Frigos artist community in response to the City’s proposal to redevelop the site they had occupied for decades. Through a national survey of cultural planning and policy in Spanish cities, Clemente Navarro (Chapter 16) shows how cultural policy can be an object of both classic growth machine policy agendas and more progressive socially-oriented planning. Samuel Shaw (Chapter 17) examines the shape and implications of distinct city and artist-led efforts to promote Portland, Oregon as an artist city. Daniel Silver (Chapter 18) concludes the volume with two case studies of cultural politics in Toronto that highlight the role of arts and cultural groups in the formation, strategies, and outcomes of political alliances in two different neighborhood development contexts.

REFERENCES


Part I

URBAN CULTURAL POLICY AS AN OBJECT OF GOVERNANCE
CHAPTER 1

A Different Class: Politics and Culture in London

Kate Oakley

INTRODUCTION

When then London mayor Ken Livingstone said, “I think one of the things that cements our strength as such a strong financial centre, and gives us the margin over places like Frankfurt, is that once you have had a hard day’s work, this city has a diversity of offerings in terms of cultural and leisure services, unrivalled anywhere else,” (Livingston 2008) he was neatly summarising a relationship between culture, economic growth, and urban living that had, by then, become axiomatic in policy circles.

What is striking about the statement (and the many others like it) in the context of Livingstone’s own career, however, is how much of a departure it represents from his first stint in charge of London in the 1980s. At the time, Livingstone was associated with the Greater London Council’s (GLC) “cultural industry” policies (Bianchini 1987), the emphasis of which was firmly on culture as a source of production, and indeed of jobs for Londoners, particularly those from working class backgrounds and ethnic minorities. By 2005, just into his second term as London’s elected mayor, and with responsibilities for both cultural policy and economic development, the emphasis is on culture as consumption. These policies helped to develop lifestyle offerings of a city keen to keep its financial and business elites from decamping to other cities, in particular Frankfurt.
Behind the rhetoric, actual policy shifts were somewhat less dramatic. London has always been concerned with how its culture and leisure offerings add to the city’s attractiveness to tourists and investors, and throughout Livingstone’s two terms in office in the 2000s, work continued on supporting the cultural industries in their productive capacity. One could argue that cultural industry development was linked to the employment of certain communities; however, these claims would be hard to sustain. And yet, the rhetoric matters and tells us something about the sense of political possibilities. The policy emphasis was different in the second of Livingstone’s times in office and the sense of constraint much greater, particularly when it came to making structural interventions in the economy.

The figure of Livingstone, leader of the GLC from 1981 to 1986, and elected mayor of London from 2000 to 2008, runs throughout this chapter. This would be the case in any chapter on London’s urban politics, in which he has been a major player for many decades; however, it is particularly relevant to discussions of London’s cultural policy. Although Livingstone’s own utterances on culture are relatively rare, his connection, first with the GLC, and then with the Mayor’s Commission on the Creative Industries, makes him an iconic figure. Moreover, Livingstone has a certain candor, which is rare in modern politicians.

In a fascinating interview with geographer and former board member of the Greater London Enterprise Board, Doreen Massey (Massey 2007b), Livingstone explores the tensions and contradictions facing a politician, one who still self-identifies as being on the left, in grappling with the financial juggernaut of modern capitalism. After arguing that the GLC “did everything possible to prevent the decline of manufacturing, and nothing whatsoever to encourage finance and business services,” Livingstone ruefully admits that, “coming back to the job after a fourteen-year gap, that battle had been well and truly lost,” and that finance
and business services, “just drives the whole London economy” (Massey 2007b: 3). Like most politicians of the time, Livingstone accepts that this pattern is set – arguing that 80 percent of London’s jobs growth in the next decade would be in these sectors, though there is also, he says, a “creative layer of industry, which we are really looking to encourage … and which leavens the whole pattern” (2007b: 3).

To what degree and in what way this “leavening” is supposed to occur is not made clear, but beyond the obvious arguments about diversifying what was becoming a finance-dominated economy, lurks a set of assumptions about how the cultural industries work and who they employ. Later in the interview, when Massey presses Livingstone about the degree to which the financial dominance of London’s economy makes it a center for the production of neoliberalism and the high levels of inequality associated with that, Livingstone falls back on two arguments. One is that neoliberalism (which he prefers to call globalization) had “good and bad sides,” an example of the former being that Shell, along with working on hydrogen fuel cells, has established a “Muslim workers group.” The second is a more conventional argument for greater redistribution – including a Tobin tax\(^1\) - which Livingstone favors - alongside a tax on the super rich, but in either case, “I don’t waste my breath trying to persuade [Prime Minister] Gordon Brown.” To Massey’s (2007 b: 4) suggestion that the dominance of finance itself is the problem, Livingstone argues impotence,

This is not the world you create, it’s the world you’re in. What, effectively, has happened with the growth of financial services in London is that it's driven land costs and house prices and the cost-base up to a level where nothing else can get off the ground...You do everything possible to build the industries in the creative sector, and try also to sit down and look at issues such as the London Living Wage and so on. But ultimately we’re locked into that set-up.
The chapter analyses how a notion – the cultural industries – born in the social democratic politics of London in the 1980s, was re-fashioned and re-framed to meet the demands of a global financial center in the early twenty-first century. It also looks at the role of cultural industry in the production of inequality. As the global financial crisis continues to undermine the fabric of the UK’s economy, it also asks what is the future for urban cultural politics in London and how it can be re-invented.

THE GLC AND THE CULTURAL INDUSTRIES

The development of a cultural industries strategy by the Great London Council in the 1980s has been well-covered elsewhere in the literature (Bianchini 1987, 1993; Garnham 2005; O’Connor 2009). As Bianchini argues (1993), the 1970s was a period when, across Western Europe, urban cultural polices became more politicized and more important. Linked to a whole range of post-1968 social movements – environmentalism, feminism, gay and ethnic minority activism – leftist urban governments sought to develop policies that moved away from the traditional arms length arts polices, in favor of a more consciously politicized stance. In so doing, the emphasis also moved from a traditional “high arts” argument to one that embraced aspects of popular culture, particularly those associated with “alternative” culture, fanzines, independent film makers, radical publishers and so on.

In the case of London this was part of a broader political strategy, which was attempting to reconstruct the left of British politics, at that time stunned by the success of Thatcherism. The fracturing of the Labour party’s traditional working-class vote (Hobsbawm 1981) was to be
countered by a broader appeal to ethnic minorities, women and the young, an appeal that took cultural political form in the embrace and support of commercial popular culture, particularly manifested in free festivals and events. Ethnic minority, or “black arts” as it was called at the time, became the subject of particular public reimagining in cinema, theater and festivals, while training schemes aimed at improving the representation of ethnic minority workers within the cultural sectors were established and funded (Bianchini 1987).

At the same time, the GLC’s Industry and Employment committee under the influence of figures like Robin Murray and academic Nick Garnham, was developing approaches to the “cultural industries” that sought to break down distinctions between subsidized and commercial culture, as well as notions of “high and low.” As most people’s cultural consumption was hugely shaped by market forces, cultural policy needed to take account of this, they argued, and could thus include public investments in commercial enterprises such as recording studios, publishing houses, and magazines, and even commercial sports organizations (Garnham 1990).

Any analysis of the market for cultural products, Garnham argued, suggested that cultural policy should focus on distribution, including subsidizing audience and market research for small cultural businesses, in an attempt to help foster self-sufficiency and offer a genuine alternative to the current gatekeepers. Alternative distribution channels, particularly in terms of broadcasting, were considered by the GLC, but as with many of its cultural industry policies, these remained ideas rather than practical interventions. The GLC, however, was dismantled before they ever saw the light of day.
ALL THIS OPTIMISM, ALL THIS BOOMING AND SOARING – LONDON AFTER BIG BANG

At the time of writing, the 25th anniversary of the so-called “big bang” de-regulation of financial markets has just passed, amidst a deepening global economic crisis. The significance of October 27th 1986 was captured by one commentator as the, “remaking of Britain in the image of a laissez-fair free market economy,” (Lanchester 2010: 168) and what followed big bang was little short of a cultural revolution. The growth in finance and the continuing decline of manufacturing had major implications for already highly-uneven economic geography of the UK, where London came more and more to resemble a city state within the national economy (Ertürk et al 2011).

These trends had implications within the city itself, ones that were not particularly palatable for many of its inhabitants. As the city became more globalized, London ceased to resolve its traditional labor shortages by pulling in workers from the North of England, Scotland, and Wales and began to draw on a global pool of highly polarized labor. Although there was an overall growth in employment in London of 13 per cent between 1997 and 2006, more than 85 per cent of these jobs were taken by residents born outside of the UK (Ertürk et al. 2011). At the top of this labor market those in finance and business services, education, medicine, and the cultural industries - a well-skilled labor force - found employment. At the bottom, for unskilled migrants in low paid service jobs, wages were substantially eroded (Gordon et al. 2007). The overall rise in property prices, in a city where a third of the housing stock is still in social ownership, concentrated wealth still further, and raised the question: “who and what is London for” (Ertürk et al 2011:6)?
Finance, as Livingstone pointed out, took much of the credit for driving London’s economy; however, it was a vehicle with strongly polarizing effects. While London accounted for some 31 per cent of the finance services sector workforce by the time of the 2008 crash, with other finance jobs being spread around larger regional centers in the UK, it had an almost total monopoly of high end finance jobs, particularly in areas such as private equity and hedge funds. Even within London such jobs were heavily concentrated in the square mile of London’s financial district, in Canary Wharf\(^2\) and Mayfair\(^3\). In terms of driving the rest of the economy however – presumably through a combination of direct employment, lending to businesses, and taxation – the record was distinctly mixed. For most of the boom years, the finance sector made about half the contribution to government tax receipts that declining manufacturing paid (Ertürk et al 2011), while around 5 per cent of lending from such institutions went to UK-based businesses (Hutton and Nightingale 2011).

However, as Doreen Massey has argued, the “global” status of London has also been discursively used to justify some of the policies that have favored London’s development over that of the rest of the UK, mobilized as she says, “to justify the untouchability of London’s financial and business sectors” (Massey 2007a: 40). It was a strategy in evidence when the UK government objected to French and German support for the Tobin transaction tax on the grounds that “the UK” would pay around 70 percent of it. In fact, the majority of such a tax would be paid by the City of London and Canary Wharf, rather than say Birmingham or Aberdeen. As Massey argues, that London sought to reinvent and project itself as the global city *par excellence* was the outcome of a political contest, one in which neoliberalism triumphed and sought to present the market as a *natural* way of organising society, to which politics could only respond (Mirowski 2009).
Despite his well-publicized differences with the national, “New Labour” government, in the 2000s he took a much more accommodating, less confrontational stance on what one might call the neoliberal settlement, than Livingstone’s first regime had taken. While Labour local government in the 1970s and early 1980s had sought to explore a number of radical alternative ways of restructuring local economies, by 2004 the assumption was that London government, “cannot really reverse these strong, deep-rooted factors” (GLA 2004:8).

The compensatory element of neoliberalism was presented by Livingstone, in a strange nod to Thatcherism, as an “opening up” of the networks of “old white men,” who had previously dominated the City of London. A more dynamic era meant that “international capital had become “more progressive, less racist and sexist” than its forerunners (in Massey 2007:3). As such it is a diversity that ignores questions of social class, or as Massey puts it, “London’s poor...are caught in the cross-fire of the city’s reinvention.....the employment generated by the new growth is not for them; it is a different class project entirely” (Massey 2007a: 166).

**CULTURE COMES BACK – THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES COMMISSION**

As Bilton (2010: 257) argued in the 1980s, the GLC’s marriage of democratic arts policies and support for cultural enterprises was grounded in a social democratic politics that, while not reflected at the national level, produced a “paradoxical alliance between left-wing local authorities and right-wing central government – which laid the foundations for Britain’s influential creative industries policies more than 10 years later.”

By the time “creative industries” was taken up in London over a decade after the GLC’s experiment, the alliance was instead between a Labour London administration, headed by an
independent Mayor⁴ and a “New Labour” central government. In this case, despite some rhetorical differences, the sense of constraint about what was possible in terms of economic development was shared by both sides. Deregulation, particularly in the media sectors, has already resulted in a deterioration of the working conditions for freelancers (Ursell 2000; Blair 2001). The willingness of public administrations to intervene in market structures was considerably diminished. Those who were excluded or disadvantaged by the market remained a concern of public policy, but the state’s responsibility was to help them “compete” within the market, or if this was impossible, to provide some level of welfare.

As an example of such as alliance, the Mayor’s Commission on Creative Industries was set up in London in 2002. It followed the Mayor’s Economic Development Strategy, published the previous summer, which had emphasized the importance of the creative industries to the London economy. This was reinforced by another report, “Creativity, London’s Core Business” (LDA 2002b), which identified the creative industries as the fastest growing sector in London’s economy, and the source of one in every five new jobs.

The Commission met over a six-month period between 2002 and 2003 and took evidence from academics, policymakers, and practitioners before publishing its report and recommendations. These were to be acted on by a unit within the London Development Agency dubbed, somewhat unimaginatively, “Creative London.” The Commission was described as “business led” (LDA 2002a); however, in reality it was somewhat more diverse. While featuring representatives of “big business” – Yahoo and Sony in this case – the Commission also featured organizations such as Haringey Arts Council (an arts development charity), B3 Media (a training and support agency which worked with ethnic minority filmmakers and artists) and the Area10 Artists Collective. Some of these organizations had
been active in one form or another since the 1980s, and had adapted to the various “languages” of contemporary policy making. This discourse emphasized skills training and qualification while retained other core elements of community arts practice (Oakley forthcoming 2012).

The Commission’s remit was constructed primarily in terms of economic development and was peppered with terms like faster balance sheet growth, cluster development, and models of business finance; although, it nevertheless displayed similarities with the GLC’s cultural industries approaches (LDA 2002a). Particular emphasis was placed on the need to develop specific measures that would help ethnic-minority run businesses.

There was also a strongly spatial element to many of the proposed interventions. Much of its subsequent work was concerned with establishing a series of localized “hubs” which concentrated support for cultural enterprises. These hubs were to be established just outside of the main concentrations of cultural sector employment in London, which are in places like Camden or Soho in central London. Instead, neighborhoods like Lewisham, Haringey, and Kings Cross – which combined high levels of creative industry activity, with high levels of social deprivation – were the destination for hubs. This co-location was not an accident. The Commission was strongly influenced by the belief that creative industry employment could benefit marginalized groups and with adequate training and investment, the unemployed. Initiatives were to be “particularly targeted at disenfranchised groups” and London’s “rich but divided” legacy of social polarization was to be “actively challenged” (LDA 2003a: 15).

What was striking about such assumptions was the lack of evidence to support them, as jobs in the creative industries were already known to be highly competitive and to favor those able
to absorb the cost of extended education and of unpaid work as an entry requirement to the labor market (Lloyd 2006). The role of the creative industries in creating jobs for those from disadvantaged backgrounds was an article of faith, more than one of the “evidence-based policy” (Oakley 2008). But it was an article of faith that had actively shaped many of the participants in the Mayor’s Commission. This was particularly apparent in many of the discussion that took place during the Commissions’ evidence-gathering period. A debate on diversity (one of the Commission’s themes,) expressed the view that,

more could be done to widen the “net of opportunity,” and ensure that as many as possible, irrespective of their background, could participate in and contribute to London’s creative economy (LDA 2003b: online).

It was also emphasized that such a demand could not be “imposed” on business in the sector, “a business case needs to be made” (LDA 2003b: online). What such a “business case” would look like in a sector generally over-supplied with qualified labor was never made clear. Diversity was often invoked as a key to unlocking global markets; however, this was never demonstrated substantively. Informal methods of recruitment and the influence of social networks were acknowledged, but the only way to challenge this was thus to develop “BME-owned businesses” and, “business and entrepreneurial skills amongst the young” (LDA 2003b: online).

By 2003, the Commission was complete and Creative London established. Its “hubs” strategy – the establishment of neighborhood-level centers of economic development expertise – was the focus of much of its attention in the first year and such interventions worked hard on
balancing the conflicting goals of local economic development with commitments to the idea of social inclusion. In London, with its history of cultural industries development, its huge problems of growing inequality, and its need to diversify its finance-dominated economy, a creative industries strategy shorn of the language of social amelioration was unthinkable.

**CULTURAL LABOR MARKETS AND THE PRODUCTION OF INEQUALITY**

The “creative layer of industry” envisaged by Livingstone and others as “leavening” London’s economic base in fact turned out to replicate many of the problems of inequality associated with development reliant on finance, business services, or other “knowledge-based” industries. Indeed in many ways the cultural industries seem the least promising place to locate economic development that could tackle disadvantage. As one government agency responsible for skills and training in the media sectors put it, the typical workforce profile is “white, male, young and highly qualified” (Skillset 2011: 31).

The creative industries in the UK employ proportionately fewer women, and fewer black, Asian and ethnic minority workers than other parts of the economy. Over 60 percent of workers in the cultural sectors (defined in this case as craft, heritage, performing and visual arts, design) in England are male, and 93 percent are white (CCSkills 2009). This last figure is of particular concern when one looks at the geographical spread of cultural sector employment, which is concentrated in London and the South East of England where ethnic minorities make up between a quarter and third of the workforce. In broadcasting, music, and publishing, the proportion of ethnic minority workers is less than half that of London’s workforce as a whole (GLA 2010).
While it is difficult for young workers to enter these industries, it is also difficult for older workers, particularly women, to stay in them. Just a fifth of creative industry workers are over 50, compared with almost 30 per cent of the UK labor market as a whole. And in the television industry, for example, only 50 per cent of women are 35 years and older, compared with 70 per cent of men (Skillset 2011).

In a sector with an over-supply of labor, high levels of self-employment, very small firms, strong social networks, and a suspicion of formal qualifications, the employment of those without relevant social contacts, or unable to support unpaid internships and other forms of training, has always been problematic, but the situation, if anything, appears to be deteriorating (GLA 2010; Skillset 2011). Ethnicity and class-based exclusions are defining features of a sector, which also contains a small number of very highly paid workers. Although policy makers and those responsible for developing the creative industries have been slow to acknowledge the problems of cultural labor markets (Banks and Hesmondhalgh 2009) and concerns about declining social mobility and the problem of unpaid internships, they have managed to give the issue some degree of publicity (Cabinet Office 2009; Lawton & Potter 2010; HMG 2011).

It would be difficult to argue that it was “evidence” about the problems of cultural labor markets that led policymakers in London to switch the focus of their efforts from production to consumption; however, from about 2006 onwards, such a switch can be detected. If the early part of the 2000s saw echoes of the 1980s in London’s cultural policies, albeit in a constrained form, after 2005 a much more conventional approach was adopted.
EVEN BANKERS NEED A GOOD NIGHT OUT: CONSUMPTION IN THE CAPITAL

There were three factors that led to the switch, even though such changes in policy are often partial rather than total. What was seen as an uneasy coupling of creative industries policy with ideals of social justice soon began to unravel. It was not simply that cultural labor markets showed little sign of absorbing much labor from marginalized groups, but the spatial strategy of the “hubs” showed little sign of being able to check the continuing clustering of London’s creative employment within the core boroughs of Westminster, Camden, and Kensington & Chelsea (BOP 2007). The claims concerning supposed links between creative industries and an inherently “progressive” form of economic development became more dubious by the day.

As national policy was under review, The Creative Economy Programme, which resulted in Creative Britain (DCMS 2008), was established. The purpose of this was to re-examine the notion of creative industries, and to produce a formulation that was both more intellectually robust and more integrated with economic activities outside the creative industries themselves. More informally, I was told by a senior civil servant at the time that there was a strong desire within the Department for Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) to cull the “creative anywhere” networks and support agencies that had sprung up throughout the country and which were seen to be achieving relatively little (Oakley 2010). In its submission to the Creative Economy Programme (LDA 2007), the LDA stressed London’s status as a “global market place,” its unique “cultural infrastructure,” and its role as the home of “Europe’s leading financial centre, international trade events and much of the sector’s markets and deal-making opportunities (LDA 2007:2). The language of the “cultural industries,” with its concerns with representation and participation, had all but disappeared.
What had replaced it was the language of “London, World City;” the site of the 2012 Olympics. It was also the language of the “creative economy,” the cultural sectors themselves were no longer the sole focus, but their links to other businesses – and in London case this primarily meant finance – were strongly stressed. The later years of Livingstone’s terms of office saw London increasingly act as a sort of city-state, with the GLA opening its own “overseas offices” in Delhi, Mumbai, Beijing, Shanghai and Brussels. In this city-state finance dominated; everything else was secondary.

In place of a focus on neighborhoods and spatial re-distribution, polices were directed towards particular sub-sectors of the creative industries where London was perceived to have competitive strengths, such as film, design, and fashion. Capital projects, such as extension to Tate Modern or the British Museum put the emphasis squarely back on high culture; the lifestyle offerings needed to attract and reassure the globally mobile elite. This sharply differentiates London’s post-2007 cultural policies, not only from the GLC with its focus on the cultural industries, but also from the Mayor’s Commission and the creative industry hubs. An era had come to an end.

CONCLUSION

As a volume like this demonstrates, there are a huge variety of urban cultural policies and a number of ways in which they can be distinguished from that of the state. This chapter has concerned itself with one of these types of policy, that of the cultural industries. It has argued that aspects of such policies – the emphasis on supporting production, the stress on popular culture and not just the arts, the downplaying of cultural arguments in favor of economic
development, and the association with progressive social movements – can be seen in London’s cultural policies from the 1980s through to the mid 2000s.

Yet the circumstances in which such policies were enacted changed dramatically. The 1980s political confrontation between a leftist urban administration and a radical Conservative government had been settled, and it was clear who won. The city, far from being a center of resistance to neoliberalism, became, “a key institutional arena in and through which neoliberalism is itself evolving” (Brenner and Theodore 2002:345). The concentration of global wealth within London, the success of its appeal “over places like Frankfurt,” gave it the dubious distinction of becoming one of the most unequal cities in the developed world (Dorling 2010).

Yet as Peck et al. (2009) have argued there is no straight line from the social democratic city to the neoliberal one. Nor do places simply absorb de-regulation or marketization in a uniform way; even Conservative mayors tend to become advocates of public housing and public transport when faced with the issues of running a large city (Roberts 2010).

By the time of the 2008 financial crisis the possibilities of politics, the different economic futures that can be imagined, even the potential for local economic development, seem to have been exhausted. Britain, in the New Labour years, had thrown some money at regional economic development, a combination of welfare benefits and public sector expansion had, for a while, kept some control of its unbalanced economic geography (Ertürk et al 2011). Within London, the Livingstone administration had accommodated itself to the needs of financial services and with what spare cash was left has sought to develop some other, more “progressive,” sectors of the economy, such as the cultural industries. In this way, it was argued, an entrepreneurial economy could be harnessed to serve the needs of the socially
excluded, if only they could be made ready for the competition. While the economy grew, and public spending remained high, this could appear plausible. But when the real motor of London’s economy imploded in the financial crisis of 2008, these tensions were laid bare, and often exposed as contradictions.

The attempt to fuse social and economic ends in urban cultural policy appears to have been discontinued; at least in the case of London. In current Conservative policy, both nationally and in London, the distinction between commercial “creative industries,” and “the arts,” is being re-enforced, and a philanthropic and voluntaristic model of cultural support is being reintroduced, albeit with little immediate success. London’s cultural policymakers are pre-occupied with that most traditional form of urban cultural development – hosting a mega event – in this case the 2012 Olympics.

At the same time, the right to imagine other potential futures and ways of organizing society is probably the galvanising political creed of the moment. Cultural workers, long immersed in what Ross (2002) calls their “sacrificial tradition,” are starting to organize around issues of unpaid work and exploitation and the occupy movement has sought to reclaim the streets as a space for just that, the act of imagining alternatives. Little of this is as yet reflected in formal urban politics and with London’s 2012 mayoral election a re-run of its last one, the sense of stasis at City Hall is strong. But it would be unwise to imagine that within a city as multifaceted as London, new possibilities are not being born.

REFERENCES


**ENDNOTES**

1 A currency transaction tax, originally promoted by economist James Tobin.

2 The second of London’s financial centers, to the East of the “City of London.”

3 Mayfair, a small area of central London, is the location of choice for hedge funds.

4 When Ken Livingstone ran for the first time as directly elected Mayor of London in 2000, he ran against the official Labour candidate and was expelled from the party. He was later re-admitted to the party and ran in 2004 as the official Labour candidate.

5 For example the Precarious Workers Brigade or Carrotworkers Collective (<http://carrotworkers.wordpress.com/> and <http://precariousworkersbrigade.tumblr.com/>) or the various groups that have organised around internships.

6 Ken Livingstone will again be the Labour party candidate versus Boris Johnson as the Conservative party candidate, the same line up as 2008.
CHAPTER 2

Chicago from the Political Machine to the Entertainment Machine

Terry Nichols Clark and Daniel Silver

Citizens of high and especially low status have dramatically increased their interest and participation in the arts and culture in recent years. There is apparent controversy over the point, but it mostly is a question of definition. Studies focused on the more traditional activities like classical music, opera, and museum visits find gradual declines (e.g. DiMaggio and Mukhtar 2004; National Endowment for the Arts 2009) but studies of more comprehensive sets of activities (internet downloads of electronic music, hip hop, rap, radio listening, starting your own small band or arts group) often find growth, sometimes dramatic. The French and French Canadians have done some of the best work mapping such developments (e.g. Donnat 2011). Clark and Silva (2009) document a strong rise in some 10 countries and moderate increases in 20 more in the World Values Survey over the past 20 years.

How have political leaders responded to these changes? The case of Chicago provides a valuable starting point. These processes are new, controversial, and absent in many locations. In old European cities like Paris and Berlin, culture has been a core municipal concern for centuries. The first book on Midwest US cities and towns (Longworth 2007) stresses that most are in serious decline and minimally stress culture and art.
Chicago, however, especially under the leadership of Mayor Richard M. Daley, dramatically integrated the arts and culture into its basic political repertoire. Chicago is moreover a new entrant on the stage of global cultural cities, transforming its blue collar and localist heritage. Here, the coalitions, stakeholders, and conflicts that emerge are less entrenched and more fluid, and, with the benefit of recent data, we can see how cultural and expressive concerns enter into “normal” city politics. The new combination of participants and resources powerfully document the rise of amenities and culture, contrasting with the strong tradition of jobs and contracts as classic resources, led by a political machine (Clark 2012). Chicago politicians’ traditional concern with such private goods has been joined with an emphasis on public goods like parks and art and flowers, ushering in a new political style and a new role for culture in the city.

More traditionally associated with hogs (“Chicago: Hog Butcher to the World”), clientelism (“We Don’t Want Nobody Nobody Sent,”), and industrialism (“Chicago, City of Broad Shoulders”), Chicago lacks a strong tradition of major civic and city government expenditure and interest in arts, culture, and amenities. As late as 1975, Saul Bellow wrote, “there were beautiful and moving things in Chicago, but culture was not one of them” (Bellow 1975: 69). In the wake of major investments in Chicago’s cultural infrastructure, by 2009, the Director of the National Endowment of the Arts could say: “Mayor Daley should be the No. 1 hero to everyone in this country who cares about art” (in The Theater Loop, 2009). In 1976, Milton Rakove described Chicago as “Dick Daley’s town. Uncultured and parochial…not an Athens, neither a Rome, nor a London, and never a Paris” (Rakove 1976: 41). In 2003 Mayor Daley II had the street level bus stops and rail entrances redesigned to match those in Paris. What happened in between, how did local politicians drive this process, and how has Chicago politics changed?
Our concern is the role of government and public policy in the cultural transformation of Chicago. This is important as most past work on urban culture and cultural policy has focused on policy and economics, a tendency encouraged by the professional standards of organizations like the International City Managers Association (ICMA, website) and its more specialized counterparts, as well as academic disciplinary specialization. In Chicago, however, power and politics are paramount. These issues may be muted elsewhere as policy actors and analysts alike attempt to frame their work as rational deliberation. By contrast, the Chicago case provides a model that allows us to see personal rivalries, ambitions, and connections that drive local policy.

The only major American city with a historically Catholic political majority, Chicago stands out for its past emphasis on clout (aka “juice”), with individual personalities vying for political power and willing to use city resources to sustain and expand political success. To this end, the vast political machine of Mayor Richard J. Daley (Daley I, 1955-1976) wielded the classic tools of patronage jobs and contracts for specific ethnicities and neighborhoods, which have been more important than class. This everyday acceptance of ethnic/national/cultural distinctiveness led to a more anthropological cultural relativism and mutual tolerance embodied in the slogan, “You deliver your precinct, and I’ll deliver mine.”

His son, Mayor Richard M. Daley (Daley II, 1989 to 2011) operated in a world where such clientelist tactics, while not extinguished, were much less effective. But the Chicago tradition of pragmatism, personalism, and localism persisted. Daley II responded to this altered landscape in a vigorous and innovative way, utilizing the arts, entertainment, parks, and amenities to build support among his new, more cosmopolitan, educated, younger, and affluent citizens. And, in
good Catholic, non-ideological form, Daley learned how to give this constituency what it wanted – flowers, theater, bike paths, green buildings, and music. Simultaneously traditional ethnic groups “got theirs”: from blues to Celtic festivals. The result is a dramatic transition, the high points of which we recount below, from the Political Machine to the Entertainment Machine.

DALEY I AND THE NEW SOCIAL ISSUES

The elder Mayor Daley understood social issues as part of the New Deal legacy. For him they meant concern for the “common man,” helping the disadvantaged, providing jobs and support for basic economic needs. His speeches often included a nod of thanks to the New Deal Democratic program, the policies of which he might illustrate with a concrete example chosen for his specific audience, perhaps a hospital or an urban-renewal project for that neighborhood. Here social and fiscal issues strongly overlapped, consistent with New Deal Democratic ideology (Andersen 1979; Rundquist, Miranda, and Tunyavong 1991). Yet if he referred to the big themes of the national New Deal, “Da Mayor” did so plainly, with a grammatical eccentricity that out-of-towners sometimes found amusing. He would also never forget to thank, by name, those who had helped him in that locale, including precinct captains and aldermen. City officials reciprocated by ending their public statements with “God bless Mayor Daley.”

Though Daley I did invest in public art – for instance, the Chicago Civic Center as well as public sculptures by Picasso, Calder, and Chagall – he took a strong stand against the 1960s new social movements and their core concerns with more citizen-responsive, egalitarian, multicultural, and tolerant politics that put environmental, feminist, lifestyle and quality of life issues center stage.
He did of course “address” the new social issues in the late 1960s – with a vengeance. When the agenda of the future was paraded by picketers before the August 1968 Democratic National Convention (DNC) in Chicago, Daley’s reaction – consistent with Chicago’s common-man approach and neighborhood pride – was to call the cops and drag the protestors away. This horrified the national television and print journalists in town for the convention, who played up the conflict between the unruly protestors and the mayor.

Daley’s actions during the ‘68 DNC unwittingly sewed the seeds of some of the deepest changes in Chicago’s history. His authoritarian style sparked multiple conflicts, which brought major new developments. The general pattern of these changes can be summarized as a decline in hierarchy and a rise of more egalitarian political relations. Slowly and steadily, the picketers outside the 1968 DNC have been invited in to City Hall and their programs pursued – through visible appointments of women and minorities, a new language of multiculturalism, programs like set-asides for minorities and women contractors, and greening of the city with new trees and flowers. This is not to say that every movement has achieved its goals. The key point is that over time, as minority movement ideals become broadly majority concerns, political leaders respond to them, with major consequences for local cultural policy.

FRAGMENTED POWER, EMERGENT NEW ISSUES: BILANDIC AND BYRNE

When Mayor Daley passed away in 1976, the Democratic machine began to fragment between competing interests. In fact, Michael Bilandic was selected as his replacement in large measure because “he had practically no profile of his own” (Suttles 1990: 139). His tenure was short,
marked by the steady rise of organized opposition from the media, civic groups, and rival government agencies. A fractured party meant more reliance on public support and less on party connections. In this context, the arts would prove useful politically. While weakened authority hindered his ability to accomplish all that he planned, Bilandic’s greater dependence on general public approval led him to initiate several key projects including Chicago Fest, Navy Pier, and The Chicago Public Library.

Jane Byrne, even though she rose through Daley’s machine, ran against Bilandic on a reform agenda. Her victory seemed to validate a cautious and uncomfortable alliance of racial minorities and reformers. But once in office, she reconverted government offices into “funnels for patronage.” One of her many reversals involved Bilandic’s Chicago Fest. She first sought to cancel Chicago Fest but she pragmatically and “characteristically did a 180-degree turn and adopted the event as her very own, …. [ordering] her Special Events office to come up with spectacles like it.” (Davis 1995: 22). And in 1978 she started the percent for art program designating a portion of funds for new and renovated buildings to pay for public art – inspired by national examples. By requiring new buildings to have more sidewalk space, she also made possible the sidewalk cafes that expanded exponentially after her administration.

These policies all helped to enliven street life and create a downtown that is more visible to the affluent. These were centered first in the tourist and convention areas of the city, and over time broadened to such events as Chicago Fest, which in turn inspired related Lakefront festivities, typically linked with Chicago’s ethnic traditions – like the Blues and Gospel Festivals, Latin Music Festivals, and Celtic Festivals. Many included free concerts by top stars in Grant Park,
and were much appreciated by low-income Chicagoans. This inaugurated a trend, actively pursued by Daley II, of using public music festivals to generate allegiance through consumption and leisure for all.

**CULTURAL POLICY UNDER HAROLD WASHINGTON: THE CITY OF CHICAGO CULTURAL PLAN**

Jane Byrne was explicit about introducing certain issues to Chicago politics, which included issue specific women’s organizations as well as a newfound emphasis on consumption and lifestyle within the city. The arts and culture, the aesthetics of street life and public festivals, were major legacies that mushroomed thereafter. But Harold Washington’s victory in 1983 shook Chicago to the core. Initially a machine bit player, Washington converted to the cause of reform in large measure due to political expediency (Green and Holli 1991). His resources came almost completely from black individuals and businesses, who were traditionally separated from the broader machine structures. In addition he was elected by a diverse coalition of non-Catholics: Protestant-heritage “lakefront liberals,” Hispanics, Jews, and an overwhelming majority of Chicago’s African-Americans

Washington and his advisors created a reform agenda to match their seemingly prophetic rise to power. One pillar of the agenda was the formation of Chicago’s Department of Cultural Affairs, and with it, its first-ever comprehensive cultural plan (CCP). The plan was a landmark document. Joining a newly prioritized attention to culture with classic Chicago themes, it aimed to incorporate culture into “all aspects of municipal planning” (CCP, website). First and
foremost, it was ambitious, stating: “The Chicago Cultural Plan is without precedent in its scope and the grassroots process by which it was crafted. It took shape from the recommendations and observations of thousands of Chicago citizens as well as hundreds of cultural, civic and community groups” (CCP, website). Second, it stressed the strong charismatic individual in typical Chicago fashion, opening the “Statement of Principles” by averring: “The individual artist is at the foundation of our cultural heritage” (CCP, website). Yet, continuing the equally strong Chicago tradition of rooting and tempering individual action in ethno-cultural soil, the plan itself is presented by its authors as an expression of the collected and multiple cultures of Chicago’s neighborhoods and ethnicities. Cultural Plan meetings were held in 65 Chicago neighborhoods and citywide meetings were held with Latino, Asian, and Native American artists as well as representatives of major downtown cultural institutions.

The Plan proposed a number of specific initiatives. These included streamlining decision-making within the Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA), strengthening its role in city governance structures and integrating into Illinois Arts Agencies; commissioning studies about the economic impact of the arts in Chicago; enhancing culture’s role in the city’s tourist attraction programs; creating cultural incubator programs; offering city buildings at reasonable rates for use by artists as well as rezoning spaces as live-work; increasing grants to arts groups; expanding the Chicago Cultural Center, and many others. The plan was and is an inspiration for many other cities.

Yet very little of the plan was implemented during Washington’s tenure. Indeed, on nearly every front, his agenda was viewed through the Chicago looking glass, as “rewarding a new set of friends and punishing a new set of enemies” (Ferman 1996: 141). Throughout his term, a group
of white machine aldermen opposed him at every turn, blocking nearly every reform that could not be implemented by executive order.

Fred Fine, the first DCA commissioner, tendered his resignation on April 8, the day after Harold Washington was reelected. To replace him, the Mayor appointed Joan Harris, the former chairwoman of the Chicago Opera Theater, who also served on the board of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the Museum of Contemporary Arts, and Urban Gateways. Harris, as the Chicago Tribune reported, was “convinced that city government must remain a player, though a minor player, in funding Chicago's many nonprofit arts institutions” Her main vision was the “modest but essential” goal of “setting the tone and image for the city’s cultural aspirations” (Christiansen 1989). This is a far cry from the soaring visions of the plan; many of its aspirations were indeed ground up in the gears of the old machine. But it did provide the framework and new rules of the game for what would follow.

**DALEY II AND THE RISE OF CULTURE**

The 1980s and 1990s marked a monumental shift in Chicago’s government, perhaps more than in all previous decades of the twentieth century combined. This bold claim may seem surprising. Was the city not governed by a mayor named Daley, as it was some fifty years earlier? The two Daleys looked and talked alike – Richard J., the legendary Boss, mayor from 1955 to 1976, and Richard M., in office from 1989 to 2010. How could they be so different?
Chicago’s changes were camouflaged by an outdated image of the city, its citizens, and in particular its conservative leaders. What changed? The lifeblood of Carl Sandburg’s “City of the Big Shoulders” was heavy industry, production, and growth; its citizens were mostly blue-collar. Industrial organization once followed practices of strict seniority, few pay differentials by individual achievement, and promotion from within.

Post-industrialism turns this on its head. National and global competition and precise communication permit contracting out to small firms globally. Local and “particularistic” social relations are partially replaced by more abstract and distant ones. Building on mathematical models of risk pioneered at the University of Chicago, the Board of Trade has emerged at the core of a network of futures and options markets that extends around the globe. But if the Board of Trade symbolizes Chicago’s core position in global finance, we stress that the city’s largest industry is no longer slaughtering, or steel production – or even finance. It is entertainment and tourism (Clark 2012 provides more statistical detail). Indeed, the most visited park in the entire United States is the Chicago Lakefront; it has far more visitors than the Grand Canyon (although many are from nearby). Often in stark contrast to their preconceptions, visitors are struck by the attractiveness of Chicago’s parks, architecture, and boulevards, lined with new flowers, shrubs, benches, public art, and wrought iron fences. Chicago is a leader among US cities in devising ways to convert brownfields into usable property, which new industries and housing can use productively. Old parking lots surrounding hundreds of Chicago public schools were converted into small parks and playgrounds, and decorated in distinctive ways in the 1990s. Catering to its new “ethnicities,” Chicago now hosts Lollapalooza and Pitchfork, two of the world’s largest urban pop music festivals.
At the same time, Daley II sought to broaden his political base to incorporate Hispanics, African-Americans, gays, young urban professionals, environmentalists, and many other constituencies. His speeches added references to public goods like “trees, bicycle, culture, and entertainment” (Pasotti 2009; Banuelos 2009; Feron 1999). By marching in the Gay Rights Parade, he marked this new commitment. Narrower ethnic-neighborhood visions persist as does classic clientelism. But these are now complemented by a political, civic, and ecological vision of the entire region, where political leaders can work together rather than just fight. Regional civic groups like Open Lands have developed programs targeted to central city neighborhoods, many funded by local businesses.

**CULTURAL POLICY AS PRAGMATIC POLITICS**

Daley II’s family history and personal style made him seem an unlikely candidate to institute these sweeping aesthetics and consumption-driven changes. Yet that same history made him into a shrewd politician who would not let ideology interfere with good politics. If he saw that planting flowers and consolidating Chicago’s theaters into a downtown “Broadway in Chicago” made political sense, it was because the rules of the game and the facts on the ground were changing. Important forces had been at work for some years, eroding the machine's popularity. For instance, a detailed study by Thomas Guterbock (1980) of a stalwart machine alderman on the North Side found that many residents did not care about free garbage cans or similar small material incentives.
New organizations and styles that sprang up after the 1970s had diffused more widely, from block clubs and environmental action groups to women’s, gay, and other new social movements. It was essential to these groups’ independent self-image that they not be dominated by a machine hierarchy, but instead be democratically and consensually run by their members. Globalization, rising cosmopolitanism, education, and media use among typical citizens heightened such concerns. While Mayor Daley II was widely seen as having been carried to office in 1989 by the regular Democratic Party this was not the case, and in a few short years, he increasingly relied on the media instead of the traditional army of precinct captains. Television coverage in the 1980s intruded into the inner sanctum of the Chicago City Hall, the Council Chambers. Visitors to Chicago would comment for instance that they knew all about that night when Mayor Washington’s successor was chosen, since they had seen it on TV in Norway! This in turn increased the consciousness by the mayor and council of their worldwide audience, as non-Chicagoans became part of what sociologists call a “reference group.” That is, leaders would not just ask, “what do Chicagoans think of this vote and of me,” but also “what do others outside Chicago think.” As world trade, tourism, and related global forces rise, they have helped change Chicago’s political rules.

Media advertising and efficient service delivery increasingly drove politics in Chicago in the 1990s, and contributed to displacing the regular Democratic Party from the lives of individual citizens. If the general analytical trade-off was between the strong political party and the individual citizen, the intermediaries were the neighborhood associations. When the machine was strong, it co-opted or destroyed these (Ferman 1996). Daley II reversed this process by
elevating independent neighborhood associations. One way of signaling this was by improving
neighborhood parks and sidewalks. The signs announced the change. That is, decades back, the
most casual visitor to Chicago was struck by the hundreds of signs all over the city whose
bottom line read “Richard J. Daley, Mayor.” Under his son, many sparkling new signs proclaim
individual neighborhoods, local associations, and block clubs. These are one visible symbol of a
general trend toward more “public goods” rhetoric and policies, such as crime-fighting,
education, and quality of life amenities (Feron 1999; St. John 1999), together with a more
neighborhood approach.

Most important for this chapter, however, is the fact that this shift led Daley to wholeheartedly
embrace the notion that his new political environment required supplementing production
concerns with consumption and aesthetic issues. Few of Daley’s initial public statements address
these issues. The mayor discreetly added occasions like opening night theater performances to
his social itinerary. It was easier to sell these types of policy in Chicago subtly. Because Mayor
Daley II appealed to common Chicagoans with the style and language of his father, some cultural
changes have seemed disconcerting. Take for instance the traditional white police who objected
strenuously, although informally, to the mayor’s explicit emphasis on minority hiring, a multi-
cultural emphasis in city programs, aesthetics, and service to citizens. Consider too shifts in
Navy Pier. In earlier plans it was to be supported primarily by commercial sales to individuals,
i.e. more separable goods. Harold Washington wanted it to be a more public good, a more
aesthetically-driven edifice with fountains and vistas, open to pedestrians to consume freely.
Indeed, Navy Pier became Chicago’s number one tourist spot, attracting millions of visitors
annually after it was reconstructed in the 1990s. It joined high and low, with cotton candy
vendors outside the Chicago Shakespeare Theater.
Seeking to unravel the sources driving amenities by Mayor Daley II, we interviewed such knowledgeable informants as David Doig, active in many amenity policies in the City’s planning department before becoming Commissioner of Parks (see Clark 2012). Asked why, his first answer was “the mayor has been traveling, visiting places like Paris, bringing back specific ideas and policies.” Alderman Mary Ann Smith became a citywide leader of aesthetic/consumption issues in the late 1990s, traveling to the West Coast and to Germany and Scandinavia to bring back slides, which she then showed to citizens. She summarized specific ideas in memos to the Mayor, who endorsed many of them, such as a campaign to add greenery to rooftops in 2000. Her assessment was that it simply took a few years at the beginning of his administration to get the more basic things in order, like a campaign against rats in alleys, and converting brownfields left by old polluting factories, before the more specifically aesthetic might take off.

If Washington started Chicago’s Department Cultural Affairs (DCA), Daley pursued cultural policy with a vigor that made Chicago internationally prominent. The specifics are summarized in changes in arts and culture funding (Fig. 1). In the pre-Daley years, the DCA was the main municipal arts and culture organization. In 1989, Daley transferred the duties of festival planning and funding from the DCA to the new Mayors Office of Special Events. Daley aligned his own political reputation more closely with cultural services.

These policies are documented dramatically in budgetary commitments. We have assembled for the first time culture and arts spending by the multiple overlapping governments in the Chicago area, which shows a significant increase through the 1990s, albeit flattening around 2005. This is
FIGURE 2.1: How Chicago Funds the Arts Under Political Leadership

NOTE: The separate sources of arts funding join in the Total, but the jump in the Total after 2003 is due mostly just to including Parks. Earlier Parks data were not reasonably accessible. These are approximations since there are indirect costs that may be reported in other categories, like retirement.
government spending only totaled about $80 million when we sum the City, Parks District, and related budgets. This data was complex to assemble as multiple overlapping governments support culture and the arts. The Donnelley Foundation commissioned a report on the arts and culture non-profits in the Chicago area, which found that they spent a total of some $755 million 2004 of which $428 million was “unearned”. This is not far from the US average, where 13 percent of nonprofit arts agencies funds come from government (National Endowment for the Arts 2007). By contrast 52 percent of local culture is funded by local government in French cities (the Ministry of Culture provides less than 15 percent, and private contributions are almost zero.) We focus on government spending, but the private-public partnership leverages all sources. Civic leaders, foundations, and businesses are major cultural supporters, and Daley II worked with them actively on culture.

Other significant changes in policy were two revisions of the Chicago Cultural Plan in 1994, led by his “Global Culture Czar,” Lois Weisberg. First, illustrating the rising importance of neighborhood groups (rather than the Democratic Party), was a focus on development in neighborhoods as well as downtown Chicago which led the DCA to increase the number of grants through the Neighborhood Arts Program and Community Arts Assistance Program. Second, illustrating Chicago’s new global vision, the revised plan added a new section on “International Programs” aimed at international tourism. This led to the expansion of Chicago’s Sister Cities program under the DCA, as well as introducing the Chicago Artists International Program and adaptive reuse of the historic Water Tower as an international visitor welcome center. This was supported by civic groups like Global Chicago.
MILLENIUM PARK AND THE CHICAGO WAY OF CULTURAL POLICY

The most dramatic new amenity in Chicago, however, was clearly Millennium Park. It is critical here for several reasons. It was promoted as “Chicago’s Eiffel Tower,” it redefined the city’s global image, it was a huge ambitious project where public and private resources joined culture in new ways.

The site of Millennium Park was once a drab field adjacent to Grant Park. Now it is a cultural meeting place and global destination. What is striking about Millennium Park from a user’s perspective is how its public arts are used by Chicagoans from all backgrounds and neighborhoods. “The Crown Fountain” by James Plensa features rotating giant images of typical Chicagoans. Every five minutes or so they open their mouths and out gushes water. On hot summer days, children of all types gather underneath waiting for the fountain to spit. “Cloudgate” aka “The Bean” by Anish Kapoor – a giant highly polished stainless steel object shaped like a kidney bean – reflects the city to the viewer in an infinite regress of images, encouraging a view of the city and its residents as in process, flux, and formation – a far cry from the classic images of stability, locality, and familiarity.

The central attractions in Millennium Park all bear the names of their private donors: The Jay Pritzker Pavillion, Boeing Galleries, Harris Theatre for Music and Dance, and Mc Donald’s Cycle center. Donations, along with revenues generated by the below-ground parking garage, were key to building the Park, as Daley promised to do so without spending a dime of taxpayer
money. Timothy Gilfoyle (2006) has documented the inner workings of the massive project. Upholding this “no-taxpayer-money” commitment was one of Daley’s primary political concerns and a way of avoiding criticism, especially from the Chicago Tribune. Site choice was another way to avoid opposition: Millennium Park was built in a traditionally non-residential area, limiting opposition, since no vocal community groups existed.

To coordinate Millennium Park’s “aesthetic enhancements,” Daley tapped John Bryan, CEO of Sara Lee, as his key fund-raiser and civic leader. Bryan was an ideal choice – respected by the Chicago corporate elite, he also had strong ties to Chicago’s major cultural institutions as Chair of the Art Institute and a Trustee and the University of Chicago. Bryan also had a track-record of success, raising more money for renovations to Chicago’s Lyric Opera and Orchestra Hall than had ever been donated by a business community for a local cultural project (Gilfoyle 2006). At the same time, Bryan was a prime representative of the new social issues, with a reputation for having broken down gender and racial barriers within Sara Lee (Gilfoyle 2006). These specifically aesthetic, social, and lifestyle concerns gave Bryan considerable clout with local environmental and neighborhood groups. This stated goal of sustainability and environmentalism reduced the desire or need for interest groups to oppose the projects (Stevenson 2007). At the same time, the star power of Frank Gehry – “acquired” by the Pritzker family’s efforts – was enough to keep the civic group Friends of the Park from invoking Chicago’s historic ordinances against buildings in its lakefront park space. Here we see masters in the culture of clout at work, applying old tricks within the new rules and among the new local actors.

Bryan was able to raise over $230 million for the project. In a 21st century cultural version of
Chicago-style neighborhood/personal politics, he divided up the space into a series of regions (i.e. neighborhoods). Donors were given considerable input into the art and design of their particular spaces, and, more or less, Daley gave Bryan free-reign in this process. This gave the Park that very pluralistic patchwork feel distinctive of Chicago’s broader mosaic of neighborhoods. Furnari (2010) shows in network analyses how they divided along aesthetic lines, some more civic/citizen-engaged, others more physical/garden oriented, even while collaborating. Each brought distinct resources: money, contacts, new public art objects, and multi-use buildings combined synergistically.

The list of donors includes many prominent Chicagoans, including Oprah Winfrey. Though the financial coalition was diverse, most gifts came from the finance sector and Chicago’s old-guard industrial corporations – that is, from outside traditional growth machine interests like real estate and development. What held this group together, led by Bryan, was their shared membership in most of Chicago’s philanthropic, civic, and artistic boards. Indeed, the arts groups in Chicago join many of its top business leaders, who see each other at dinners, fund raisers, symphonies, art shows. Though clearly these leaders were concerned with growth, they were also motivated to create a world-class facility that would push aesthetic boundaries, while Daley was interested in harnessing their connections, talents, and resources to stamp his name on a revitalized and more inviting, open, and multi-cultural downtown. The specific policy and funding decisions they made featured pro-environment, openly participatory, cultural goals. Before Millennium Park, the most dramatic joining of these was Richard Franke’s Chicago Humanities Festival, downtown, on and off campus at the University of Chicago.
In Chicago, one can find, as in the past, more narrow, open business conflicts, such as between new gondoliers and older barge haulers in the Chicago River, where Mayor Daley II mediated and encouraged a view that the river should be open to all users. How many mayors can speak of diversity with these two as examples? What could be a sharper marker that culture has been “institutionalized” into the normal life of normal Chicago politics? And Daley quipped further that he hoped the Chicago River would soon have more excitement than the Seine. New rhetoric, impossible in old Chicago, which would have blushed at any comparison to Gay Paree.

CONCLUSION: CULTURAL POLICY IS A POLITICAL OUTCOME

Over the last half century, culminating in Daley II, Chicago’s leaders have thus increasingly adopted policies that reflect three changes: more public goods, more managed growth, and more amenities. The Chicago case is thus ideal for highlighting the deeply political character of cultural policy, which analysts and policy-makers all too often misrepresent as a pure exercise in non-political planning.

Indeed, Chicago machine politicians were masters of the political sphere, sending precinct captains into neighborhoods in order to know what their clients wanted. The new entertainment machine continues these practices, but also on a different, expressive, level. Chicago is now host to not only ethnically-rooted music festivals like the Blues or Celtic festivals, but Lollapalooza and the indie music Pitchfork Festival. If Daley I’s power hinged on skilled precinct captains who knew what their people wanted, Daley II inaugurated a style of power that hinges on skilled cultural affairs officers sensitive to what indie music fans, environmental activists, jazz aficionados, and foodies like, plus other elements of an increasingly differentiated and refined
domain of consumption. Fleury (2007:180) shows that sensitive managers similarly built the Beaubourg Center into a powerful scene, by so engaging participants, that citizenship is experienced as an identity in public space. Beaubourg attracts over five times the number of visitors as the Eifel Tower. Chicago’s Millennium Park in this respect is closer to Beaubourg than the Eiffel Tower in joining multiple cultural events in adjacent public spaces, from sculpture to ice skating to opera. New mayor Rahm Emmanuel has made producing a new Cultural Plan one of his first and most publically broadcast policy goals, with new support for local and neighborhood musicians and music venues reportedly at its center.

The news is that citizens are no longer (only) moving to the Paris Latin Quarter or New York’s Greenwich Village to find the arts. You can now stay in Iowa City. There are all sorts of artistic, bohemian, colorful, and diverse neighborhoods in small and mid sized towns across the US and elsewhere. These are entertainment machines of a new sort that work alongside the traditional growth machines. Analysts and policy makers can learn from the Chicago case: how cities with weak cultural traditions can dramatically transform themselves, without violence, in more profound ways than some nations where elites have proclaimed Revolution.

REFERENCES


Chicago Cultural Plan, Online. Available HTTP:  


ICMA Code of Ethics. Online. Available HTTP:


The Theater Loop. (2009) Online. Available HTTP:

In 1986, direct mayoral elections were introduced throughout Colombia with the passage of Law 11, which was enforced beginning with the municipal elections of 1988 (until then the mayors had been named by the state governors, and the mayor of Bogotá by the president). The 1991 constitution weakened parties and allowed the emergence of independent candidates. Various mechanisms supported this outcome. Parties became free to endorse an unlimited number of candidates, thus undermining traditional ideological and programmatic coherence. Party endorsements were no longer necessary to enter mayoral races; rather, an independent candidate could enter the race upon collecting 50,000 signatures. Lowering electoral quotients meant that political entrepreneurs could gain access to Parliament with far fewer votes, thereby dispelling their incentives to negotiate. Municipal elections were no longer held on the same day as other elections, undermining the customary advantage of traditional parties in coordinating mobilization. Finally, ballots were no longer printed and distributed by parties in front of polling stations, a practice that required an army of distributors and undermined political competition.

The weakening of parties was compounded by the effects of Decree 1421, implemented in 1993 to alter the organization of municipal administration. The Decree separated legislative and administrative functions, putting an end to co-administration. This undermined councilors’ traditional channels of political and bureaucratic pressure and their ability to influence the
mayor. The mayor also gained complete authority over the appointment and dismissal of the heads of administration. His powers were further strengthened by the removal of city councilors from boards of directors of public service companies, which concentrated the largest share of the municipal budget (Fernandez de Soto 1995). As the council played a lesser role in appointments, the mandate among management lengthened from an average of a few months to a full three-year term (Gilbert 2006). Several functions were transferred to the authority of the mayor, providing the power to overcome political stalling or blockades, pass district development plans, and territorial organization plans by decree. The Decree also laid out a fiscal reform that increased revenues for the city: tax receipts nearly quadrupled between 1990 and 2003 (from $200 million to $750 million), and the city’s credit rating improved substantially (Montezuma 2005). These changes opened the way for new and innovating actors in the political arena.

CULTURAL AGENTS REVOLUTIONIZE AN ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN

As a result of these changes, the 1994 election produced unprecedented results and led to a dramatic shift in the relationship between citizens and local government. Antanas Mockus, a philosophy and mathematics professor, was dean of the National University of Colombia in 1993. He was asked to resign because he had mooned unruly students during a meeting, an event taped and broadcast on national television. This provocative act attracted public sympathy and the ex-dean was asked to run for mayor in the upcoming election. He agreed, realizing that the mayoralty offered a platform to pursue his educational aspirations, or as he put it, that “if I get into politics, I can do pedagogy on a large scale” (Interview, Mockus 2007). The theme of security and citizenship became the pillar of Mockus’s campaign.
The first draft of the platform filled fifteen floppy disks produced by fifteen academic working groups. With Raúl Barragán Noriega, professor of semiotics, Mockus’s right hand man in the 1994 election and his first general secretary, Mockus condensed that material into a six page document titled “Citizen in Formation” (Ciudadano en Formación). “Citizen in Formation,” also the title of the District Capital Development Plan that Mockus presented to the city council upon election, was a platform aiming to explicitly “transform political and citizen culture through pedagogic, communicative, and symbolic endeavors” (Pérez 2006: 20). The core of the platform was to shape public policy in relation to participatory civic engagement. This required improving “citizen culture,” defined by Mockus as “the set of shared attitudes, customs, actions, and minimum rules that generate a sense of belonging, facilitate urban coexistence, and lead citizens to respect common heritage and recognize their rights and duties” (Mockus 1995: 16). Mockus’s vision turned the classic Toquevillian logic on its head. No longer was good government the product of civicness – on the contrary, civicness would be the product of good government.

Mockus’s campaign revolved around four principles named the “No P,” meaning No Publicity, No Politics, No Money (plata), and No Parties. The party’s only funds were garnered by the proceeds from the sale of Mockus’s car, and were invested in spinning tops. Barragán used his semiotics expertise to translate Mockus’s complex message to voters: the normal spinning top (pirinola) has its faces denominated pay one, pay two, pay all, take one, take two, and take all. The last implies that the individual wins everything. Mockus changed the last face from “take all” to “all win” and distributed the spinning tops to voters, turning them from passive message recipients to active participants. All aspects of the campaign aimed to establish a direct
relationship between candidate and public. The small glass-fronted shop that served as headquarters, for example, was stripped of any posters in the first days of the campaign to demonstrate that Mockus was not going to engage voters with propaganda but just with straight talk. Running as an independent, Mockus obtained 64 percent of the vote winning in all twenty districts in Bogotá except one.

UNDERSTANDING CITIZENSHIP AS A CULTURAL CONSTRUCT

With the “Citizen in Formation” plan, Mockus sought to alter the relationship between the citizen and the law. His goal was the transformation of vexing security issues, which centered on “keeping common rules, having culturally rooted mechanisms of social self-regulation, respecting differences and complying with rules to process them; [and] also learning to reach, comply with and amend agreements” (Mockus 2002, 21). The basis for this intervention was the promotion of Citizen Culture (Cultura Ciudadana), which involved two interlocking dimensions. First, it required “reengineering” the link between morality, law, and culture. Second, because violence reflected a lack of adequate interaction, it required teaching and facilitating communication (Mockus 2004).

With regard to the first point, Citizen Culture sought to strengthen cultural and moral regulation; for example, the relation to public employees, respect for traffic signals and peaceful conflict resolution among neighbors. In the eyes of the mayor, cultural intervention was essential in achieving these goals. He wrote, “Co-existence would seem to depend mainly on the so-called rule of law. However, what is central is not exactly the law: it is the consistency between cultural
and moral regulation and the law.”

What is important is the justification for obeying or disobeying the law, or the example of others, or what is customary, or the only means of achieving the objective. Thus, the central focus is not precisely on the law, but on accompanying the law from the sphere of culture and morality. It is precisely where the law’s own force is not sufficient that the backing of ethical or cultural traditions and/or transformations is indispensable for achieving co-existence. Each time something is legislated, a (preferably voluntary) process of cultural and moral change should be triggered. To achieve this, the law that is produced should seem fair, at least to a majority of citizens (Mockus 2002: 33).

The implications were quite clear: coexistence required closing the gap between law, morality, and culture, thereby fostering a sense of disapproval for illegal actions on the part a disenfranchised citizenship that had little respect for traditional top-down authority.

Citizen Culture was intended to address another issue: improving communication in order to undermine violence. Inspired by Jürgen Habermas’s communication theory, Mockus explained conflict as “caused or exacerbated by restrictions on communication” (Mockus 2002: 26). Because physical violence is a form of communication, the role of government was to introduce citizens to alternative modes of expression. The objective was “to empower as much as possible the communicative competence of individuals and groups to solve civically conflicts and to provide expression to new forms of nonconformity that can substitute physical violence” (Martin-Barbero 2005: 303).
In Mockus’s approach, changes in civicness would come from top-down social engineering, and such socialization was in fact a key responsibility of government. According to the new policy paradigm, change required developing a sense of collective belonging, and building a collective vision: “Co-existence is also sharing dreams or, at least, managing to have compatible dreams. Dreams can come from the past, thus being endowed with authority, or may be born from contractual processes, from agreements recognized as such. In some way, the arts, and particularly the moral emotions provoked by the arts, help to hand down and express shared dreams” (Mockus 2002: 32): For this reason, Mockus argued that creativity is indispensable to democracies, as it allows for new solutions to long-standing fiscal and social tensions. According to this perspective, bad government was fundamentally a failure in imagination on the part of its officers. A prevalent mechanism was that of “interruption,” or “defamiliarization,” which induces surprise through artistic technique. The aim, according to Mockus, was learning to think counterfactually: “Without imagining the world otherwise, change is unthinkable. And thinking otherwise is an invitation to play” (Sommer 2005: 3). The “disturbing” interruptions, such as mimes to direct traffic or vaccinating children against violence, led citizens to reflect and challenge previous assumptions concerning what public engagement can look like. However, these interruptions alone were not sufficient. New forms of cultural communication also provided the glue for collective behavior by fostering the habits that citizens recognized as necessary for active civic membership.

Within Mockus’s policy regime, public space occupied a prominent role. Rocío Londoño, head of the Institute for Cultural Affairs throughout the second term, argued: “We wanted to start from
the activities in the city’s open spaces, because open spaces are the fundamental sceneries of citizenship. There is a concentration in the street, the squares, the parks, the avenues, the traffic, all is part of the daily expression of the citizens” (Interview, Londoño 2007). In both communication and budgeting, public space and citizen culture were connected to reducing crime through an approach that involved the fiscal activities of all government sectors. Mockus, inspired by Wittgenstein’s notion of language games, “changed realities by changing languages” (Interview, Mockus 2007). Paving a road in a poor barrio, for example, could support civic development because the community could better gather outside; or purchasing new motorbikes for the police was translated into showing respect for the law and thus promoting civicness.

In the promotion of civic belonging, Mockus also introduced the understanding that Bogotá had a complex and, in some sense, gritty heritage. Hence, a television series was sponsored to break with the idea that one could enjoy only the “pretty” quarters that sell Bogotá to tourists. The series of twenty episodes, called “Bogotá in Multiple Steps” and created by five directors, showed the “real city.” It consciously presented a sense of belonging and pride “not because Bogotá is a pretty city, but because it is an interesting city, because it’s worth the effort” (Interview, Londoño 2007). In the same context, one of the most successful slogans was “Bogotá coqueta” (Flirtatious Bogotá), which portrayed the city as ugly but seductive, encouraging citizens to “make Bogotá more attractive by changing citizen behavior, not by changing the city’s appearance” (Interview, Mockus 2007).
PROMOTING CIVICNESS THROUGH CULTURAL POLICY

An investment of $130 million, equivalent to 3.7 percent of the overall district investment budget, was dedicated to the first Citizen Culture Program (1995–1997). The funds were first invested in researching citizens’ living conditions, justice initiatives, and the revitalization of public space. For example, Paul Bromberg, chief of the Department of Cultural Affairs (Instituto Distrital de Cultura y Turismo) in the first Mockus mandate, contracted thirteen anthropologists to observe the littering patterns of citizens over the course of a week (Interview, Bromberg Zilberstein 2007).

On the basis of these findings, dozens of interactive street performances were carried out on the sidewalks of Bogata. The games were intended to project an image of efficient and honest government, seeking citizens’ trust through irony; for example, the mayor walking through the city dressed in a spandex superhero outfit. Others prompted citizens to express their frustration and anger through nonviolent communication. For instance, 350,000 referee-like cards showing a thumbs-up and a thumbs-down sign were distributed to motorists for them to use to express their approval or disapproval in symbolic fashion, with the aim of lowering road rage accidents. The cards were so successful that their use was extended spontaneously to everyday interactions. In addition to preventing violent confrontation, the cards caused citizens to reconceptualize their relationship with law-enforcement officials. Application and compliance with the law no longer constituted a top-down affair but rather became a vivacious exchange that put citizens in the front seat and turned them from passive rule abiders to active rule enforcers.
To regulate the relation between pedestrians and drivers – fundamentally an interclass issue – Mockus hired 420 mimes to enforce zebra crossings. The mimes, dressed like monks, discouraged honking. This approach was copied in Lima and even inspired municipal posters in London’s underground. The head of the Department of Cultural Affairs under the second Mockus administration explained the purpose of the mime program:

The mimes had the clear intention of producing what Bertolt Brecht called the distancing effect. If a policeman intervenes to prevent a bus from skipping the traffic light and stopping on the zebra crossing, it is very different from a mime doing the same. The mimes made the citizen become more conscious and aware. …It was a game, a typically playful artistic activity, but it empowered citizen conscience.

(Interview, Londoño 2007)

The approach was complemented by transit enforcement reform, which had suffered from an image of inefficiency and corruption (Cuervo González 2002). As the local transit police department was eliminated, and the national police took over, the municipality made an important investment by creating a university department called Training of Trainers (formador de formadores). Police could enroll in two-month courses on community leadership, community participation, and conflict resolution (Interview, Acero 2007). The goal of civic engagement and an integrated urban landscape produced a dramatic turnaround and police on bicycles became a common sight on the city’s bike paths.

The administration also launched an antigun campaign calling for voluntary disarmament. More than 1,500 weapons were melted down and made into baby spoons. In the month of the voluntary
decommissioning, the homicide rate dropped by 26 percent. The production, sale, and use of gunpowder for recreational purposes were forbidden. Liquor laws were also reformed and establishments serving alcohol were required to close at 1:00 a.m. Surveys suggest that these policies, albeit unpopular, had very high rates of compliance and ultimately of support (92 percent for the antigun campaign, 81 percent for the early closure of bars, and 77 percent for gunpowder restrictions) (Centro Nacional de Consultoría in Montezuma 2005).

Arguably the most dramatic result during the Mockus administration was the reduced homicide rate, which fell from 81 per 100,000 in 1993 to 35 per 100,000 in 2000. Over the course of a decade, Bogotá went from being the city with the highest murder rate in Latin America to displaying a rate far lower than the other large Colombian cities of Cali and Medellin, and lower than a number of cities in the United States and Latin America. The change can be explained by the investment in civic education, the antigun initiatives, reconciliation between antagonistic groups, peaceful conflict resolution, and more effective policing strategies. While some policies were the result of national intervention, in the case of Bogotá, the role of local government was pivotal in reaching these dramatic results (Martin and Ceballos 2004).

As the homicide rate fell, the government continued to enact high impact symbolic policies. Stars were painted on the streets to mark the spots were citizens had died in traffic accidents. The administration compiled statistics of the number of “lives saved” over the year through antiviolence policies, and the central cemetery produced a matching number of empty graves for
citizens to visually realize the policy impact. Shown on the news, this “disturbing performance … confronted in some way the banalization of death which Colombian society has been experiencing for decades” (Pérez 2006: 24). A memorable intervention was the symbolic vaccination against violence that involved 45,000 children and adults in a “city-wide performance-therapy against the ‘epidemic’ that had become a cliché for rampant aggression” (Sommer 2005: 2).

Mockus was driven by the conviction that the artistic approach could overcome sociocultural barriers better than any other. Because 80 percent of the population was at the margins of cultural activities, the budget was modified to make resources that were traditionally located in high-income neighborhoods (for example, the opera) more accessible to all. The Department of Cultural Affairs developed a regular offering of cultural events in the poorest areas, including cinema, dance, and music. It strove to end the division of high culture and popular culture and the perception that opera was for the rich, while the poor should be happy with street music. Large-scale festivals played a key role, as Londoño explains:

It was necessary to break cultural barriers that reflected the marked classism of Bogotá. Breaking social barriers required the production of spaces of interchange and interaction between citizens of different social classes. The events “Concert in the Park” reached this goal because they were events of the highest artistic quality. …[I]f you assure that you bring great international bands, with excellent organization and security, then everyone attends. And a stigma is broken. Art allows breaking sociocultural barriers like no other activity.

(Interview, Londoño 2007)
Persuading voters of Citizen Culture also required a completely new relationship with the media. In Colombia, the media traditionally fed the fear, resignation, and pessimism of a “desperate metropolis” (Martin-Barbero 2005). With its focus on drama, the media compounded the effect of violence and further undermined trust and a sense of civic belonging. One of the most striking results of the Citizen Culture program was the change in media coverage. The policies enacted by Mockus were so counterintuitive unexpected, and powerful they quickly turned into favorite news items: “Mockus understood perfectly that if he dressed as Chapulín Colorado [a cartoon character] and showed up on the street to interact with citizens, it would be very attractive for a newspaper ” (Interview, Santos Calderón 2007).

Mockus’s symbolic policies received extensive and overwhelmingly positive coverage by the media, leading to a symbiosis between the media and government. The media was also instrumental in communicating a new role to citizens – active partners rather than passive recipients. The mitigation of risk was not borne by the government alone but shared by all citizens. A vivid illustration of the interactive role of citizens, government, and media occurred in 1997. Because of a tunnel malfunction, the city faced substantial water shortages, which called for investment in a new water reservoir. Rather than increase supply, the administration turned to citizens to decrease demand. In several television appearances, the mayor explained the situation and provided consumption-saving tips. He even broadcast from the shower giving the audience water saving advice, in a supremely pedagogical exercise. The aim was a public realization that saving water was everyone’s responsibility and that savings could be achieved with a systemic shift in consumption habits. In the spirit of partnership, the population was kept informed, with
detailed and publicized weekly reports that fed the sense of a common goal and shared accomplishments. In the end, bimonthly consumption was cut from 53 to 40 cubic meters and the need for new investment was deferred by fifteen years.

**IMPLICATIONS OF CULTURAL POLICY**

Mockus’s focus on education, culture, and expertise also led to a new relationship with the bureaucracy, and influenced the selection procedures for high-level civic managers. This turned from a selection process feeding clientelistic networks to a selection process solely ruled by meritocratic concerns. More than 70 percent of new management appointments were outside of the mayor’s circle and selected from a circuit of people tied to national planning and universities. Mockus revolutionized management hiring within the mayoralty. One hundred fifty interviews were held to select the people for the top thirty positions. The interview process was standardized, transparent, and designed to fairly assess the capacity of each candidate. As a result, the new group of hires was coherent and highly motivated. Alicia Eugenia Silva, secretary of government in the first Mockus administration, remembers: “We were old, but we thought we could change things. We couldn’t change the world, but we could change Bogotá. We had never worked together before, but we shared a vision for the city and a basis and principles for politics” (Interview, Eugenia Silva 2007).

Citizen Culture extended into unexpected realms. For example, Mockus graced the cover of his 1996 budget with the slogan “Public Resources, Sacred Resources.” He encouraged citizens to
develop a sense of their stake in public finance and value honesty and participation in public budgeting and fiscal extraction. Taking a highly symbolic and playful approach, he introduced a consultative form of participatory budgeting in the twenty districts. Each citizen received coins and a card: she wrote on the card the most pressing need for the locality and deposited the coins in a ballot box with six transparent tubes, one for each policy area of the development plan.

The first Mockus administration (1995–1997) concentrated on a project of civic pedagogy that reshaped Bogotános’ public behavior and created a new level of trust in government. On that basis, Enrique Peñalosa (in office from 1997 to 2000) concentrated on more politically costly investments. His district development plan, called “For the Bogotá We Want” (Por la Bogotá que Queremos), introduced an integrated mass transportation system, a land bank, a district park system, a district library system, and substantial investments in public housing and infrastructure.

Upon reelection in 2000, Mockus faced depleted coffers because of the megaprojects undertaken by Peñalosa and the worst recession since 1929. When the district council refused to raise taxes, Mockus petitioned the population directly, asking for an extra 10 percent voluntary payment in a campaign called “110 Percent with Bogotá ” (110 percent Con Bogotá). In a most remarkable demonstration of popular support for his civic renewal program, in 2002 this campaign generated $500,000 (Rojas 2002) from approximately 70,000 taxpayers (Montezuma 2005).

Surveys suggested that Mockus and Peñalosa achieved remarkable results in terms of citizen approval, public perceptions of the city, and feelings of civic pride and belonging. As a result of rapid and uncontrolled urbanization, Bogotá is a heterogeneous city. This is evident in the fact
that 88 percent of survey respondents claimed to feel like Bogotános, despite only 43 percent of the population having been born in the capital. Sixty-five percent of the population felt proud or very proud of the city. More than 60 percent of respondents had a positive image of the mayoralty. These were critical shifts from the perceptions of the previous decade (Flórez 2005). Second, civic behavior improved. The most dramatic indicator was the reduction in homicides, from 81 per 1,000 in 1993 to 30 per 1,000 in 2002. The number of traffic accidents also fell from 29,595 in 2000 to 8,447 in 2005. Decreases were also observed in the number of people run over by cars, summons for traffic violations, alcohol-related deaths, and fiscal evasion. Additionally, the percentage of citizens who felt it was justified to disobey the law fell, as did the number of those in favor of carrying arms for self-protection (Instituto Distrital de Cultura y Turismo – Alcaldía Mayor de Bogotá 2003). Finally, citizens displayed increased attention to the transparency and efficiency of government and developed a more active stance, and the number of civic associations doubled.

The success of these cultural policies shaped new governance coalitions. Four consecutive mayoral elections were fought under the unusual banner of continuity, with the competition focused on which candidate could best re-invigorate the vision set in place. Thus, the cultural approach brought together political competitors. The innovative approach even turned the city into an international model for governance (Gilbert 2006).

Nevertheless, there are considerable drawbacks to this approach to government. Powerful symbolic communication and prominent cultural interventions in Bogotá were combined with
extensive institutional powers and produced mayoral figures that were larger than life. As a result, Mockus operated in isolation from the political debate. His own deputy mayor recognized the drawbacks of his governing style: “Antanas does not realize that democracy happens in the council, in the parliament, not with an elected prince. Democracy is down there! He did wonderful things, but this pro-tempore monarchy is not the democracy that we wish for. He corrected so much in Bogotá, but in exchange we lack a project of popular democracy” (Interview, Bromberg Zilberstein 2007).

Both Mockus and Peñalosa were mayors running elections in spite of parties. They perceived judicial and legislative institutions as unnecessary nuisances, and acted as the backbone of the political system, considering themselves uniquely responsible for “their” politics (Bromberg 2001). Thus while mayors gained strength and authority, the district council lost both. In the eyes of the citizenship, the council lacked accountability and a concrete mission. Only 58 percent of a survey’s respondents knew what the council was, and of those 77.6 percent had a negative image of the institution (Santos et al. 2001).

The council’s weakness presented troubling consequences for the quality and even the stability of democracy. These effects were clear to the political elites, who called for a reorganization of parties. Bromberg argued, “The alternative to parties, there is no doubt, is better parties. Not seeking to substitute them for a delegative or plebiscitary democracy” (Bromberg 2001). Thus reforms in 2003 addressed these shortcomings by introducing incentives for programmatic coordination and party discipline.
Another fundamental change that took place in 2003 was the successful entry in the mayoral competition of the new leftist party Polo Democratico Alternativo, which sharpened ideological divisions and undermined the previous possibility for a catch-all mayor. The new party, having to build alliances and support from scratch, brought back clientelism.

Thus the political landscape in the last decade has changed. After the second of Mockus’s mandates, which ended in 2003, mayors increasingly abandoned his message of citizen formation and returned cultural policy back to a marginal role. These mayors have also had less impact, enjoyed far less popularity, and returned to relying on clientelism. Samuel Moreno, elected in 2007, was suspended and stripped of his office in 2011 by the Office of the Inspector General for improprieties in the appropriation of city contracts.

In this case, the worsening in the quality of government can be explained by the return to party politics: innovating mayors like Mockus often emerge in a context of weak parties because such organizational and ideological crisis opens the space for outside reformers. Perhaps the fall of Moreno has opened a more modest window of opportunity for reform, in which parties, and thus the council, play a significant role. In 2011, leftist Gustavo Petro was elected on an anti-corruption platform. His cabinet formation was marred by controversy as Petro initially proposed independent, technocratic appointments to send a clear message of reform, but then picked candidates less likely to stir troubles for the new mayor. Mockus’s wife Adriana Córdoba was chosen for a key supervisory position, formally launching her long-awaited political career. However, even her appointment is far from marking a return to Mockus’s transformative cultural policy and pro tempore monarchy.
REFERENCES

Acero, H. Subsecretary for Security in the Department of Coexistence and Urban Security from 1995 to 2003 and a leading consultant in the police reform, Interviewed by author.

Barragán, R. Campaign advisor and government secretary in the first Mockus administration, Interviewed by author.


Bromberg, P. Head of the Department of Cultural Affairs in the first Mockus administration; acting mayor from 1996 to 1997, Interviewed by author.

Calderón, R.S. Codirector of the newspaper El Tiempo, Interviewed by author.


Londoño, R. Head of the Department of Cultural Affairs in the second Mockus administration, Interviewed by author.


Mockus, A. Mayor of Bogotá from 1994 to 1997 and from 2000 to 2003, Interviewed by author.


Silva, A.E. Government secretary in the first Mockus administration and general secretary in the second Mockus administration, Interviewed by author.

CHAPTER 4

Notes of Discord: Urban Cultural Policy in the Confrontational City

Arie Romein and Jan Jacob Trip

INTRODUCTION

Since 1945, in the first decades of post-war reconstruction in the Netherlands, local and national governments played a dominant role in urban cultural policy, in building up the physical infrastructure and in planning and programming. As a reaction, the previously significant role played by the Maecenas - well-to-do private persons who financially support artists or the cultural infrastructure without a strong profit motive - diminished. In Rotterdam, it had played this role since the mid-19th century with the growth of shipping and port industry (Hitters 2001).

In the late 1960s, new social movements – oriented toward the environment, education, housing, and culture - came on the scene in Dutch cities (Vermeijden 2001). Some criticized the small-mindedness of a scanty and solidified public cultural programming and began stretching standards towards non-conventionality and expressivity (Mommaas 2003). In addition, there was a trend towards democratization aimed at lowering barriers of entry for consumption and production of culture for specific groups in society, particularly young people. However, in spite of rather fundamental changes in cultural policy since the late 1960s, the dominant role of local and national governments remained undisputed. This dominance has diminished since the 1980s, with the start of a slow but steady transformation of culture as a policy field.
First and foremost, this transformation is due to the growing belief that culture is a driving force of urban economies. In the wake of the successful Bilbao Guggenheim, and the rise of authors such as Charles Landry (2000) and Richard Florida (2002), culture is now in the focus of urban policy makers as a factor of urban competitiveness. This has gone hand in hand with a retreat by urban governments into programming of frameworks and a tremendous increase of investments by private transnational corporations in expanding the local cultural infrastructure.

Culture has thus come to be regarded as fundamentally different in most Dutch cities for well over a decade. However, this does not involve a clear, consistent and undisputed trend towards cultural policy for the benefit of economic growth and development. In practice, there is more than a traditional coalition for growth consisting of entrepreneurial politicians and policy-makers, property developers and finance companies at work in cultural policy. Creative individuals, loose networks and coalitions in the cultural sector itself, third parties such as education and knowledge institutions, and social protest groups are important as well (Bell and de-Shalit 2011). Additionally, these are interchangeable and mutually constitutive with changing political agendas that arise from conflicts and governance arrangements. Urban cultural policies are geared in response to changing demands of highly diverse actors.

A significant body of research exists concerning the relationships between cultural policy and urban development, but “none has studied this relatively recent phenomenon within the context and evolution of urban cultural policy at large” (Grodach 2012: 81). As one of the first to explicitly emphasize this, Carl Grodach concludes in his study of Austin, Texas that cultural policy is subject to path dependency and that a fragmented set of cultural sector
interests inside and outside local government struggle to determine the direction of the policy agenda. In this chapter about the Dutch city of Rotterdam, we also place recent cultural policy within a wider historical trajectory. Further, we utilize a broad perspective by analyzing the evolution of cultural policy in the composite context of local economic transformation, social turmoil, and a drastically changing political culture at both the local and national level.

Rotterdam is a traditional manufacturing and seaport city. Although it boasts a seaport of global size and a remarkable modern high-rise architecture, it has struggled for over two decades to develop its service, cultural and tourism economies (Trip and Romein 2009; Noordegraaf and Vermeulen 2010). In fact, Rotterdam was the first Dutch city that tackled these challenges (Hartkoorn et al. 2011). Successes have been achieved indeed, but it still remains an uphill battle. High drop-out rates and a relatively lowly skilled labor force are a continuous source of great concern in this respect. In 2002, growing social tensions in the city caused a “revanchist” upheaval that put aside the decades-long Labor dominance in the city government (Uitermark and Duyvendak, 2008; Van Eijk, 2010). Thus, the Rotterdam case provides an opportunity to study the impact of a sudden “regime change” that brought about not just new politicians, but a whole different policy culture (Tops 2007: 68).

In order to structure our analysis, we use the policy philosophy model developed by Sabatier (1987) and applied to urban policy in the Netherlands by Vermeijden (2001). The model identifies three major components of a policy philosophy:

1. Normative core: the basic principles and guidelines of policy, consisting of values and axioms regarding the relationship between urban economic development, social and cultural trends, and environmental aspects, as well as on governance itself.
2. Policy core: composite of concepts, strategies, themes, programs, and plans through which the normative core is elaborated into policies for specific fields.

3. Secondary aspects: these include the legal, financial, administrative, and organizational frameworks for putting policies into practice.

Over the course of time, transitions occur from one policy philosophy to another. Vermeijden (2001) explains the transition from ruling philosophy A to initially subordinate B schematically by combining policy core and secondary aspects into a single “practical order” and distinguishing between a central and a peripheral position that both the normative core and the practical order can take in urban policy. In a stable situation, the normative core remains unchallenged, while its practical order is adjusted to changing realities in a piecemeal way. Due to the occurrence of more fundamental changes, this normative core can be pushed aside to the periphery of urban policy in favor of the normative core of what will become policy philosophy B. This new situation can be the effect of policy-oriented learning, but more often it is the result of changes in the political landscape, such as a dramatic election result. New policy measures necessitated by the new normative core gradually push the practical order of A to the periphery. This is what happened in Rotterdam and, more generally, the Netherlands during the past decade.

POLICY PHILOSOPHIES BETWEEN 1945 AND 2002


At the start of World War II, Rotterdam was a thriving transit trade city, a link between overseas markets and the industrial German hinterland. Rotterdam also earned an international reputation as a city of modernist architecture in the 1920s and 1930s. This all came to an abrupt end with the devastating bombing of the inner city on 14 May 1940 and the subsequent destruction of the port.

The first post-war policy philosophy in Rotterdam is labeled Working City (Van de Laar 2010) because reconstruction and expansion of manufacturing industry and, particularly the port, had absolute priority over reconstruction of the city’s residential and cultural functions. National and local governments, in close cooperation with the business community, worked towards large-scale reconstruction and further expansion of the port as a major economic motor. Reconstruction of the city itself was limited to rebuilding the inner city as a central business district according to modernist principles, including wide boulevards for motorized traffic. While Rotterdam attempted to base itself on an American model, the cultural infrastructure of theaters, clubs, cinemas and so on remained quite poor until the early 1970s due to a lack of public and private resources.

The cultural climate in the city improved significantly only in the late 1960s, with the opening of the De Doelen concert hall and a 60 per cent increase of public expenditure for culture (Van de Laar 2000: 550). The Rotterdam Art Foundation, founded in 1945 by the local government, played a significant role in this cultural revival due to its willingness to invest in new initiatives like the Rotterdam Film Festival. At this point, the Working City was
already destined to fail. Deindustrialization in the city led to structural economic and social decline. Furthermore, criticism by the local protest groups concerning the overemphasis on business development and the neglect of housing and cultural infrastructure, was growing. It was said that on many a night, “one could fire a gun in the inner city without hitting anybody.”

Under pressure from social movements, the Working City transformed radically into the Urban Renewal City (Vermeijden 2001). A new generation of Labor politicians took over local government in 1974 and ruled the city for more than a decade by means of single party governments. Underpinned by leftist interpretations of the city, the policy emphasis shifted from economic growth to quality of life. Under the umbrella of the 1970s’ Labor ideology of equality, the policy philosophy of the Urban Renewal City was a “small is beautiful” vision of urban development. The erection of small pavilions and kiosks, as well as decoration by murals in the inner city can be seen as a response to the modernist post-war reconstruction of the city. It was furthered by a policy to democratize consumption and production of culture, including small-scale amateur theater and music performances throughout the city (Krom 2010). Additionally, the ideological policy document Art Policy in Rotterdam of 1978 made art and culture part of social policy fields like welfare and education (Van den Bent 2011).

The Urban Renewal City, developed in a period of increasing unemployment and social decline, was the result of the combined impacts of deindustrialization, selective suburbanization and a national austerity policy. In underground artistic and cultural circles, growing aversion to the small is beautiful policy in the atmosphere of socio-economic decline were at the root of a rebirth of the metropolitan representation of the city in the 1970s (Van Ulzen 2007). For instance, punk and new-wave music scenes grew in Rotterdam more than
anywhere else in the Netherlands. More lasting, however, was the reaction to the “little people architecture”: the representation of Rotterdam as a metropolis of modern high-rise architecture started in the underground in the late 1970s (Van Ulzen 2007; Cusveller 2007) and has constituted one of the cores of the city’s cultural policy since the 1980s (Van der Klooster and Vollaard 2007).

The Rotterdam port and industrial economy had gradually recovered in the course of the 1980s. Nevertheless, local governments became slowly but steadily aware of the need for a transformation towards a post-industrial service economy, including a high quality cultural sector. It followed the “imagine of a metropolis” (van Ulzen 2007) that had started earlier in the city’s cultural underground. Many new venues and events were developed in the 1980s. Some groups of artists and cultural producers cooperated with local government in realizing these assets, but others criticized the successes of the new policy for its top down nature. Nevertheless, the growing size and quality of its cultural climate prompted the city to compete for the European Capital of Culture 2001.

The 1986-1990 local government, no longer monopolized by Labor, installed two grand committees to evaluate the urban development of the Urban Renewal City. Their conclusions were included in what would become a new policy philosophy - the Revitalizing City (Vermeijden 2001). The 1990 government coalition agreement The New Rotterdam presented an integral vision of economic, social, spatial and cultural developments that explicitly placed the city as an “international metropolis.” Boosted by the intensifying competition between cities worldwide, the city aspired to attract service industries, skilled professionals, and tourists.
In general, the equality ideology of cultural policy was replaced by economic objectives during the 1980s. This substitution brought about a further expansion of new entertainment venues and cultural clusters in the second half of the 1980s. One of the lasting initiatives was the foundation of the Rotterdam Film Fund to promote its film industry. The 1980s were also the start of renowned and flourishing underground house and dance clubs (van Ulzen 2007). Together with new high-rise residential and office buildings and the regeneration of derelict port and industrial areas, these cultural assets were the main components of several marketing visions of the city.

On the whole, the post-war cultural policies and cultural climate in Rotterdam up to the turn of the 1990s fabricated a narrative of the future for an international public. This had been visualized by grand plans, visions, and projects and was illuminated with statistical figures of an expanding high-rise skyline, cultural infrastructure and growing tourism industry, but had largely failed to build an urban culture that connected the present with the past, and residential groups with each other (Frijhoff, 1993; Van Haaren, 1993).

**THE CONFRONTATIONAL CITY**

Rotterdam not only had an “un-Dutch” urban skyline, it was also unique in the Netherlands in regards to the scale and intensity of urban problems at the end of the 1990s. The appearance of the city had changed radically with its new architectural flagships and office towers, but beyond this glitter it suffered from structural obstacles. The policy to restructure the urban economy still suffered from a strong path dependency on the port and industrial complex (Kloosterman and Trip 2004). It also headed the “wrong rankings” of Dutch cities on social development, for instance those of unemployment, drop-out, skill levels of the labor force,
poor social integration of ethnic and religious minorities, and safety in public space.

FIGURE 4.1: Seat Distribution in the Rotterdam City Council (45 seats) since 1974

Source: Becker et al. (2004: 16); COS/Municipality of Rotterdam, <www.cos.rotterdam.nl>

Within the context of growing social strain, the political status quo aroused growing protests. Labor (PvdA) had dominated both local parliament (City Council, Figure 1) and municipal executive (Mayor and Aldermen, Figure 2) since the end of World War II. Based on an ineradicable belief in the capacity of local policy to steer urban development, its aldermen revealed themselves to be entrepreneurial politicians with panoramic visions of the future Rotterdam. Simultaneously, they failed to develop an urban culture that connected the present with the past, and residents with one another (Frijhoff 1993; Van Haaren 1993). Feeling certain of its majority position, this political caste had developed a blind spot for the increasing social problems of deprivation and neighborhood degradation. To make matters worse, they had hardly noticed the eroding tolerance for cultural diversity on the part of the mainstream. Instead, those who voiced concern about these problems were increasingly
ignored. Some flagship projects of the Revitalizing City, such as the iconic Erasmus Bridge, gave feelings of pride to the local population (Doucet et al. 2010); however, criticism of local government became ever more fierce. Small wonder, then, that the 2002 municipal elections brought about a political landslide that pushed Labor party out of local government for the first time in the post-war period.

FIGURE 4.2: Aldermen and Mayors of Rotterdam by Political Party since 1974

![Bar chart showing the number of aldermen by political party from 1974 to 2010.](http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rotterdam)


The numerical dominance of Labor had decreased with the 1986 elections (Figure 1 and 2), and livability and public safety has received explicit policy attention since 1994. However, the latter had only resulted in a rather ineffective “merry-go-round” of projects, without operationalization, critical mass, coherence, or clear sequence (Van Groningen 2006; Tops 2007). In a climate of growing disaffection with Labor, a former professor of sociology, columnist, and populist politician Pim Fortuyn became increasingly popular in Rotterdam...
where he joined the newly minted local party Leefbaar Rotterdam (Livable Rotterdam; LR) in 2002. With his criticism of Labor arrogance and of its neglect of ethnic issues, LR convincingly won the 2002 local elections with 17 of the 45 council seats. After a period in which he successfully worked to build a local coalition government, Fortuyn was shot and killed by an animal rights activist in the town of Hilversum. This was a few days before 2002 national elections in which his Pim Fortuyn List (LPF) party was set to participate.

The 2002-2006 local government, with LR taking the majority, brought about a drastic change of policy. A new normative core of public safety and livability became the main guiding principle. This implied downscaling the scope of urban policy from grand metropolitan ambitions and multiculturalism to solving safety and livability problems in neighborhoods, streets and homes. The starting point of these policies posited that social problems were caused by the concentration of deprived, ethnic minority groups in certain neighborhoods (cf. Van Praag 2004). Formal discrimination - a legal offence - was avoided, but the slogan “color is not the problem, but the problem has a color” set off confrontational arguments and measures to discipline disadvantaged ethnic groups and to prevent them from further settling in problem areas. Forceful rhetoric was used to place problems of safety and livability in the spotlight, occasionally taking on militaristic undertones, including the language of “city marines,” “frontlines,” and “intervention teams.” The policy regime included programs to improve social cohesion and cultural integration in hot spots, but with the aim of social control rather than emancipation. Finally, the secondary aspects of policy aimed to restore the ties with the local electorate by introducing clear targets, implementation strategies and monitoring of results of policies, including accountability sessions in public.

Within the new normative core, cultural policy was of secondary importance. LR did not
claim, for instance, the post of the alderman responsible for cultural policy; this was granted to its right-wing liberal coalition partner (VVD). Insofar as the local government attached importance to culture it concerned cultural heritage, traditions, and historical canons of Rotterdam, (Gemeente Rotterdam 2004a). These were primarily cultural objectives valued by “Rotterdammers” who had lost connection with a local policy that had become increasingly focused on international competitiveness. The LR-led local government disapproved of subsidizing cultural expressions or projects it considered to be too experimental (“un-Rotterdam”), megalomaniac, or “elitist” (Rutten 2005: 75).

As part of the downgrading of culture in local policy, the LR-led government distanced the procedure of decision making from the public sector apparatus and significantly reduced its size. The public Rotterdam Art Foundation that had played a powerful role as organizer and initiator in the cultural field of the city was dissolved. Instead, a system was introduced in which cultural producers and institutions in the city have to apply for subsidies with the local government within the framework of its four-year cultural policy plans (Van den Bent 2011). As a consequence, stakeholders in the cultural sector became also competitors, thus shrinking the opportunities for underground initiatives based on cooperation.

An obvious exception to the diminished emphasis on culture was the selection of cultural and creative industries as a key sector for the city’s future economic policy (Gemeente Rotterdam 2004b, 2006). Here, the focus was on expanding four specific branches that considered to have high growth potential: architecture and urban design, product innovation (applied technology), audio-visual production (film and new media), and music.

The emergence of a new policy philosophy does not mean that there is no continuity. Several
existing axioms for urban development initiated by former governments were strengthened or expanded after 2002. City-marketers have branded Rotterdam as a World City, aiming to strengthen its international image as a place with excellent qualities of life. For example, the annual event calendar was further expanded with an agenda of securing top sports tournaments and the North Sea Jazz festival. Rotterdam was elected number one Festival City of the Netherlands in both 2004 and 2005, and of the world in 2010 (by the International Festivals and Events Association).

LR lost its status as the single largest party in local parliament with the elections of 2006 (Figure 1) and did not return in the municipal executive (Figure 2). Instead, it made Labor return as the dominant party with three aldermen in a central-leftist coalition. This did not mean that pre-2002 politics was completely restored, on the contrary (cf. Uitermark and Duyvendak 2008). It had become clear to Labor politicians that quite a few neighborhoods could no longer handle a continued influx of poor and almost illiterate immigrants who were poorly integrated into local society. However, local government’s confrontational rhetoric aimed at ethnic and Muslim minorities was substituted with the objective to stimulate their social participation, as it was explicitly stated in the new vision of the city’s cultural policy (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2007b).

The importance that was already placed on cultural and creative industries in economic policy by the LR-led government was further enhanced, but explicitly returned to an emphasis on international branding strategies (Gemeente Rotterdam 2007b). What is more, the cultural potential of the young multi-ethnic population of the city, in particular their music scene, was considered an opportunity from both social participation and economic perspectives. Focusing on Rotterdam as the “hiphop capital of the Netherlands” (Hart, 2009),
the aldermen for Culture and Participation sponsored several initiatives to support musical talent in the city. Overall, however, policy documents about how to stimulate the creative and cultural economy left little room for new initiatives in underground scenes: they are rather top down and business oriented with quantitative objectives for further growth rates of already popular branches (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2006, 2007a). In the current cultural policy document, entrepreneurship and independence of public funding of the cultural sector are explicit objectives (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2011).

**ROTTERDAM IN A NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE**

Local and national government have relatively strong ties in the Netherlands. Cities depend on national government for a large part of their funding. Moreover, national and local governments are related by personal ties along party lines. Hence, Rotterdam’s lobby had always been strong, for instance when the interests of its seaport were involved. This did not change significantly when LR entered the local government, since the other parties in the governing coalition and mayor Ivo Opstelten had strong ties to their political associates in national parliament and government (Van Groningen 2006; Tops 2007). Therefore, it was likely that the regime change that took place in Rotterdam in 2002 would have had its impact on national policy and politicians. What is more, the shift in policy philosophy in Rotterdam was accompanied by comparable, although more gradual, shifts at the national level. This made Rotterdam a marked forerunner in many aspects, generating ample interest in the national press and among other cities’ policy-makers (Noordegraaf and Vermeulen 2010: 521).

The most tangible example of this impact is the *Rotterdam Act* of 2006, a *lex specialis* which...
enabled local authorities to set an income threshold for inhabitants moving to deprived neighborhoods. Although the Council of State, the Netherlands’ supreme court in administrative law, pointed out probable conflicts with existing fiscal and housing law and even the European convention on human rights (RvS 2005), the proposal by Rotterdam’s local government was quickly adopted into national law. The decision was supported by a large majority in parliament, including Labor and left-wing liberals. Such a national status was not intended for the Rotterdam Code for good citizenship, also introduced in 2006. Nonetheless, measures such as this spoke to the intense uncertainty regarding public safety and social norms that emerged on the national level around this time. Many national politicians, particularly on the right, expressed their sympathy for the Rotterdam approach and its undeniable successes in creating a more “livable” city.

Indeed, the political discontent that induced the events in Rotterdam is by no means confined to that city. Local parties gained footholds in various Dutch cities in 2002, although none comparable to LR in size and radical focus. National politics, meanwhile, saw the rise and fall of Pim Fortuyn List (2002-2008), which also briefly entered the national government during 2002 and 2003, and the introduction of several similar movements. Particularly Geert Wilder’s Freedom Party (PVV) gained successes, culminating in 2010 with a win of 24 seats out of 150 in the House of Representatives (Statistics Netherlands). In the increasingly fragmented national political landscape, PVV represented a non-governing partner to the minority government of 2010-2012. Both parties take a conservative right-wing stance on immigration and public safety, and a populist stance on culture and cultural policy. They have developed certain informal relationships although the PVV is more radical in its position towards Islam and multiculturalism (Erlanger 2011) and other, what it calls, “leftist hobbies.”
Where does all this leave the cultural economy? In spite of strong relations between local and national politics, their cultural policy arenas are not necessarily identical, and may even be based on a different policy philosophy. For the last fifteen years, cultural policy on the national level has been shaped mostly by liberal parties who, like Labor in Rotterdam, regarded culture as an economic imperative. A more entrepreneurial approach toward the cultural sector, for instance, was initiated in 1999 to make it more productive and remunerative, and better connected to society (OCW 1999). More recently, a dedicated policy to stimulate the cultural and creative economy was introduced through two documents that connect culture and economy (EZ/OCW 2005, 2009). A less ideological, more common-sense view on the importance placed on culture gradually became prevalent. Indeed, national policies finally acknowledged the potential role of culture as an economic activity on its own.

Present cultural policy represents a significant break with the past. The perceived difference between high and popular culture once again has become a central element in the debate on culture policy; however, the traditional distinction is reversed, high culture now being in the underdog position. Current national politics displays an explicit disdain for presumed elitist culture, which is dismissed for being addicted to subsidy, alienated from popular taste and, by the PVV, for being a left-wing endeavor. In contrast, cultural expressions that are assumed to be “populist” are encouraged. Even the contents of cultural expressions such as television programs or exhibitions are now up for discussion. Examples include the recent motion to introduce a minimum percentage of Dutch-language songs on public radio (Takken 2011), or the continuous debate surrounding “leftish” television news shows. At the national level a unique ideological element seems to be involved, suggesting that cultural policy is more deeply affected by a shift in dominant normative core that precludes the local. In effect, a tendency exists – if only marginally – for the cultural climate to become less free, and for
culture to become politicized.

Although these processes are relatively moderate and gradual compared to other countries (Florida 2005; Heine 2011), the cultural sector in the Netherlands now faces an increasingly bleak political climate. These tendencies are exacerbated by the current economic downturn, which provides the national government with an argument to legitimate its policy agenda. Recently they announced a substantial rise of the VAT rate on entrance fees of cultural venues, with the exception of some popular sites such as cinemas and soccer matches. In addition, unprecedented and immediate cuts on the cultural budget have been announced, amounting to 200 million Euros in only four years. 125 Million of this is targeted at the cultural infrastructure itself (OCW 2011: 2), and it seems inevitable that orchestras, museums and theater companies will disappear, making the damage irreversible. However, the scale of these austerity measures is not the only departure from previous measures. Previous shifts in cultural policy have also included budget cuts; however, the firm belief in the intrinsic value of culture and the role of government as a subsidizer of the cultural sector was not up for debate. Now, more so than before, the cutbacks themselves seem to be ideologically driven, being part of the dominant normative core rather than of the secondary aspects where financial frameworks of urban policies are categorized under. Denying its economic value for urban development observed by studies like the comprehensive quantitative analysis by Marlet (2009), in particular “elitist culture” seems to suffer more because of the prevailing political climate.

The implicit involvement of national politics in local government means that these austerity measures trickle down to the local level in two ways. First, national subsidies to locally-based institutions are reduced or abandoned. Although 200 million make up about five percent of
the subsidized cultural sector’s 2010 income (based on OCW 2011: 50), budget cuts are distributed rather unevenly, obliging for instance orchestras or museums to adopt a commercial approach, or to merge or close down. Indeed, the aldermen of nine large Dutch cities, including Rotterdam, expressed concern to the national government twice in 2010, warning that the planned cutbacks on culture, and in particular high culture, seriously threaten the cities’ international competitiveness. Second, municipal and provincial funding – 38 and five percent of total subsidized cultural sector’s income in 2010 respectively – may also be affected by budget cuts on the national level. With these cuts, the national government is forcing cities to make severe cuts to social security budgets, further reducing the importance of culture relative to other policy fields. In effect this may imply a trickling down of the policy philosophy at the national level to cities that had been previously insulated from the negative impacts of large scale policy restructuring.

**CONCLUSION: CULTURAL POLICY IN JEOPARDY?**

The elections results of 2002 came as a bombshell. The new government that took office in Rotterdam enforced radical changes in local policy. In a relatively short time, a new normative core structured around public safety and livability in disadvantaged neighborhoods settled in the central position of local policy-making. Further, adjustments of the policy core and secondary aspects of politics and political culture have been placed in the service of this new normative core, constituting a genuine shift in policy philosophy. As part of this shift, the perception of culture and cultural policy changed in several ways. Overall, this case makes clear these changes should be understood not only from a cultural but from a social, economic, and political-ideological perspective. Thus, culture needs to be situated within a longer historic trajectory in which different actors in the political and cultural sector on both local and national level are addressed.
The main point is that culture as a field in urban policy of Rotterdam after the take-over by LR shows not only changes but - in spite of a shift towards a new policy philosophy - also continuities vis-à-vis the previous years. Culture lost some of its priority due to the emphasis on safety and livability in the new policy philosophy. In addition, the ideology of culture as a vehicle for emancipation and social participation of immigrant groups was substituted with one that considered culture to be instrumental in compulsory assimilation. On the other hand, there was continuity in the economic objectives of cultural policy - attraction of new residents, visitors, and companies - which date back to the late 1980s continued. Furthermore, efforts to realize economic gain from culture were extended, in particular through expanding the festivals and events agenda, and a new mandate to support the development of cultural industries. Much of this expansion, however, marks a notable reversal of the traditional division between high and popular culture in favor of the latter, and is therefore also at odds with the ambition to attract high-level professionals and high-income residents (Möring 2009).

Even with a relatively stable normative core, the two components of the practical order of a policy philosophy are usually being continuously adjusted to changing realities. In Rotterdam, political reality has changed since the 2006 municipal elections. Although LR still held almost one third of the seats in the city council, it could no longer count on aldermen in the municipal executive. Disciplining pressure on immigrant groups has abated and the confrontational rhetoric based on ethnic and religious background has largely disappeared, but without returning to the pre-2002 reflex of denying public safety and livability problems. Furthermore, the economic objectives of cultural policy have not been challenged at all. Instead, the focus has shifted to the international level.
Finally, rather than being threatened “from within,” a twofold threat “from outside” exists with regard to cultural policy and the cultural economy of Rotterdam. The first is limitations of national cultural policy that directly affects the infrastructure of the cultural economy. Second, less immediate and more speculative, the confrontational rhetoric towards immigrant groups in national politics - more furious than they ever have been in Rotterdam - may have its effects on coming municipal elections in what is still a “difficult” city. If it induces further polarization and intolerance, it may be devastating for the open social climate that is a foundation of the cultural economy. This means our story has to end with another note of discord.

REFERENCES


--- [Municipality of Rotterdam] (2007a) *Visie creatieve economie* [Vision Creative Economy].

--- [Municipality of Rotterdam] (2007b) *In verbeelding van elkaar samen het toneel van stad zijn; uitgangspunten van het cultuurbeleid 2009-2012* [Imagining Each Other to be the Stage of the City; starting points for cultural policy]. Rotterdam.


Hart, O.C. (2009) *Hiphopstad Rotterdam; visie op de scene* [Rotterdam Hiphop city; view on the scene], Schiedam: Scriptum.


Tops, P. (2007) *Regimeverandering in Rotterdam; hoe een stadsbestuur zichzelf opnieuw uitvond* [Regime Change in Rotterdam; how a city government re-invented itself], Amsterdam/Antwerp: Atlas.


CHAPTER 5
Cultural Policy and the State of Urban Development in the Capital of South Korea

Jong Youl Lee and Chad Anderson

INTRODUCTION

In contrast to other nations where the left has often been at the forefront of cultural policy, the two conservative mayors of Seoul - Lee Myungbak (2002-2006) and Oh Sehoon (2006-2011) – adopted quality of life and amenity-oriented cultural policy to make the urban environment more attractive for residents and to create a more favorable economic climate. Mayor Lee advanced policies to help develop the city and overcome the legacy of rapid uneven development through “New Developmentalism.” Building on the broad cultural policies of Mayor Lee, Oh Sehoon put in place “Culturenomics.” Both programs advanced culture-driven economic development through major redevelopment urban design projects.

These new trends have been met with mixed reviews. Lee Myungbak faced controversy, but opposition died off as his projects were completed, and his popularity propelled him into the presidency. Oh Sehoon managed to spark controversy with many of his initiatives and even a former political ally turned on his design-driven development. Nevertheless, he was the first mayor of Seoul to be reelected, though he resigned following failure to win a referendum concerning implementation of a welfare program advanced by the liberal opposition.

Seoul’s conservative mayors led the way for a new direction of cultural and amenity-oriented development. However, urban development in Seoul nevertheless continues its legacy of
controversial regeneration policies. The beginning of 2009 saw the worst urban regeneration conflict in Korea in recent years when police led an assault on an occupied building, resulting in six deaths. Both Lee and Oh were implicated in this “Yongsan Tragedy,” raising questions over whether urban development can be advanced in South Korea given this dramatic failure of urban redevelopment even under the administrations of two politicians who seemed to offer a meaningful alternative to the status quo.

This study considers the recent experience of the high-profile culturally-oriented development in Seoul against the backdrop of the redevelopment project in Yongsan, which represent both the recent successes and failures of urban regeneration in Seoul. The main question is to what extent Seoul has actually embraced amenity-oriented models such as Lee’s “New Developmentalism” and Oh’s “Culturenomics”? This study will look at the history of development in Seoul, review the cultural-oriented amenity model, examine the efforts of Lee and Oh in regards to the amenity model, and then consider the case of the Hankangno redevelopment project in Yongsan. The predominant development model has not resolved its issues while the promising high-profile new model that may have addressed these problems was implemented on a parallel development track and never managed to replace the joint redevelopment model. The overall direction of cultural policy in Seoul is viewed in light of these recent development strategies.

DEVELOPMENT MODELS IN SEOUL

The city of Seoul has been a capital since 1394. Its population of more than ten million is roughly a fifth of the population of the entire nation and the Seoul National Capital Area accounts for half of the nation’s population (Korean Statistical Information Service). Most of
the national government and much of the social, cultural, and economic infrastructure of the nation are concentrated in the capital. The size and importance of Seoul dictated that policy implemented within the city was often the de facto policy for the nation. It should be pointed out, however, that both urban and cultural policy were determined solely at the national government level and through appointees from the central government until the implementation of local autonomy in the 1990s (Ahn 2005).

**History of Urban Regeneration in Seoul**

Much of the nation had to be rebuilt after the Korean War, which prompted competition with North Korea and massive aid from the United States, who aligned with the “democratic” non-communist government in the South (Choi 1997; Kim 1997; Lee 1990, 2009). Seoul grew rapidly and drew citizens from around the nation to live in its burgeoning urban slums. From the founding of the republic in 1948 to the mid 1960s, redevelopment worked to displace inner-city squatters and construct large concentrations of apartments (Ha 1995; Lee 1990, 2009). The government and private interests acted together, razing squatter settlements with bulldozers. In the 1970s, strong resistance by squatters caused the government to legalize some settlements and build small apartments on redevelopment sites. Residents and local community members in settlement neighborhoods started to play a role in the process through a system of priority tickets that allowed squatters the right to a small apartment in a new development. Most squatters lacked money to buy, so they sold their tickets and moved to new settlements located on the periphery of the city. Redevelopment therefore continued to disrupt existing communities (Park and Park 2010; Sin 1991). Later, although squatters who were building owners were allowed to form joint redevelopment corporations that would select a construction company for new projects, displaced tenants received only a small
relocation subsidy, limiting their stake in the process (Ha 1995).

More space opened up for individual redevelopment projects in the 1990s with the initiation of larger multifamily projects when three quarters of the residents in an area called for the creation of a redevelopment zone. This led to a “new partnership” between the state, business, and civil society for joint redevelopment. The 1990s also saw the first elected local governments, providing Seoul with independence in devising and implementing policy (Lee 2009). Joint redevelopment led to more housing but the lack of resident participation in planning, lack of equity in housing allocation, and lack of affordability for low-income residents remain contentious issues. The process is largely top-down and driven by a combination of state and business interests (Kim 1997; Lee 2009). The low cost to the state and the great benefits generated by an increasing tax base (one of the few means of generating revenue not controlled by the central government) as well as high profits for business and building owners keep this method popular.

**Korean Cultural Policy and Amenities Development**

Postwar Korea, which was dominated by authoritarian right-wing governments until at least 1988, viewed culture and the arts as essential for state development. The goals evolved from singularly promoting anticommunism and democracy to a diverse platform of using traditional culture as a spiritual force for driving the economy, addressing the social problems of development, providing cultural welfare, advancing creativity, and using culture for reunification, and to promote social cohesion (Yim 2003). Korean cultural policy has seen significant changes over time even though the effect has been the addition of new goals. In the 1970s stress on heritage and tradition remained even whereas the 1980s added
contemporary culture and providing for cultural demand and in the 1990s amateur arts, pop culture, and the cultural industry emerged (Yim 2003). In the 2000s there has been a new emphasis on reunification, new cultural industries, and increasing support for the spread of Korean culture through the “Korean Wave” of Korean drama, Korean pop music, and Korean movies, especially in several East Asian countries as well as Europe and the US. Cultural exports have increased from $5 million in 1997 to $268 million in 2005 and $793 million in 2011 (Kim 2012).

As local governments become more independent in respect to policy and local autonomy, mayors have been interested in attracting cultural festivals to repeat the success of cultural events like the Pusan International Film Festival and the Gwangju Biennale. Amenities have also been developed to support these festivals as well as culture and arts districts, as prestige projects, and to improve the quality of urban life that had been affected by rapid industrialization.

Seoul’s conservative mayors moved towards policies designed to lure the “creative class” (Florida 2002). They developed amenities and scenes (collections of amenities offering a shared urban experience for residents and visitors) to retain and develop human capital resources desired by particular businesses and industries, and to attract tourists and visitors (Clark 2004, 2006; Jung et al. 2008; Silver et al. 2006; Silver and Clark 2009).

found that closeness to parks and open space is a significant factor increasing housing price in Seoul. Chang Ho Lee (2008) notes that the Chinese community in Incheon has been successful at using ethnic identity to help market “place” and redevelop Incheon’s Chinatown. In Incheon, part of the capital area, data collected from 1995 to 2005 shows that the number of cultural amenities is positively related to population growth at the district level (Lee 2006). A larger follow up to the research at the neighborhood level emphasizes the connection between parks and educational amenities and urban growth (Lee 2007).

The amenity model stands in contrast to the modern history of urban development in Seoul. However, it is not an unnatural fit. As Yim (2003) points out, cultural and arts policy have been considered essential to governance by providing practical benefits and legitimating industrialization, healing the wounds of rapid development, urbanization, and economic development. As noted above, Koreans have taken more notice of the economic potential of culture in the wake of the “Korean Wave.” The former “hermit kingdom” now aggressively exports its cultural products worldwide, with admirers prominently following Korean culture and enjoying Korean food. In recent years Korean studies and Korean language departments have opened up around the globe. Whether viewed narrowly in the traditional cultural policy sense or in the broader amenity/scene model, culture has played a role in Korea’s urban development.

**RECENT DEVELOPMENT CASES IN SEOUL**

The conservative mayors’ embrace of the cultural amenity model allowed them to pursue multiple development goals at low cost and in a market-friendly way that addressed serious quality of life issues. They also provided opportunities to leave behind legacy projects that
symbolized their tenure, helping Lee Myungbak gain the presidency. They both employed a hands-on approach and regularly intervened to resolve or avoid conflict, designed projects to share benefits widely, and aggressively sold residents on the benefits.

**Mayor Lee**

Lee Myungbak responded to the negative effects of rapid development and industrialization, pollution filling the Seoul’s skies and residents lacking access to parks or, for that matter, any green space at all. He wanted his mayoral legacy to be a livable and environmental city. He told *Time*, “when the Korean economy was just trying to get back on its feet after the war, having parks was a luxury but now we try to put the environment first.” (Walsh 2007)

Mayor Lee set out his ambitious cultural and environmental “Seoul Vision 2006” in an attempt to transform the city into one of the world’s most citizen and eco-friendly metropolises. His signature programs, like Seoul Forest and the Cheong-gye Cheon restoration, were major urban amenity developments that aimed at improving the quality of urban life in Seoul, particularly for people in the crowded center. The Seoul Forest, on 11,600 hectares of city land, opened in 2005. It includes five parks: a cultural art park, an ecological forest, a nature experience field, wetlands, and a waterside park along a stretch of the Han River. These parks include numerous amenities such as an insect garden, a nature experience center, an open theater, bike paths and bike rentals, forest hiking trails, and a special events area.

Lee’s best-known project as mayor was the Cheong-gye Cheon restoration. The Cheong-gye Cheon had been a stream running through the center of Seoul as well as the site of a previous
urban renewal program where the occupants of shanties who used the stream for washing and doing laundry for hire were forcibly displaced. The stream was paved over and then had a highway overpass constructed on top of it in the 1960s. The course of the stream took it near city hall and just a block away from the popular Jongno shopping and cultural district and near some of the most popular tourist destinations in the city. Most of the area became run down and the stream itself was essentially a conduit for sewage (Anderson 2010a).

Mayor Lee undertook numerous initiatives designed to earn citizen support for the project. In preparation for the restoration, Seoul residents were invited to tour the site and view the environmental damage for themselves. International and Korean ecologists were consulted on the project, and foreign architects were also consulted. Traffic problems were handled by reworking public transportation to encourage more use of trains and buses. The area was also opened up to pedestrians. Summarizing these efforts, Mayor Lee said, “This cultural and environmental plan is to bring back the clear streams and pure air that used to flow under this area before it was covered up with concrete back when this city was being developed. This issue has been researched for about ten years already by many experts and academics” (Anderson 2010b: 88). The work started in July 2003. Trees were planted along the route while the work was underway. Twenty-one bridges were constructed, including two historic restorations.

Despite these efforts, the project attracted some controversy. A used goods market was displaced, and a nearby pornography market was also disrupted. There were criticisms of the cost, and there was a bribery scandal involving the purchase of relaxed regulations by real estate developers. There was also a last-minute water dispute between the city and the Korea Water Resources Corporation over the 120,000 tons of water to be pumped daily through the
stream. Political opposition came from the previous liberal mayor’s camp, which cited gentrification as a growing concern. The final cost was W386 billion ($351 million), more than the W349 billion ($317 million) originally budgeted (Anderson 2010a).

The stream opened officially in early October 2005 and attracted more than thirty million visitors by the end of its first year. It was generally considered to be a major success and became a factor in Lee Myungbak’s election to the presidency.

**Mayor Oh**

Oh Sehoon continued the cultural and environmental policy strategy of the Vision 2006 plan. However, he sought future goals under the auspices of his “Seoul Tomorrow” rubric. In addition to being a global city, a Northeast Asian business hub, a clean healthy and green city, a city with “culture as common and ever-present as air or water” (Tomorrow Vision 2011), Oh pushed for Seoul to become a world design capital (Seoul Metropolitan Government 2011). Mayor Oh announced the goal of making Seoul a creative cultural city in 2008 and utilized “culturenomics” to push his idea of culture-driven economics. In addition to promoting cultural access, facilities, and performances, this concept included a broad view of culture that embraced historical restoration, the environment and green space, open spaces, design, and new amenities (Cheong 2008). His utopian vision was based upon a city where citizens were happy and Seoul was seen as a respected cultural capital and a “global” destination. This vision would be achieved through enhancing the city’s quality of life and competitiveness. Five major directions were crucial: welfare for a warm life, a dynamic economy, a trusted and transparent city administration, a clean and green environment, and an attractive cultural capital (Seoul Metropolitan Government 2011).
The “clean and green environment” initiative includes amenity factors such as the goal of “lush greenery five minutes away from any home,” (Policy Initiatives 2011) the Han River as an ecological recreational space, and improved traffic and transportation infrastructure. The attractive cultural capital initiative included new cultural activities all throughout Seoul such as volunteer programs to promote cultural exchange through providing welfare services, low-cost access to cultural content such as performances, the operation of more than 100 arts theaters to spread arts into every neighborhood, mobile libraries to encourage book reading, and customized cultural classes for every age group as well as for the general public. The cultural capital initiative also included a design component to promote the fashion and design industries through support for fashion and design clusters, a charming urban atmosphere constructed through fun designs, promotion of a creative design culture through education and cultural experiences, and the development of Seoul as a UNESCO Creative City recognized for design (Policy Initiatives 2011).

The results of these initiatives were dramatic. Under Mayor Oh, the city opened a design center and museum, hosted the inaugural meeting of the Global Design Cities Organization in 2010, and was designated the 2010 World Design Capital. The New York Times cited Seoul as the third top tourist destination in the world in 2010 on the basis of its new emphasis on design and suggested that Seoul had displaced Tokyo as a destination for people interested in design. Oh also initiated the Namsan (South Mountain) Renaissance Plan which worked to tear down buildings that disrupted the scenery around Namsan while enhancing the area for tourists with jogging paths and traditional Korean designs in order to transform the mountain into a tourist destination not unlike New York’s Central Park (Anderson 2010a).
Oh also tried to connect Seoul directly to the Korean Wave by turning to internationally renowned singer Rain to represent Seoul as a goodwill ambassador for the city. As part of the Seoul Tomorrow vision, Oh tried to promote larger projects. He proposed turning Seoul into a maritime tourist hub complete with a floating hotel through his Han River Renaissance proposal that was in progress when his party lost control of the city council in 2010 (Cheong 2008).

Oh also directly promoted traditional culture. The city began restoring the West Gate, and won a UNESCO award for the city’s program of preserving traditional tiled roof houses in the Bukchon neighborhood, both through purchase and use of more than 30 houses which were converted into cultural facilities and through financial support for the restoration and maintenance of around 300 others. Oh’s team hopes to preserve of 4,500 of these tradition homes by 2018 (Anderson 2010a). Among Oh’s more controversial efforts was the Big Air snowboarding competition held on the new plaza between the Seoul Art Center and the American Embassy and other government buildings. It required closing off traffic, and critics noted that there could have been many other venues that would not have disrupted traffic, inconveniencing Seoul residents and tourists.

Mayor Oh’s commitment to design was not universally popular. At a time when his political opposition was focusing on increased welfare spending, many regarded his emphasis on design as a distraction from problems like high youth unemployment (Im et al. 2010). Although his policies generated employment, they did not provide the full-time permanent white collar jobs at big companies that college graduates wanted. Oh also continued to support and approve numerous joint redevelopment projects; however, he was unable to match the growth achieved by Lee.
Yongsan Hankangno Redevelopment

The plans in Yongsan’s Hankangno neighborhood, like other joint redevelopments, designated an area for redevelopment by a corporation formed by a construction company and local property owners. More than 900 tenant households affected were to be paid compensation for giving up their apartment or business location. This plan was one of the numerous plans approved under Mayor Lee and continued under Mayor Oh (Lee and Anderson 2010). Evictees claimed that they tried numerous administrative channels to voice their opinion but were repeatedly rebuffed. There was reportedly a sign hung in front of the Yongsan District Office by the elected District Chief saying, “Those who come to the District Office demanding the ridiculous won't be treated as democratic citizens, please have some restraint” (Anderson 2010b: 73). Tenants responded with protests to bring attention to their grievances when mandatory public meetings did not address their problems (Anderson 2010b: 69-77). This is a stark contrast with the Cheong-gye Cheon restoration when Mayor Lee personally negotiated with the reluctant tenants and owners who were to be displaced.

Close to 800 families would settle prior to the occupation. The issue took years to negotiate due to problems with the redevelopment compensation. It did not consider the actual costs of moving or starting a new business elsewhere, or any long-term investments that had been made. The widow of protester Lee Sangnim reported, “The money you invested beyond the contract is not recognized and the compensation is not enough” (Lee and Anderson 2010: 9). Kim (2009) likewise highlighted the need to pay compensation at least equal to what had been invested, which was not done in many cases. “They offered an outrageously low amount for compensation, and then had thugs come in and out and threaten the tenants. Most left because they couldn’t bear the threats anymore,” according to organizer Ryu Joo-hyung.
(Anderson 2010b: 72). Similarly, Lee and Joo (2008) saw the entire process as problematic, finding that a few owners got a large development profit from the joint redevelopment while the former residents did failed to receive benefit.

The dispute festered until January 19, 2009, when a group occupied the five-story Namildang Building on busy Hankang Road in the redevelopment zone and prepared for a standoff with police. Members of the Federation against House Demolition, including tenants from the area and activists from other parts of the city, demanded that the plan be scrapped. In general, they were also under the impression that the occupation would end relatively peacefully with some sort of negotiated settlement (as had happened in recent cases under the previous liberal presidents). However, instead of negotiating, the police made a dawn raid after only one day of occupation. Protesters used Molotov cocktails and projectiles thrown by hand or shot from slingshots. Flames ignited almost 370 gallons of paint thinner on the fortified roof and quickly engulfed the building. Five protesters and one policeman died in the fire (Lee and Anderson 2010).

Twenty protesters were indicted, five were arrested and fifteen were charged for the incident. The prosecution investigation found the protesters to be responsible. The Police Chief resigned and withdrew himself from consideration for the position of head of the national police. The incident provoked massive protests and it took almost a year before things returned to normalcy. The redevelopment corporation and the tenants’ association reached a mediated agreement close to a year after the incident. The deal involved a joint funeral for the victims and a reported $3.2 million in compensation. The funeral was held January 9, 2010. While culturenomics was the popular face of urban development efforts in Seoul, most development schemes were met with protests and evictions. However, this case is somewhat
anomalous, in that, it is the only one to end in such tragedy.

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

Cultural policy in Seoul under Lee Myungbak and Oh Sehoon followed an amenity model that merged with development policy. Mayor Lee tried to clean the environment, provided more green space, provided better transportation, a new urban waterfront, and restored a sense of history to the city. Mayor Oh extended Lee’s program, but added a number of smaller projects linked through culturenomics and design. On the other hand, the Yongsan Hankangno Redevelopment Project represents the greatest failure of urban redevelopment in Korea and cast a shadow over Korean politics in its wake. President Lee Myungbak’s popularity plunged, and the incident was a likely factor in Mayor Oh’s narrow reelection margin. Both mayors approved the plan and failed to intervene as they had regularly done in their culturally-oriented development projects.

The Hankangno redevelopment is an extreme case and its results were due in part to miscalculation by both sides. Both the activists and the state were under the impression that the aggressive action would force a quick resolution (Lee and Anderson 2010). After more than fifty years of trying to address the basic issues of the South Korean urban development model, this case highlights certain issues that have plagued the system from the beginning and have not been resolved. In particular, there remains a lack of substantial tenant input into the future of their neighborhood, the question of adequate compensation, issues surrounding the sharing of the benefits, and the risk of conflict when these issues are not negotiated. Unlike the cultural amenity model, which has spread benefits very broadly, the benefits have flowed to some and not others. This model, as opposed to cultural development, remains the
main direction of urban redevelopment in Seoul.

The discrepancy between the two policy threads shows the limits of the penetration of the new cultural model. The culturally-oriented amenity model has had an impact. However, it is limited in comparison to the standard redevelopment model. It had the potential to address some of the failings of joint redevelopment with broadly shared benefits, residents being permitted voice and their opinions more carefully considered through salesmanship and negotiations. Recent trends suggest that the cultural development model will not be extended to replace the predominant new town model. The paradigm has shifted away from culture and design in favor of welfare. As a candidate for president, Lee Myungbak promised a transnational canal to replicate the success of his urban waterfront on a national scale, but was blocked by public protest. Student protests during the summer of 2011 demanded Lee slash university tuition.

The opposition liberal parties formed an electoral alliance in the 2010 local elections based on the “welfare state theory” of implementing an expansive welfare program (Welfare State Theory Poised to Unite Oppostion Camps 2010). Mayor Oh had been criticized for his emphasis on design, which is citizens’ lowest priority according to a survey of Seoul residents (Im et al. 2010). On the other hand, welfare was ranked the highest. A liberal campaign promising free school lunches for all students proved very popular and liberals swept the elections. Oh was reelected by a slim margin even after increasing welfare to almost a quarter of the city budget (as compared to 2.9 percent for culture and tourism). The liberals in control of the city council then pushed for immediate implementation of free school lunches. Oh favored gradual implementation and forced a referendum on the question and resigned when not enough voters came to the polls for the referendum to be counted.
Independent liberal Park Wonsoon won the election to replace Oh on October 26, 2011. He started shifting funds to cut tuition at city universities and tried to push a welfare and participation focus early in his administration. However, he did not initiate any new culturenomics-oriented projects. His emphasis on participation could provide a new model to overcome weaknesses of joint redevelopment; however the direction of urban redevelopment in Seoul remains unclear.

REFERENCES


--- (2006) “Making Culture into Magic: how can it bring tourists and residents?” Presented at
Korean Ministry of Culture and Tourism, July 2006.


Tomorrow Vision, Seoul Metropolitan Government, Online. Available HTTP:


Part II

REWRYING THE CREATIVE CITY SCRIPT
CHAPTER 6

Creativity and Urban Regeneration: The Role of La Tohu and the Cirque du Soleil in the Saint-Michel Neighborhood in Montréal

Deborah Leslie and Norma Rantisi

INTRODUCTION

This paper explores the role of the arts and culture in urban regeneration in the Saint-Michel neighborhood of Montréal. We draw upon a case study of the formation of La Tohu (or circus arts city), formed in 2004 in Montréal’s poorest neighborhood. Like other cultural districts, La Tohu is a product of both public and private investment, including funds from the Cirque du Soleil, the National Circus School and En Piste (the circus arts trade association), as well as the federal, provincial, and municipal governments. Our aim is to investigate the role of the Cirque du Soleil in the creation of a circus arts district, the range of programs run by La Tohu, and the rationales underpinning these programs.

Arts and culture-led regeneration efforts often privilege an instrumental understanding of culture and creativity, whereby the arts are valued mainly for their economic role. The literature emphasizes how creative city strategies fit into existing neoliberal agendas, promoting gentrification and the displacement of working class, ethnic, and racially marginalized populations (Catungal et al. 2009; Catungal and Leslie 2009; Ley 2003; Luckman et al. 2009; Peck 2005; Zukin 1991, 1995), and in many cases the displacement of the creative ecology that
gave rise to these areas in the first place (Gibson and Kong 2005). While the literature
emphasizes the mostly negative dimensions of creative city agendas, some authors point out that
a variety of rationales underpin creative city agendas and suggest that there is potential for
democratic and socially progressive outcomes (Grodach and Loukaitou-Sideris 2007; Markusen
and Gadwa 2010; Mommaas 2004). It is therefore important to examine the range of objectives
that inform creative city policies and interrogate their implications for local communities. In
particular, our case represents an example of a public-private partnership where the state is
offered the opportunity to collaborate with socially minded entrepreneurs in a project that
extends beyond the sphere of “traditional” business interests.

The paper draws upon semi-structured interviews with Cirque officials and employees, as well as
with individuals working at other circus troupes in Montréal between 2008 and 2011. Interviews
were also conducted with a variety of officials involved in establishing La Tohu, such as
representatives from the provincial and municipal governments, the National Circus School, En
Piste, the Circus trade association, and La Tohu itself. These actors provide insight into the
objectives that lie behind the establishment of a circus arts district, and the nature of its facilities
and programs.

The paper is organized as follows: first we review the literature on culture-led urban
regeneration, identifying key insights relevant to the case study. In the second section, we outline
the characteristics of Saint-Michel and the key problems confronting this neighborhood. The
third section traces a history of the formation of La Tohu, including the main actors involved in
the creation of a circus arts district, the objectives that underpin La Tohu, and potential
implications for the local community. The conclusion reflects back on the capacity of creativity-led initiatives in general – and cultural districting in particular – for realizing economic development and social justice goals. We argue that a more socially progressive political agenda can moderate the neoliberal politics typically associated with cultural districts and is essential to the long-term sustainability of such policies.

CREATIVITY AND URBAN REGENERATION

Following the rise of the “creative city” discourse there has been an increased interest in using the arts and culture as an urban economic development tool (Florida 2002; Landry and Bianchini 1995). One particularly strong focus in many creative city policies is an emphasis on cultural districts or quarters. Cultural districts are designated areas of the city that contain a high concentration of cultural facilities, organizations, businesses, creators, and participants (Markusen and Gadwa 2010: 386). According to Mommaas (2004), such districts can be differentiated according to a number of criteria, including their horizontal profile. Some quarters emphasize a specific arts or cultural sector (such as art or film), while others are multi-sectoral. Clusters or districts can also be distinguished according to the vertical roles they perform on the value chain. Some districts focus on design, while others emphasize production, distribution or consumption (or some combination of these functions). Mommaas (2004) also classifies districts according to their organizational structure and governance, management practices, openness, location and history. For example, some districts emerge as a result of “top down” processes orchestrated by government intervention, while others materialize in an organic or “bottom up” fashion, through the spontaneous decisions of individual artists to move to a marginal
neighborhood (Mommaas 2004: 516).

Though such districts are complex, Mommaas (2004) suggests that a protoypical ideal often informs policy-making. In this ideal conception, a cultural district is characterized by high levels of intra-cluster interaction, including both traded and untraded transactions. In such a milieu, firms benefit from reduced transaction costs, as well as from access to local “buzz” (Scott 2000; Stern and Seifert 2010; Storper and Venables 2004).

There are diverse rationales for supporting culture and cultural districts, including economic objectives such as talent, investment, and tourist attraction (Florida 2002), urban revitalization and infrastructure enhancement (Sasaki 2010), and community building (Markusen and Gadwa 2010). Despite the variety of rationales, findings from a survey of U.S. city governments by Grodach and Loukaitou-Sideris (2007) indicate that the vast majority of creative city policies are underpinned by economic objectives (see also Evans 2009). As a consequence, many argue that cultural quarters lead to gentrification and the displacement of low income and racially marginalized populations and ultimately artists themselves (Catungal et al. 2009; Ley 2003; Zukin 1982, 1995) as well as the removal of homeless individuals and youths from public space (Luckman et al. 2009; Smith 1996). For many, the arts and culture thus seem to be tools for papering over urban decay, adding a glossy veneer that prepares the city for reinvestment (Catungal and Leslie 2009; Peck 2005; Rantisi et al. 2006).

For others, creative city initiatives have political implications that are more complicated than a simple power elite model would imply. For example, Stern and Seifert (2010) find that
investment in the arts and culture can strengthen urban economies, contributing to the revitalization of run-down and economically disadvantaged neighborhoods. In their study, the creation of cultural districts is associated with higher levels of civic engagement, greater access to the arts, and a proliferation of social service organizations (Stern and Seifert 2010: 263). Cultural districts are also characterized by increasing populations and declining poverty rates. In contrast to other authors, they find little evidence of ethnic or class-based displacement. In fact, most neighborhoods tend to be ethnically stable (Stern and Seifert 2010: 273). Similarly, Grodach and Loukaitou-Sideris (2007) point out that some cultural districts include affordable housing requirements, which can protect the community against gentrification. This illustrates the capacity of policymakers to temper some of the negative dimensions of cultural district formation through the incorporation of a broader range of rationales.

Detailed studies are thus needed of individual neighborhoods that interrogate the range of objectives associated with district formation and their implications for the community (Mommaas 2004: 527). In the following sections we explore these dynamics through an investigation of the circus arts district in Saint-Michel.

A PROFILE OF THE SAINT-MICHEL NEIGHBORHOOD

Saint-Michel is a working class neighborhood located in the north part of Montréal (Figure 1). Its geographic boundaries correspond to the old city of Ville Saint-Michel, which was annexed by Montréal in 1968 (Johnston 2008b). In 2006, the population of Saint-Michel was 39,090 (La Division des Affaires Économiques et Institutionnelles 2009). The area is one of the densest
neighborhoods in Montréal, and is known for its characteristic row housing and public housing
towers (Johnston 2008a; Ravensbergen 2006: A1). Saint-Michel is also one of the most diverse
districts within Montreal. The area contains over 65 different ethnic groups, including Haitians,
Italians, Arabs, Asians, Hispanics, and Québécois (Girard 2005; Hall 2005). Approximately 50
per cent of local residents are immigrants (Johnston 2008b; La Division des Affaires
Économiques et Institutionnelles 2009) and 42 per cent are visible minorities (Ravensbergen

While diverse, the neighborhood is beset by a number of social problems. By the 1990s, the
area had one of the highest crime rates in the city (Adams 2004; Greenaway 2008b). Unemployment
rates for both youths and adults are also higher than for other neighborhoods (City of Montreal 2006), as are poverty levels (Adams 2004). Approximately 40 per cent of residents are considered low income by Statistics Canada and 20 per cent of residents are on social assistance (Adams 2004; Ravensbergen 2006: A1). The population is not only poor, but has relatively low levels of education, which makes it difficult to adapt to changing labor markets.

In the early twentieth century, the Miron limestone quarry was the largest employer in the
district. However, in 1968, it was turned into a landfill. By the late 1980s, the site was receiving
one million tons of waste per year, making it one of the largest urban landfills in North America
(Tohu 2011). The presence of the landfill contributed to poor air quality in the area, decreasing its attractiveness to potential residents (Fine 2000). Currently, most jobs are concentrated in manufacturing (particularly garment production) and consumer services, although there has been a considerable loss of employment in manufacturing (Arpin-Simonetti 2008; CDÉC 2008; Gillies 2006; Le Groupe de Travil Sur Les Portraits Des Quartiers Villeray, Saint-Michel et Parc Extension 2004; Ravensbergen 2006: A1).
FIGURE 6.1: Map of Saint-Michel
While Saint Michel is one of the poorest neighborhoods in Montréal, it has been undergoing a process of transformation in the last decade. The landfill was acquired by the City of Montréal in 1988, and the city has focused its efforts on a massive environmental rehabilitation project aimed at transforming the site into a park, with commercial, educational, sports, and cultural facilities.\(^1\) Another aspect of change is the growth of cultural industry jobs in the district, particularly in the circus arts. In the next section we discuss the role of the Cirque du Soleil and La Tohu in this process.

THE CIRQUE DU SOLEIL AND THE FORMATION OF LA TOHU

The Cirque moved its international headquarters to Saint-Michel in 1997 (Munk 1997) (Figure 2). The company purposely chose to locate its operations in “one of the most sensitive neighbourhoods in Canada” in order to support a community development agenda which was in line with the firm’s corporate social responsibility platform (Cirque du Soleil 2011a). The location also fits well with the firm’s branding as an innovative and progressive company. According to the firm, the “Cirque du Soleil has aspired to be an agent of change since its inception and the decision ten years ago to establish a creative complex in the Saint-Michel district of Montréal sprang from the desire to select a location where the company’s presence could have the greatest possible positive influence” (Cirque du Soleil 2011b).
Part of the desire to locate in a low-income neighborhood stems from Cirque’s origins. The Cirque du Soleil was started by a group of street kids performing in public space. As a director argues, the Cirque originates in “street performers, people without education, without any kind of background… people who were living and playing in the streets” (Interview, Cirque Director). Moreover, while Cirque could have located their headquarters anywhere in the world, a number of interviewees from the local circus arts milieu noted that the founder’s strong Québec nationalist sentiment also played a role in selecting a Montréal location and seeking to contribute to the revitalization of one of its poorest neighborhoods (Interviews).
Not only was the building’s architecture distinct (consisting of an innovative postmodern structure designed by Dan Hanganu), but also its exterior landscaping includes vegetable and herb gardens that grow food for the facility’s cafeterie. The company has continued to expand its presence in the neighborhood, constructing a second building in 2001, known as the Ateliers, designed to house offices and production workshops. Approximately 400 artisans are employed in these workshops (Cirque du Soleil 2011a). In 2007, the firm added a third building to its headquarters, Le Mât (the Mast) to expand their administrative offices.

In addition to expanding its facilities, in the late 1990s, the Cirque began to work with the National Circus School and the national circus arts trade association, En Piste, to create an integrated circus arts district in Saint-Michel. As an official with Tohu argues, the Cirque was interested in creating a performance venue:

The idea … was to create a hub in which you intervene in the circus domain from… education to production and presenting…It’s really the concept of a city in the Greek sense of the term, where people live, work, and there’s citizenship and an ownership - that was the idea.

(Interview, Tohu official)

As a director at the National Circus School notes, the school’s situation was also central to the decision to create a new district:

The school had to move because… we had to expand… and since it was located in a historical, heritage building in old Montréal we couldn’t expand there… So we needed to put the school into a larger project to
make it more attractive and we thought it was a very good idea to bring back an old project of creating a circus city … something stronger for the school and for Cirque du Soleil and for… the development of emerging companies. So we said “ok, we will work on a project of a circus city… to build Montréal as a circus capital.”

(Interview, official National Circus School)

To realize this vision, the Cirque lobbied provincial deputy ministers in support of a “circus city,” one which could become a “strong economic motor for Québec” (Interview Cirque official; Interview Tohu official). They also made an agreement with the City, whereby Tohu would contribute to the City’s existing environmental project by hosting conferences and public visits to the landfill and played a critical role in leveraging funds from other sources.

The district was completed in 2004 (Greenaway 2008b) and included the National Circus School, along with the offices of En Piste. The creation of Tohu also entailed the construction of a large Pavilion – an indoor circular performance venue, the only one of its kind in Canada, to accommodate traveling circuses and new companies or independent performers in need of a space to start their own projects (Figure 3). This Pavilion contains an exhibition room, a reception hall and artist workshops, as well as a restaurant, offices and a 1,700 seat big top for summer performances (Vlessing 2004: S18). The complex also contains a welcome center for the Saint-Michel Environmental Complex (CESM) (Lalonde 2009). As part of the creation of Tohu, the Cirque du Soleil also constructed an artist residence in 2003 to house performers from across the country and around the world.
Tohu thus brings together activities across all parts of the production chain in one geographic cluster, including circus training, creation, production, and performance (Figure 4). La Tohu thus encompasses a combination of production and consumption activities that characterizes most successful cultural districts (Mommaas 2004). In order to capture the varied objectives lying behind the district, the area underwent a name change from the Cité des Arts du Cirque to La Tohu. Tohu stands for “hurly burly,” which refers to “the creative turbulence, the agitation and effervescence that infuse this centre as well as its inhabitants and the projects emanating from it” (National Circus School 2011).
A product of a public-private partnership, Tohu is an example of a planned cultural district. It has received support from all levels of government, including the City of Montréal, the Government of Québec, and the Government of Canada (Bérubé 2004; Tohu 2011). The international reputation of the Cirque du Soleil and its importance within the Montréal region meant that the firm was able to push its interests with government officials. The Cirque’s success also provided a justification for state involvement:
Cirque du Soleil makes lots of money, but if you look - originally, the Québec government gave Cirque du Soleil... $1 million in 1985. Today it’s a billion dollar company, so… it was a very good move… If we invest in circus it should be able to sustain itself, then that’s a good rationale.

(Interview, Tohu official)

Thus, the primary objective for the key actors involved is to secure Montréal’s position as an international circus capital (Richer 2004). Montréal was already one of the world’s leading centers of circus arts when Tohu was created. The creation of a geographic cluster – where ideas can be exchanged and inter-firm transactions can take place – is designed to further innovation in the sector. As a Cirque employee involved in the creation of La Tohu notes:

Creating synergy with all the energies, because we’re a small place… If we want to keep ahead in the world, we have to bring all forces together. So we have everybody together. We have Cirque du Soleil, all the expertise here connected to the school. We have students and teachers relating personally. They are physically together. There are… 150 residences for artists.

(Interview, Cirque employee and founder La Tohu)

La Tohu benefits the Cirque, but is also meant to foster the development of other, independent troupes by encouraging entrepreneurship. La Tohu supported the creation of one of the first local troupes, Les 7 Doigts de la Main. One Cirque employee suggests that a goal of developing new enterprises is critical for solidifying a local circus arts milieu:
What you have here is Cirque du Soleil being a citizen in the Cité des Arts du Cirque... We have a business, Cirque du Soleil that is successful, but we don’t have an industry that is as successful in Québec. Now it’s becoming more and more successful. In the last few years, Cirque Eloise has created three great shows in a form that is more theatre … And Les 7 Doigts de la Main… So what we’re saying to the government, this is an industry to be reckoned with. We bring a lot of money into this province and in Canada and we’re generating a lot of jobs.

(Interview, Cirque official)

Economic rationales are thus central to the establishment of the district. However, they are part of a broader political agenda that includes environmentalism and community solidarity.

The second mission of La Tohu is environmental. As mentioned above, the City already has a rehabilitation project in place for the area, to which La Tohu is contributing. The aim is to revitalize the Saint-Michel Environmental Complex next door to the Pavillon. A massive park is being built at the complex, which includes green space, bike paths, and cross-country ski trails (Marketwire 2005). Further contributing to environmental objectives, La Tohu’s building is Gold LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified and has received numerous architectural and environmental awards (Anon. 2005; Greenaway 2008a; Latarte 2005; Lavigne 2005). It uses renewable energy for heating and cooling, and incorporates recycled materials in its construction (Le Corre-Laliberté 2004; Richer 2005).

The third mission of Tohu is community-related. The goal is to contribute to social engagement and the development of the Saint-Michel neighborhood (Vlessing, 2004: S18). This community outreach dimension is an outgrowth of the programs that Cirque was already providing through
its Global Citizenship department, and it was written into the mission statement to ensure that La Tohu remained committed to this objective (Interview, Tohu official). La Tohu contributes to the community by offering free attendance at circus shows to local residents. In addition, each year, La Tohu organizes Saint-Michel Las Fallas, a feast based on a popular festival in Spain (Girard 2005). Local artists and residents construct a wooden sculpture, which is later burned. The burning is symbolic of the neighborhood political struggles that local citizens are engaged in around poverty, racism, and crime (Lawrence 2004). The aim is for the community to appropriate the event, and in the process, to create their own rituals (Lawrence 2004). Cultural objectives thus underpin Tohu’s agenda, which is concerned with fostering social cohesion and civic pride. Unlike other cultural districts where there is a policing out of local youths, La Tohu’s events encourage the participation of young people in public events. As one youth participant notes, “it’s obvious that projects such as this one stimulate the liveliness of the neighbourhood. Since the Tohu has been here, a lot of things have changed” (as quoted in Girard 2005).

An open and participatory model of governance has also emerged, whereby the Cirque and Tohu have collaborated with government agencies and community organizations to facilitate the construction of daycares, as well as organizing labor market workshops and events that celebrate the culturally diverse identity of the neighborhood (CDÉC 2005; CDÉC 2008; Hall 2005). La Tohu is represented on the board of directors of Vivre Saint-Michel en Santé, an umbrella group that unites local citizens, community organizations, institutions, and businesses in Saint-Michel. This organization works to promote economic development and improve the quality of life in the neighborhood. While the development of a circus arts district has the potential to contribute to gentrification, La Tohu works with community partners to encourage the development of
affordable housing cooperatives in the area (Tremblay and Pilati 2007). This illustrates how a variety of political rationales can underpin the creation of a cultural district, decreasing the potential for displacement and rising inequality.

In addition to these activities, La Tohu operates according to social economy principles, as do all of its subcontractors (Tohu 2011). All service jobs at Tohu are allocated to neighborhood residents, including jobs in the parking lot, bistro, cloakroom, and circus hall. Employees are organized into worker cooperatives (Tohu 2006). According to the City, Tohu has created 1,500 jobs in Saint-Michel, “which places the arts and performance industry among the fastest growing economic activities in the region” (City of Montreal as quoted in Le Groupe de Travail Sue Les Portraits Des Quartiers Villeray, Saint-Michel et Parc Extension 2004). One official at Tohu (Interview) sums it up:

We implemented a program for people from the community that want to work here… Everybody that works with the public at Tohu has to come from the neighborhood…. house managers, parking, ushers, and people that work with public relations. So there’s over 70 youth from the neighborhood that work here. To do that, you have to have a program to be able to train these people, because a lot of them, this is their first job experience… I guess that has given the soul to La Tohu because you have empowerment by the neighborhood.

While such sentiments are part hype, designed to foster a corporate image for the company and the agency as a socially responsible enterprise and the majority of these jobs are low paid, the corporate social responsibility agenda still requires the provision of initiatives to serve the local community and this translates into a commitment which is absent in other cultural districts, such
as participation in monthly neighborhood roundtable discussions about the future of the neighborhood (Interview, Director of non-profit neighborhood center).²

There is also evidence that the Cirque and La Tohu have provided opportunities to local youths to upgrade their skills in the arts, enhancing their position in the labor market. To this end, the Cirque mounts a student business project that provides secondary school students from Saint-Michel with an opportunity to take part in training activities. This led to partnerships with local school boards to bring arts into their classrooms. (Interview Cirque employee and founder La Tohu).³ The nature of these engagements illustrates how the Cirque’s relationship with the community is constantly evolving. The Cirque is intimately aware of the potential for young people to become future innovators:

We work with La Tohu and the Conseil des Arts de Montréal. Last year was our first year, pilot project. The idea was to create a sense of artistic development in the youth population in Saint-Michel, which is a pretty at risk neighborhood and also, I would say, sensitive neighborhood in a way. Because in general, at Cirque, we’re very much interested in the power of youth and the potential of youth…The idea is to really give them the space, the time, and the network for them to really open their minds and push themselves to develop a creative project.

(Employee, Cirque du Soleil)

From the perspective of the agency, Saint-Michel was an ideal site in which to bring the three missions - economic, environmental and social - together in a circus arts district:
We knew that Saint-Michel district provided enough space. We also knew it was not an easy place… So this is why we designed the concept of Tohu, not only as a geographic concept but also as Tohu Inc, a non-profit organization which… had to be environmental because we are close to the dump site… And the other axis is that it had to bring something to the community here…

(Interview, official Circus School)

In particular, the opportunity to support low-income youth is an explicit mandate of the agency and the Cirque, stemming in large part to the Cirque’s own origins, as noted above.

Thus, although economic objectives clearly form the central motivation for the establishment of a circus arts district, the social/cultural and environmental mandates of both the Cirque and La Tohu still leave their mark on the services offered and efforts to engage the community. While further research is necessary to evaluate the impacts of these programs, the varied nature of the rationales has outcomes that complicate any one reading of the programming offered on site.

CONCLUSION

Historically, the circus has been an anti-establishment art form, characterized by a carnivalesque quality, transgressing dominant traditions and spaces (Bakhtin 1948). The circus is associated with the street, and with popular entertainment. It is also linked to marginality and youth culture. As illustrated above, in the case of La Tohu, some of these qualities still infuse its creative policies. The objective of building a competitive international circus capital reigns supreme, but its realization at the expense of other concerns is tempered by Tohu’s avowed commitment to social, political, and environmental mandates, which obliges the agency to deliver programs that
are not oriented solely (or even primarily) to profit and which signals the possibility for an alternative path to the gentrified, sanitized spaces that increasingly characterize planned cultural quarters. This is evident, for instance, in La Tohu’s development of a collaborative and participatory model of governance, working with the Cirque du Soleil, local arts councils, and neighborhood associations to initiate a number of programs designed to help local youths and other members of the community, providing them with cultural events, skills, employment opportunities, and access to affordable housing. Through such initiatives and involvement in neighborhood roundtables, La Tohu has the potential to contribute to social cohesion and identity and to shape new local governance schemes; an ability to realize that potential however depends on continued engagement with the community and a long-term commitment to redressing the social and economic disparities.

REFERENCES


**ENDNOTES**

---

1 The landfill stopped receiving waste in 2006 and the dump site has been covered. Methane, produced from rotting garbage underground, is now collected and pumped to a power plant, which converts the gas to electricity.

2 Tohu also employs an intercultural counsellor to help kids grapple with problems related to racism (Greenaway 2008b). There is some evidence that La Tohu’s programs are succeeding. Local youths profiled in a media report suggest that these programs offer them employment (collecting parking fees and ushering people to their seats), but also give them life skills necessary for the labor market (Greenaway, 2008b). The evidence suggests that truancy levels have also diminished with the creation of La Tohu’s programs (Greenaway 2008b).

3 The Cirque also offers workshops in the circus arts, dance, and visual arts to pre-schoolers in the neighborhood through its Arts Nomades program.
INTRODUCTION

Few cities have developed and promoted their music scenes like the self-proclaimed “Live Music Capital of the World,” Austin, TX. This mid-sized city is home to an estimated 200 music venues, 1,900 music acts, and 8,000 musicians (Austin Convention and Visitors Bureau 2010). The music industry generates over $616 million and provides nearly 11,200 jobs (City of Austin 2001). Over the last twenty years, local government has not only recognized these direct economic impacts, but also the indirect impacts, treating the sector as a critical amenity that attracts and retains technology workers and firms to the city. However, over the last decade, the preeminence of music has been challenged by two interrelated factors: first, policies oriented toward promoting central city redevelopment and, second, a policy discourse associated with the creative city thesis adopted by competing development and cultural policy interests. As I have detailed elsewhere, on the one hand, political leaders have adopted creative city language to justify their preexisting economic development and redevelopment strategies. On the other hand, those in the Cultural Arts Division incorporate this language in plan discourse to argue for more direct support for artists (Grodach 2012b). Both agendas have introduced real and perceived threats to the strength of the local music industry. This chapter examines the ascendancy of and policy challenges to the music sector in Austin, illustrating how music representatives attempt to manipulate and promulgate a counter discourse to address these challenges and retain music’s
dominant policy status.

A modest body of literature identifies the organizational structures and issues specific to the music industry and music scenes. The music sector is comprised of a complex and interrelated set of occupations and businesses including musicians, songwriters, musical instrument manufacturers and repair, sound and video technicians, music labels, performance venues (e.g., concert halls, bars), various special events, music stores, and industry support such as publicity, management, and legal services (Connell and Gibson 2003; Florida and Jackson 2010; Scott 1999). Like other cultural industries, music tends to be dominated by flexible and insecure employment. Many musicians make a living through temporary, part-time work and often dedicate their own time and money to everything from training and management to recording and distribution of material. This condition is a contributing factor in the creation of highly developed networks within and between local scenes and music genres (Hracs 2011; Seman 2010). It also helps to account for the vulnerability of many musicians and, by extension music venues, to the upscaling of central city property markets despite their hand in bestowing these areas with the cultural capital that makes them attractive to new investment (Gibson and Homan, 2004). While this literature provides detailed knowledge of industry dynamics, it has not specifically detailed how and why music policies are adopted by cities or explored the political dynamics and conflicts behind policy outcomes.

To address this, I study the ways in which different constituents negotiate change by crafting competing discourses and images in their quest to shape music-related policy in Austin. The analysis relies on multiple interviews with 16 individuals including directors and staff of municipal and quasi-public agencies, nonprofit organizations, music industry representatives and
commissions, and policy report authors as well as documentary sources including plans, program reports, and studies produced by various public entities and local newspaper articles. As the following sections show, music representatives attempted to utilize the City-sponsored Live Music Task Force and Report as a vehicle to craft and promote a policy narrative around key issues and events with mixed success. Studying the ways in which they worked to achieve their goals provides lessons for understanding how urban cultural policy is made, contested, and revised.

THE RISE OF MUSIC IN AUSTIN’S URBAN POLICY

While Austin has long been known as a hotbed of music (Shank 1994), it was not until the late 1980s, that the City began to embrace the field as the “defining element of Austin’s culture” (City of Austin 2002: 4) and incorporate it into economic development and city imaging efforts. At this time, Austin was already internationally renowned for its indie, blues, and country music scenes, the Austin City Limits television program, and what would become one of the most prominent music events in the world, South by Southwest. In 1989, the City made its first attempts to capitalize on local music with the formation of a Music Commission to advise city council on “music economic development issues” and the Music Loan Guarantee Program to underwrite loans for musicians and music-related businesses (City of Austin 1989). Two years later, the City crowned itself the “Live Music Capital of the World” and, subsequently, hired a Music Liaison in the Convention and Visitor’s Bureau to market Austin as a music tourist destination. In the early 2000s, the City commissioned a study documenting the economic impact of music on the region, established a web site dedicated to assisting musicians in locating music-related resources, and created additional programs to promote the live music brand such as live
performed at city council meetings and the airport (City of Austin 2001, 2007). Mayor Will Wynn declared 2008 “The Year of Austin Music” and encouraged residents to attend at least one live music event each month. The following year, at the recommendation of the Live Music Taskforce, the City established a Music Program Manager and Sound Engineer in the Economic Growth and Redevelopment Services Office (EGRSO) to oversee all music-related programs.

Strong and sustained city support for local music was not due to a large, acclaimed music scene in itself, but because live music served as an important asset in other key objectives related to economic development and growth management. In addition to lobbying by Austin’s music community, the earlier programs described above gained much of their impetus from the City-Chamber economic development strategy of the 1980s, which focused on attracting high-tech research activity in part through the promotion of quality of life amenities – including live music (Austin Chamber of Commerce 1985, 1998; Oden et al. 2007). In the process, the City-Chamber coalition stopped treating live music as a bar scene that attracted hippies, punks, and other social deviants – and thereby posing a general threat to the business climate – and reframed it as an economic development asset.

Music’s significance was reinforced in the 1990s when the city experienced significant economic and population growth. With this growth, came mounting concern over pressure on the city’s natural environment and quality of life, which was paradoxically central to the City’s tech strategy (Austin Chamber of Commerce 1998). In response to this crisis, the City released a long-range growth management plan, the Smart Growth Initiative, which established a “desired development zone” intended to mitigate suburban expansion and encourage central city infill development “in a manner that preserves the character of Austin and its environment” (City of
Austin 2004: 17). In the process, live music and the arts became resources of growth management by serving as a symbol of the city’s “unique culture” in downtown redevelopment and as a defense against fears of homogenization and corporatization of the urban core. To this end, the City attempted to place more cultural facilities downtown through (RFP) requirements (such as the new studios for Austin City Limits in the W Hotel/condominium project), a $31.5 million bond for the construction and renovation of six cultural facilities located primarily downtown, and other arts and music-related initiatives. Ironically, the success of these investments in attracting redevelopment has led to increasingly unaffordable living and work space for many artists and musicians in the center city (Schwartz 2005; Spencer 2008).

A further impetus behind these initiatives can be linked to the interaction of city officials with Richard Florida both before and after publication of Rise of the Creative Class (2002). In brief, Florida drew substantially on the City’s approach to growth management and economic development in the formulation of his creative class thesis, which states in part that cultural amenities—like the arts and music—serve as consumer and lifestyle-based attractions for skilled professionals and tech development (Florida 2000, 2002). In turn, the City adopted the creative city discourse to frame and justify their preexisting approach to economic development and growth management (Grodach 2012a, 2012b; Long 2010; McCann 2007). Austin planning and policy documents began to emphasize the importance of Austin’s “creative community” beginning with The Mayor’s Task Force on the Economy (City of Austin 2003), which motivated the formation of a new economic development office – Economic Growth and Redevelopment Services (EGRSO) – and the incorporation of the Cultural Arts Division into this larger entity. In addition to bolstering public investment in downtown redevelopment through the arts and music, the City hired a Creative Industries Development Manager and reinvented long-standing
programs like the Music Loan Program to incorporate the “Creative Industries” (although music remains the only recipient under the program).

In sum, music – particularly live music – has been a central component of the city’s larger economic development and growth management agendas and key to the city image that served these objectives. While some early programs were geared toward direct support and representation of the music industry, the majority of music policy tended toward the production and promotion of Austin’s music city image particularly following the establishment of the creative city agenda. This image helped to reinforce a narrative that framed Austin as a high-tech center and as a place that cares about environmental and urban sustainability and the quality of life. However, these agendas did not necessarily address the mounting income inequality and gentrification that has come to define the central city following these development initiatives. Paradoxically, the City positioned music as an economic development asset, yet there are few initiatives to directly support and protect the field. As such, while the creative city discourse has played an important role in boosting City investment in the arts and music, this repositioning has not been embraced by the music community as a whole.

COMPETING AGENDAS AND NARRATIVES

High-tech economic development and downtown redevelopment positioned music as a significant political and economic issue through the 1990s. Not only did this result in major challenges for the industry, it also produced an image and policy crisis for the City. Many issues tied to central city redevelopment that negatively affected music development were actually recognized early on in a 2001 study of the music industry conducted by the City (City of Austin
2001). However, it was not until the institutionalization of the creative city discourse that music representatives began to pressure the city into action.

As noted, new residential and commercial activity in the urban core has led to higher rents for low-income households, which includes many musicians. With the gentrification of neighborhoods surrounding the downtown, living and rehearsal space became less affordable and more scarce (Schwartz 2005; Spencer 2008). Music venues faced additional pressure from new mixed-use development projects through increases in property and alcohol sales tax deposits forcing some long-standing clubs to shut their doors. One high profile example is Liberty Lunch, a local institution opened in 1976 and evicted from city-owned land to be redeveloped for a software firm, which would bring in significantly higher property tax returns (Bertin 1999; Scheibal 2001). Further, redevelopment along Waller Creek in downtown will soon remove adjacent property – including 15 live music venues – from the 100-year floodplain, a zoning designation that has kept property taxes and rents in the area lower than adjacent areas. With the redevelopment and zoning changes, property values and property tax returns are anticipated to rise dramatically and the Music Commission and others have called attention to the likely displacement of these clubs (Powell 2010; Music Commission 2010). Additionally, as Austin’s reputation as a music mecca grew, the affordability issue was compounded by the fact that the supply of musicians and music venues has increasingly exceeded local demand (Gregor 2008; City of Austin 2008b). As a result, the large supply of venues and musicians has put further pressure on both by increasing competition for customers and reducing pay for performances (City of Austin 2001). In sum, through the 2000s many musicians and music businesses faced an increasingly precarious work environment, yet no firm policies were in place to address these issues because they were outside the purview of the city’s emphasis on music primarily as a
quality of life amenity within the creative city discourse. As one music advocate opined, “while big companies make fortunes off our town's hip-and-cool rep, the musicians they celebrate are missing out on the quality-of-life miracle” (Gregor 2008).

In addition to the affordability and oversupply issues, music venues faced a separate challenge related to central city redevelopment in the form of conflicting land use issues. Beginning in the 1990s, as many residents were attracted to the urban core for the quality of life, the City approved new downtown redevelopment projects adjacent to “very loud, very successful nightclubs” and received increasing complaints from residents about noise from bars, restaurants, and other establishments that offered live music (VanScoy 1998). The conflict became particularly pronounced in 2005 with the passage of the City of Austin Smoking In Public Places Ordinance, which prohibited smoking within 15 feet of an entrance to any business establishment. To operate around the ordinance and retain patrons, many venues constructed outdoor stages, thus increasing noise complaints (City of Austin 2008b). Further conflict and confusion occurred over the inconsistent application and enforcement of the ordinances, which set separate maximum decibel levels for outdoor performances at music venues and restaurants. Nevertheless, as an interviewee from the Austin Music Commission stated, “under the current ordinance, almost every music venue is perpetually in violation of the stated sound level limit, outdoor or otherwise.” In short, the noise issue exacerbated the conflict between two key policy objectives and components of the city image – sustainable redevelopment and live music.

Finally, the music sector has generally viewed the city’s embrace of Richard Florida’s creative city thesis (Florida 2002) and the incorporation of this concept into planning discourse and policy over the last decade as a challenge to their preeminent status. As described above, music
representatives have resisted this label partly due to its association with central city gentrification. Additionally, the creative city narrative opened a space for arts interests to encourage the city to consider all “creative” activity as a possible economic development target rather than privileging music. This culminated in 2006-2008 when the Cultural Arts Division produced *CreateAustin*, a plan to “establish recommendations to invigorate Austin’s ‘culture of creativity’ to the year 2017” (Cultural Arts Division 2008: 9). Drawing on the creativity discourse, the plan incorporated the music sector into the broader category of creative industries to stress shared issues among sectors including a rising cost of living, but argues that while “Austin is widely known as the ‘live music capital of the world,’ other modes of creativity have not been as successfully supported or branded” (Cultural Arts Division 2008: 18). As one interviewee with *CreateAustin* stressed “I’m concerned that live music is often thought of as the dominant cultural expression here…but that’s not the only [cultural sector] that’s important.”

Not only did the creativity discourse empower arts leaders to move beyond the arts as a nonprofit sector dependent on state support and assert its economic impact and importance to “the core of Austin’s identity” (Cultural Arts Division 2008: 13), it simultaneously intended to chip away at the music sector’s privileged position and reinterpret the Austin story in which live music alone defines cultural economic development and the cultural image of the city.

**NEGOTIATING “AUSTIN'S MUSIC CRISIS”**

Through the 1990s the City increasingly faced a conflict between two key policy objectives and components of the city image: smart growth and live music. The City worked to create a dense, walkable, and mixed-use urban core attractive to professionals and tech firms, yet the success of this program led to outcomes that harmed and marginalized the music community. This conflict
was exacerbated by the promotion of the creative city mandate, which was employed by the City to support the smart growth agenda and by CAD to redefine the city image beyond music. Although these conflicts intensified through the 2000s, it was only with the formation of the Live Music Task Force (LMTF) in 2008 that the music sector experienced success in defending their position (City of Austin 2008b). Ultimately, the task force provided an opportunity for the local music industry to draw on this image crisis as a political weapon and establish a framework to address these challenges and move beyond the City’s image-driven music policy.

According to one taskforce member, LMTF was created to deal with “Austin’s music crisis” (Gregor 2008). For the City, this meant addressing the “increased cost pressures on live music venues as well as an increase in the number of noise complaints” due to growth in the urban core and “address issues of concern to those whose livelihoods depend upon live music” (City of Austin 2008a). Created in January and disbanded in November 2008, the taskforce was comprised of 15 members including music-business owners, musicians, and music representatives from the visitors’ bureau and city. The final report is framed around four issue-based committees: live music venues, entertainment districts, musician services and support, and sound enforcement and control. Each committee offers a set of recommendations, however, the report’s central proposal is that the city should establish a Music Department to develop and serve the live music industry. The plan specifically recommends that this department “should be independent of the existing Cultural Arts Division, in part because of its focus on the ‘for profit’ nature and activity of live music and the role it plays in economic development” (City of Austin 2008b: 2).
This recommendation and the report more generally accentuate a key narrative for the music community rooted in two interrelated arguments. First, despite the fact that many musicians perform both inside and outside commercial channels, the report justifies investing in music on economic grounds as “for profit activity.” As a LMTF supporter espoused, the LMTF is “important for redefining live music in Austin as a fundamentally economic interest…This is about economic development” (Freeman 2008). The economic role is also highlighted through subcommittee recommendations that draw heavily on conventional economic development strategies. For instance, the proposed Music Department is charged with handling industry recruitment and “attracting more traditional industry elements,” incubating new industry, and marketing duties to attract tourists and encourage residents to attend live music. Furthermore, in terms of specific committee recommendations, a primary focus of the venues committee is putting forth incentives for the establishment of new venues such as enhanced soundproofing and reduced building fees (despite concern expressed by LMTF members in the press over the oversupply of music venues and musicians). The musician services subcommittee focuses primarily on job training and business services for musicians.

In addition to establishing music as part of the city’s economic base, LMTF and its promoters attempted to disassociate music from other cultural sectors. Notably, LMTF representatives strategically minimize CAD and CreateAustin as representing nonprofit arts activity and, therefore, being dependent on the City for support. As a LMTF supporter (Freeman 2008) maintains:

Although music obviously is culture, our Cultural Arts department is more attuned to basically taking taxpayer money and saying we value cultural arts and we're going to put money into it, whereas music doesn’t really need money given to it.
In this way, music is framed as a commercial sector that the city depends on for income and for a positive image, despite the fact that the LMTF exists to make recommendations regarding how the city should support live music. This distinction serves to not only reinforce music as a profit-making entity, but also to marginalize CAD’s competing creative sector policy agenda, *CreateAustin*, which encompasses the multiple fields and institutional sectors where many artists – including musicians – work (Cultural Arts Division 2009). In contrast to LMTF’s traditional economic development argument, this plan tries to establish the economic significance of the creative sectors, while also arguing that they contribute to “building community spirit, social cohesion, and tolerance,” provide “lifelong learning opportunities,” and “pathways for healthy development” (Cultural Arts Division 2009: 11). But, as multiple *CreateAustin* interviewees state, such a broad scope became difficult to communicate to city council and EGRSO representatives, who view CAD as focused primarily on nonprofit arts activity despite their responsibility for the city’s film and music programs. Indeed, unlike the LMTF, it took two years for city council to officially approve *CreateAustin* and it did so without funding to actually implement the plan (City of Austin 2010).

LMTF underscores the need for separate and distinct policy by calling for the appointment of individuals with “a strong understanding of the history of Austin live music and experience working with music industry and for-profit development professionals” (City of Austin 2008b: 3). This demand reinforces the distinction from the creative city approach by underscoring the rootedness of the music business in the city and, by emphasizing the need for a specialist, critiques the broad approach of *CreateAustin*. Against CAD’s comprehensive approach, an interviewee from the Music Commission argues,
There should be a dedicated department given the role of music in the economy…We’ll have people who
know music…They won’t be working somewhat on art, somewhat on music, somewhat on film. It is music
100% of the time…I think that if people are fully dedicated to a particular discipline then they can probably
be more efficient than dividing their time amongst two, three or five different areas. You probably can’t
be expert in all of them.

In this way, music actually relies on CreateAustin to craft a contrasting narrative and thereby
fine-tune its own policy story.

Finally, unlike the reestablishment of music’s economic import and the attack on CAD through
the for-profit narrative, the report provides surprisingly little attention to the issue of central city
redevelopment. Despite the high profile attention to this issue in the press, the LMTF addresses
redevelopment and gentrification only indirectly through brief recommendations for
incentivizing affordable musician housing (e.g. density bonuses) in the musician services
subcommittee. These recommendations are vague and do not refer to the rising cost of housing in
the urban core, or the fact that they are dependent on it. Because there is no framing context,
music appears dependent on central city redevelopment rather than harmed by it.

The other primary redevelopment issue – noise – is, however, more widely and concretely
addressed. The report focuses on inconsistent ordinance enforcement by calling for clear
definitions of a live music venue and a “Downtown Entertainment District” and “entertainment
nodes” where incompatible residential uses are minimized or restricted and the sound ordinance
is relaxed. The sound enforcement committee calls for tighter regulation and direct control of
this issue by trained professionals within the proposed Music Department. This includes a recommendation for a new city staff person with experience in live music engineering and acoustics to oversee the management and enforcement of outdoor live music sound control and the complaint and live music permit processes, a requirement for all outdoor venues to utilize a city-approved sound engineer, construction standards for outdoor venues, and to move the sound complaint process from the Police Department to Code Enforcement.

**CITY RESPONSE**

The city has addressed a number of key issues in the LMTF report following its presentation to city council in November 2008. Although city council did not approve the formation of a Music Department, it did appoint a music program manager within EGRSO. This position was filled in 2009 by a LMTF member and former Gibson guitar executive. Additionally, in 2010, the city appointed a designated sound engineer to oversee the regulation, permitting, and enforcement of the sound ordinance as well as provide information and assistance to affected neighborhoods. Besides meeting the taskforce’s demand for direct and knowledgeable representation, these gains are put in context when compared to CreateAustin, which has met with lukewarm city support and no additional funding or positions.

However, the city has not directly addressed the conflicts associated with creative city/smart growth redevelopment beyond reviewing the sound ordinance. Looking to LMTF recommendations, the city has resolved the inconsistency in the sound ordinance by setting the maximum noise level for restaurants with outdoor live music in the Central Business District and
Downtown Mixed Use zone to the same level as designated live music venues (City of Austin n.d.). Additionally, the City has revised the outdoor music venue permits process and provided a notification and appeal system for affected homeowners, which is overseen by the City sound engineer and music program manager (City of Austin n.d.).

In contrast, the city has essentially ignored the music community’s call to address the other major conflict inherent to the creative city narrative – the displacement and need for affordable space for musicians and music venues. Unlike the noise issue or the arts-music distinction, LMTF report did not create a coherent narrative that clearly identified the cause of the problem and presented clear counter strategies to address this, despite city council’s recognition of the affordability issue at the outset. Indeed, producing a narrative that relies heavily on the economic impact and for-profit character of music makes it difficult to incorporate a companion discourse that demonstrates the need for support programs.

CONCLUSION

This chapter examined how and why music became a policy focus for the City of Austin and the subsequent policy challenges to the music community. Moreover, I have demonstrated how representatives of the local music industry attempted to deal with these challenges and renegotiate music policy through plan discourse constructed in the LMTF report. Music became an important part of the city’s policy landscape because it served as an amenity in support of larger strategies related to high-tech economic development and growth management policies focused on downtown redevelopment and the creative city image. However, with the successful
realization of these objectives came pressures on musicians and live music venues in the form of increasingly unaffordable space and noise complaints. Additionally, building on the city’s attention to cultural amenities, the Cultural Affairs Division produced a competing cultural policy discourse that reframed music within a host of creative industries and attempted to dethrone music from its dominant policy position. Music representatives used the LMTF report as a vehicle to identify, frame, and negotiate these policy challenges and craft a discourse to support their agenda. The report dismissed the creative city narrative by reframing the debate as being between for-profit and nonprofit sectors and stressing music’s economic impact. While successful in repelling competing arts sectors and retaining music’s status as the creative industry in the city, the economic discourse focused on internal creative industry competition at the expense of addressing wider social goals despite the high-profile narrative of the displacement of musicians and music venues in the “Live Music Capital of the World.” Ultimately, music leaders were able to broaden policy beyond the image emphasis to achieve more direct representation and achieved their objectives around noise issues, but did not challenge the actual root of these problems, downtown redevelopment.

In sum, this case study illustrates the dynamics and conflicts behind four key issues of urban cultural policy. First, it demonstrates the value of high-profile planning efforts. Despite some trade-offs, the LMTF report was a crucial vehicle to conceptualize and organize a policy front in response to multiple competing issues. Still, a second issue is that plan leaders need to strategically consider the context for planning and the implications of plan discourse. Cities like Austin that rely on the cultural sectors for a positive city image are willing to make decisions that will tarnish this image and potentially harm cultural workers and businesses in the name of
economic growth. Cultural sector representatives face a major obstacle in this regard and, while music interests relied primarily on an economic argument to establish legitimacy, they lost potential social gains in the process. As such, a third issue concerns the fact that the economic narrative so often championed by arts and cultural sector groups has both strengths and weaknesses. While it was a seemingly necessary part of music’s policy story to regain status, the narrative also limited what music representatives could achieve and marginalized potential allies in the arts. Finally, the case shows that, with the emergence of the creative city discourse, urban cultural policy is no longer focused on nonprofit arts activity alone and, as a result, internal competition for limited funding and support between related cultural sectors defines the policy landscape and can distract from other pressing issues in an unprecedented manner. Cultural policy-makers and industry representatives must recognize these realities to push policy forward and to directly serve those working in the arts and cultural sectors.

REFERENCES


City of Austin. (1989) *Austin Music Commission Ordinance.*

--- (2001) *The Role of Music in the Austin Economy,* Austin: City of Austin.


--- (2007) *Austin Alive: mapping place through art and culture,* Austin: City of Austin.


--- (2008b) *Live Music Taskforce,* August, Austin: City of Austin.


Cultural Arts Division. (2009) *CreateAustin Cultural Plan,* Austin: City of Austin.


CHAPTER 8

“To Have and To Need”: Reorganizing Cultural Policy as Panacea for Berlin’s Urban and Economic Woes

Doreen Jakob

During the past two decades, policy makers around the world have re-conceptualized cultural policy. No longer a mere tool for preservation, heritage, and identity, cultural policy today is also used to revitalize urban and economic development, to advance global positioning, to promote attractiveness, and to secure revenue. Berlin’s cultural policy is no exception to this trend. The city, capital, and state have put much of their hopes for growth, prosperity, and centrality on culture. While Berlin’s politicians widely promote the city’s creativity, their actual cultural politics however, are dubious. Despite the widespread perception of Berlin as a heaven for the production of culture, the city’s politics are in fact a leading example for the capitalization of culture that undermines the very foundation on which it thrived (cf. Bajovic 2011; Žmijewski 2011).

In his recent book, David Harvey claims “if only New York or London were more like Berlin” (Harvey 2010: 230). Beset with underutilized real estate and a struggling economy, the city provides ample space for cultural exploration and relatively cheap living conditions. It does share, with New York and London, an equal percentage of cultural industries employment (Senatsverwaltung für Wirtschaft Arbeit und Frauen in Berlin 2005 (SenWAF)). Yet, Berlin’s cultural politics are an obscure matter and much more profit-driven than one might assume. Time and again, the Berlin government has slashed its cultural budget while simultaneously providing
generous financial support to high-profile cultural institutions and businesses, culture-led real estate projects, and spectacular international promotion campaigns for selected cultural industries. In fact, no other mayor seems to present its city as so devoted and driven by culture as Berlin mayor Wowereit. According to him, it is “the best that Berlin has to offer, its unique creativity. Creativity is Berlin’s future” (Presse- und Informationsamt des Landes Berlin 2007).

Yet, the problématique is not merely a question of funding but of agency, task, and goals. In the past, Berlin stakeholders have built large programs to enforce urban and economic revitalization via arts and culture. They have also enacted a process of political reshuffling of cultural policymaking from arts and cultural councils to city marketing, urban, economic, and real estate development organizations (Jakob 2009). However, these new cultural policies offer little support to the actual production of culture; instead, they are mainly focused on its promotion, city-branding, and gentrification capabilities (Jakob 2009, 2010). They are political and economic tools to commercialize culture that threaten to erode the basis on which the lively Berlin cultural scene is built (Horn 2011; Žmijewski 2011).

Long tolerated and/or ignored by cultural producers, these policy developments culminated in a public outcry in January 2011 via the open letter Haben und Brauchen (To Have and To Need) to mayor Wowereit signed by 2,420 cultural producers, curators, representatives of Berlin’s art, culture and educational institutions, and city politicians (Haben und Brauchen 2011). It was triggered by the mayor’s plan to organize an “Achievement Show of Young Berlin Art” (later “based in Berlin”) yet led to an overall review and protest of Berlin’s cultural policies. The signatories demand a “fundamental revision of the concept and curatorial model” of the
exhibition and a permanent Berlin Kunsthalle. They also call for a public discussion of the politics of urban development “within the context of the current transformation process of privatization and commercialization of public space,” and about “how the production and presentation conditions of contemporary art in Berlin can be sustainably supported and developed away from media beacons” (ibid.). Indeed, Haben und Brauchen “prefigures OWS [Occupy Wall Street] in some ways. It was a reaction to corrupt and non-transparent activities in Berlin's cultural funding and management. The initiators have tried to keep it open and non-hierarchical. [Names] have done everything imaginable not to be traditional leaders but rather facilitators for a broader grassroots movement” (personal interview).

This chapter will first provide a short overview of the cultural landscape of Berlin, its geography and historical uniqueness as a formerly divided city. It will then turn to the more recent reorganization of Berlin’s cultural, urban, and economic development policy towards promoting Berlin as the creative city. The research is based on 14 years of participatory observation (six years as resident, eight years as part-time resident) of the Berlin cultural scene, its cultural policy and 83 in-depth interviews with artists and arts organizations, policy makers and urban and economic development organizations, and various news media sources (see Jakob 2009 for further details on research methodology). The research was originally undertaken to understand place-based networking dynamics within Berlin’s cultural industries, the involvement of cultural policy makers and real estate developers, and their effects on network formation (cf. Jakob 2009). Later interviews focused directly on the relationship between artists, arts organizations, and cultural policy makers, including Haben und Brauchen. Building on this background, this chapter argues that the current Berlin cultural policy is not only obscure but also unsustainable
and thus threatens the foundation of Berlin’s cultural production. It concludes by calling for a shift in the city government’s focus from the promotion of cultural activities (“haves”) to their actual production “needs.”

“POOR, BUT SEXY:” THE HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY OF BERLIN’S CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

As the popular phrase by Berlin mayor Wowereit “Berlin: arm, aber sexy” (poor, but sexy) indicates, the city thrives on a relatively low cost of living combined with a lively nightlife and cultural scene that continues to attract young people to visit and locate there. Berlin’s cultural geography is dynamic, fluent, and polycentric, or as Grésillon (2004) finds, without comparison and in strong contrast to, for example, Paris’s relatively rigid cultural geography. Berlin was home to two distinct cultural industries agglomerations for most of the 20th century. While prestigious and traditional cultural institutions like the Staatsoper, the Schauspielhaus, Deutsches Theater, and the museums at the Museum Island are located in Mitte, the central city district, cabarets, variété theaters, revues, and movie theaters opened in Charlottenburg during the 1920s and transformed the later center of West-Berlin into the most prominent contemporary entertainment district at the time. The city was the 1920s “capital of motion pictures” (Grésillon 2004: 74) not only in terms of production (with the Universum Film-AG, later UFA, alone producing more movies than the rest of Europe together) but also in terms of consumption. There were approximately 300 movie theaters, most of them located around Zoologischer Garten and Kurfürstendamm in the Charlottenburg district. Thus, the spatial bipolarity of Berlin’s cultural industries was not a result of the city’s later division but rather was an extension in scale and
intensity of what was already in place during the 1920s.

The years of Berlin’s political separation created an infrastructure that featured a double existence of highly subsidized cultural institutions – three city operas, two radio orchestras, choirs, main libraries, and museum complexes, all with national and international aspirations. Moreover, there were two districts of bohemian character – Prenzlauer Berg (East-Berlin) and Kreuzberg (West-Berlin) – yet with very disparate real estate conditions. While Prenzlauer Berg was home to the East-German political opposition with its many desolate buildings that gave room to alternative forms of creative activities (Dahn 2001), Kreuzberg served as the center of the student and squatter movement in the 1970s and 80s, followed by the development of a housing market where demand exceeded supply (personal interviews).

The fall of the Berlin wall brought about the opportunity for many West-Berlin based cultural producers to seek out and find new, often much larger and free or low cost, spaces for their endeavors in East-Berlin (Grésillon 2004; Jakob 2009: 92, 98). Unification, that is the inauguration of the West-German legal system that protects private property, put an end to most of the squatter activities in East-Berlin. While some groups were able to keep their spaces and legalize their activities, others were emptied often by severe police forces. Prior to unification, the East-Berlin cultural industries landscape was determined by state institutions and organizations with few independent activities. Cultural production was embedded in the large, state-owned conglomerates. Thus the collapse of the communist system and the closure of or mass lay-offs by most East-German companies triggered a phenomenal formation of new creative enterprises and activities in East-Berlin, further fostered by the influx of new residents.
and cultural entrepreneurs from West-Berlin, West-Germany as well as many other countries
(e.g. USA) all in search for new creative, social, and physical opportunities (personal
interviews).

Much of the legacy, myth, and nostalgia of Berlin’s creative freedom and experimental
opportunities stems from this rather short period right before and after the German reunification
in October 1990 when cultural activities existed in a vacuum – politically as well as materially
(personal interview, Berlin-Mitte Department of Cultural Affairs). The restructuring and
reorientation of the East-Berlin public administration – their employees as well as rules and
regulations – brought about a period of freedom and experimentation where East-German
standards were abandoned and West-German models not yet fully practiced. It is described by
artists as “the most beautiful time in life as such, when the old power is gone and the new has not
yet arrived” (Wilms 2003, see also Bain 2003 for the importance of improvisational space).
Moreover, East-Berlin real estate was largely handed to local public housing associations that
would reassign it to their former owners, privatize, or self-manage it. This was not only a very
lengthy and complicated process due to the complex histories of Berlin and Germany but was
also strained by the new settlement of cultural producers and organizations in these properties.
Hence, the Berlin-Mitte public housing association decided to grant commercial space that was
not yet privatized and therefore empty though not directly available for letting on a temporary
basis to cultural groups. Some consider the former manager of the association to be the
“inventor” of the concept of Zwischennutzung – the temporary, in-between use of space – that
soon became to dominate Berlin’s culture-led urban and economic development policy and has
since been adopted in many western metropolises.
Thus, the fall of the Berlin Wall brought an end to a highly regulated and subsidized East- and West-Berlin cultural policy and landscape in exchange for a period of “freedom” and political ignorance towards cultural activities. It was accompanied by de-industrialization and suburbanization that made way for an unprecedented availability of space – physical, social, and cultural – for artistic experimentation. Yet, while the cultural scene flourished, the overall Berlin economy did not, leading to continuous threats of state bankruptcy (cf. Bundesverfassungsgericht 2006, Senatsverwaltung für Finanzen 2006, Wieland 2002). Beginning in the mid-2000s, the Berlin government began a process of reorganizing its cultural and economic development policy towards promoting Berlin as the creative city, with mayor Wowereit leading the way.

CREATIVE CITY BERLIN: THE MORE THE MERRIER?

Berlin is well known as an international center of arts and culture and for its past and recent innovations in film, music, visual, and performing arts. The city is home to a cultural labor force of more than 10 per cent (8 per cent in 2004) of all Berlin employees (approx. 160,500 people) who are employed by more than 22,900 predominantly small and medium sized companies, generating over 21 per cent of the Berlin GDP (Senatsverwaltung für Wirtschaft Arbeit und Frauen in Berlin 2009 (SenWAF)). However, a closer look behind these numbers reveals that the city thrives mainly on retail. Large numbers of the employees that the city administration reports as visual arts and design workers are actually employed in “retailing, clothing and shoes including mail order businesses” (SenWAF 2005: 64, cf. Jakob 2009 for more details on the
calculations). Still, the issue at stake is not whether or not Berlin has more or fewer cultural employees. There are many hurdles in gathering accurate data on the size of a city’s cultural economy (Scott 2004, Drake 2003). Instead, the administration’s reasons for including other, non-cultural, occupations into its analysis point to its goal of situating Berlin within the top ranks of global creative metropolises. In its footnotes, the 2005 report repeatedly explains its calculations by stating that the Vienna report also includes retail and manufacturing and that “Berlin wants and must compare itself to other European metropolises” (SenWAF 2005: 9). In a political climate where Berlin’s cultural economy is supposed to “denote the essential parallel to London and New York” (Büro Christiania 2006: 2), it comes in handy that all three cities share a common percentage of employees in cultural occupations (Center for an Urban Future 2005, Greater London Authority 2004).

Apart from these two overall cultural industries studies initiated and carried out by the Berlin government as guidelines for future cultural policy, the city and European Union via a combination of different social and urban development funds, have also sponsored an array of cultural industries assessment and development studies for nearly every Berlin district. In sum, they all point to the economic importance of Berlin’s cultural industries and reiterate the mayor’s position of creativity as Berlin’s future. In fact, to underline his commitment, Mayor Klaus Wowereit declared cultural affairs a “Chefsache” (matter for the boss) and appointed himself as the new “Cultural Senator” in 2006. His decision prompted an outcry from cultural experts who argue that the Department of Cultural Affairs, already the department with the smallest budget in the Berlin administration, may lose further financial support. Moreover, some critics also worry about the quality and kind of culture that may be supported by the mayor, as “so far he has not
been noticeable for a great interest in high culture. Event culture and party will not substitute for that” (Berlin member of parliament in: Spiegel Online 2006), hinting at the mayor’s regular presence at such venues and events.

Event culture and nightlife are a focus of creative class urban and economic development schemes. For instance, Richard Florida claims that traditional cultural amenities like “the symphony, opera, theater, ballet [...] are taking a backseat to more casual, open, inclusive, and participative activities” (Florida 2005: 84) in attracting talented people. Elizabeth Currid enthusiastically endorses the government’s focus on and support of nightlife venues as centerpieces of cultural industries development strategies, as they are the places that “encourage creativity to happen” (Currid 2007: 185, for a critique of these policies see Peck 2005, 2007). Mayor Wowereit has exemplified such recommendations in his efforts to shed the responsibility for the Berlin State Opera while, for example, supporting Universal Music’s relocation from Hamburg to Berlin with approximately 17.5 Million Euros (Werle 2003).

TO HAVE AND TO NEED: IN SEARCH FOR LONG-TERM CULTURAL POLICY GOALS

Berlin’s cultural policy is an obscure jungle: so is its cultural scene. On any given day, spectators can visit up to 400 visual arts exhibitions (Wahjudi 2010) in addition to countless music, theater, fashion, and film events. While their organization may stand as evidence of a lively and flourishing cultural scene that features pluralistic styles, methods, and genres, it is also fostered by a combination of Berlin’s cultural and urban and economic development policies as well as an
intense competition between cultural producers (Jakob 2009). During the past ten years, Berlin policy makers have not only continuously slashed the city’s cultural budget but have also reshuffled cultural funding away from arts and cultural councils to economic and urban development organizations. This development was further supported by EFRE\(^1\) and “Social City”\(^2\) funds, which have been used to develop local cultural industries incubators and networks, cultural festivals and events like monthly neighborhood art walks, and to administer the allocation and distribution of Zwischenutzung properties for cultural production and mediation amongst others (Jakob 2010).

Often, governmental support of cultural activities and public financing are much needed to sustain new projects and developments. However, these grants do not foster the production of creative work nor are they allotted on principles of artistic quality. Their primary focus is on the economic and urban development of selected neighborhoods via the promotion of arts and culture (Jakob 2010). The move from traditional, curated, and competition-based arts and cultural council funding towards cultural industries funds administered by urban and economic development organizations goes hand in hand with a growing interest in arts and culture on the part of Berlin’s government. While prestigious cultural institutions continue to be funded on the grounds that their international reputation creates prestige for Berlin, the majority of Berlin’s cultural producers are, if at all, supported for their active presence as “pioneers” of gentrification in “underdeveloped” neighborhoods (low cost space in exchange for regular place-based events like art walks) and/or for their role as “ambassadors” of Berlin as a global creative metropolis (funding for international, collective exhibitions and fairs and network formation like “Creative Berlin”). As Bajovic put it “When 20 percent of the gross domestic product of the City of Berlin
is obtained from culture, then Berlin on its part should also give something back to the artists and create and finance locations that benefit artists—platforms that function neither in a self-exploitative nor purely capital-oriented manner” (Bajovic 2011: 15).

In short, Berlin’s current cultural policy is primarily centered on the presentation of the city’s cultural activities and not on increasing productive development. Moreover, because the available funds are distributed by such an array of diverse institutions, more than half of Berlin’s cultural producers are unaware of funding opportunities and even fewer have attempted to access them (Institut für Strategieentwicklung 2011). More importantly, the study based on 456 interviews with Berlin artists from 30 countries finds that the current cultural industries initiatives by the Berlin government not only fail to address their clientele but also have “nothing to do” with the life and occupational realities of professional artists and are “a waste of money” (ibid.: 24-25). In fact, the goals of many arts-led urban and economic development policies are counter-productive and undermine the sustainability and advancement of Berlin’s cultural scene.

Even with the continuous cuts, Berlin’s cultural budget is comparatively large. In 2010, the city allotted 365 million Euros towards cultural activities (Bisky 2010) whereby the prestigious performing arts institutions received more than 200 million and the so-called “free scene” that is, off-spaces and independent producers, received 10 million Euros (Wahjudi 2010). In comparison, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs’ expense budget for the fiscal year 2011 was 141 million U.S. dollars (New York City Department of Cultural Affairs 2012), although U.S. cultural funding differs significantly from the German system with large numbers of additional foundations and philanthropies unavailable and non-existent in Germany.
Moreover, Berlin continues to attract ever more cultural producers and consumers who value the openness, tolerance, diversity, and liveliness of the city and its cultural scene (Institut für Strategieentwicklung 2011). It would seem Berlin-based cultural producers have more than their international peers to be creative, productive, and successful. Yet, their needs are not met.

As argued above, the growth of Berlin’s cultural scene was largely caused by the availability of space: politically, physically, socially, and culturally. Hence, by implication, the bedrock of Berlin’s creative city status is relatively affordable rents and living expenses in combination with social and culturally diverse neighborhoods, mixed-use real estate, and opportunities for experimentation. However, this foundation is eroding. It is not only that rents and living costs have risen tremendously in the past and affordable apartments and studios have become rare, but that the political instrumentalization of cultural producers for the revitalization of “underdeveloped” neighborhoods via Berlin’s cultural policy has created these conditions without including them in a long-term and sustainable vision of Berlin’s urban and cultural development. In other words, “approximately 20 years after the treaty of Germany’s and Berlin’s unification it is unclear where the arts are standing and whereto from an unknown standpoint the path could lead. In the jungle of the city orientation has been lost” (Wahjudi 2010).

It was within this tense environment of strained relationships between Berlin’s policy makers and cultural producers – especially visual artists as they tend to be on the forefront of urban revitalization projects due to their spatial needs – that Berlin mayor Klaus Wowereit announced the organization of a temporary “Achievement Show of Young Berlin Art” in the summer of 2011. The exhibition aimed to showcase the importance of Berlin as an international center for
contemporary art production. Later renamed “based in Berlin,” the six-week long event featured 80 emerging artists who live and work in Berlin. It is the latest of a series of global, creative city marketing strategies with a budget of 1.6 million Euros compared to the four million Euros that the city currently allots to all Berlin visual arts institutions and artists each year. Following the show’s announcement, there was an outcry of over 2,400 people – primarily Berlin-based artists and curators – via an open letter (Haben und Brauchen) that rejected the show as a tool to further instrumentalize and exploit Berlin artists for city marketing, to further economize culture and to advance Wowereit’s own image in an election year. Subsequently, the Rat für die Künste (Council for the Arts) wrote a positioning paper, “Culture makes Berlin” (Rat für die Künste 2011). The Berlin association of fine artists published “Was braucht die Bildende Kunst in Berlin?” (What do the Fine Arts in Berlin Need?) (berufsverband bildender künstler berlin e.V. 2011). The Stiftung Zukunft Berlin (Foundation Future Berlin 2011) developed a statement of principles regarding culture and city development. The Initiative Stadt Neudenken (Initiative for Rethinking the City 2011) called for in a position paper a rethinking of property and urban development. In sum, Berlin’s cultural policy has been under attack from various quarters. The protest articulated is “above all a consequence of an increasing commercialization of art and culture … [whereby] the strategic use of them for the formulating and realizing of political, economic, and representative interests threatens the wealth of art and knowledge production in this city” (Horn 2011: 2).

If Only . . .

Berlin’s cultural policy is geared towards presenting Berlin as a global creative city in search of
international recognition and capital investment. “If only New York and London were more like Berlin” where “land values and property prices are lamentably low, which means that people of little means can easily find not bad places in which to live” writes Harvey (2010: 230). If only Berlin was more like London and New York City is the sentiment of Berlin’s policy makers. Speaking at the “I love Berlin” event, a presentation of Berlin designers at the New York City Museum of Modern Art, Berlin mayor Wovereit announced: “Three years ago it was: MoMA in Berlin. [...] Today it is: Berlin in MoMA. The UNESCO included Berlin into the network of creative cities and awarded it with ‘City of Design’ in 2006. With this the city will further move into the international focus as a creative metropolis” (Presse- und Informationsamt des Landes Berlin 2007). The Berlin government presents its involvement in such marketing initiatives as innovative support strategy and “milestone for the creative scene of the city” (ibid.). These metropolitan comparisons are not new. Nor are the answers by cultural producers: there is more money to be made in London and New York City but the working conditions are better in Berlin. Nevertheless, Berlin’s rents are now disproportionally rising compared to the incomes of most cultural producers. Hence, if only one could sell in London and New York City but live and work in Berlin (personal interviews). Two thirds of all Berlin-based artists currently worry about rising rents (Institut für Strategieentwicklung 2011). It would be their main reason for leaving the city. Yet, “rather than gaining political points by dealing with the problems of the city [...] the Governing Mayor is interested in something else. He is interested in scoring easy points on art, which once served as the social enfant terrible but now ‘decorates the system.’ Art now is no longer just an intellectual safari for philosophers but also a political safari for politicians and the local administration” (Żmijewski 2011).
As Žmijewski writes, “the Berlin of today is a city of artists, and their presence is what shapes its identity. It should treat them with the utmost care” (Žmijewski 2011). Yet, Berlin cultural policy misses that goal. Focusing primarily on the presentation of arts and culture as engines for urban and economic development and political goals, it not only takes away resources for production, but also undermines its own foundation. It “forces” cultural producers to adopt “an opportunistic and servile approach to the authorities” that makes them client of the latter: “such politics is undemocratic” (ibid.). Haben und Brauchen sees the “current thinking about urban and economic development as counter-productive – servicing a small elite and not the majority […] and] politicians as trying to enrich themselves and their cronies, benefiting neither us nor the general populace” (personal interview). At a time when nothing seems certain anymore – neither physical, social, nor cultural freedom – Berlin’s cultural policy makers must rethink their strategies and activities in terms of sustainability and transparency.

Creative cities are “almost invariably uncomfortable, unstable cities, cities kicking over the traces” (Hall 2000: 646). Hall attributes the transformational qualities of a creative city to the presence of people who are simultaneously included and excluded in the established urban society. To actually induce change, these outsiders must communicate their ideas for a new reality and find appropriate support – a process that has been largely lacking in Berlin. Is the wide public outcry and media support regarding “based in Berlin,” the open letter and later formation of the Haben und Brauchen network the first “real” step towards Berlin’s creative city status? If a new post-election cultural policy is to be adopted by Berlin’s cultural producers, its revisions must include a shift from showcasing what they have and instead induce debates that help foster what they need. Haben und Brauchen’s proposal of a new social contract between
cultural industries and politicians, which includes the transparent distribution of the revenues generated by culture, can serve as a first goal of such policy change.

REFERENCES


berufsverband bildender künstler berlin e.v. (2011) *Was braucht die Bildende Kunst in Berlin?*, Berlin: berufsverband bildender künstler berlin e.V.


*Geoforum*, 34: 511-524.


Haben und Brauchen (2011) *To Have and To Need - the open letter* [Online], Berlin: Haben und Brauchen. Online. Available HTTP:


New York City Department of Cultural Affairs (2012) Online. Available HTTP:


(accessed 15 March 2012).

Quartiersmanagement Berlin (2012) Online. Available HTTP:


(accessed 3 March 2012).


---

**ENDNOTES**

1 EFRE (European Funds for Regional Development) are European Union funds that support small and medium sized enterprises and infrastructure projects in underdeveloped areas to create employment and economic growth. They are allotted to non-profit organizations through a local public administration (75.5 million Euros between 2000–2010 for Berlin (Quartiersmanagement Berlin 2012)).

2 The “Soziale Stadt” or Socially Integrative City program is an initiative co-funded by Federal, State, and City governments to support urban development in “Districts With Special Development Needs” (210.5 million Euros between 1999–2010 (ibid.)).
CHAPTER 9
Urban Cultural Policy, City Size, and Proximity

Chris Gibson and Gordon Waitt

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter we bring a distinctly geographical perspective to questions of urban cultural policy. We are interested in how perceptions (and concrete experiences) of city size and proximity shape the politics of urban cultural policy making. The particular kind of urban cultural policy-making we discuss relates to the pervasive idea that cities ought to refashion their economic development policies and planning regimes to become “creative cities” (Landry 2000). Central to this is an assumption that all places now compete with each other for creative industries and people – the supposed “creative class,” who are imagined as a vital demographic group to capture as in-migrants, for the investment and innovation they bring with them (Florida 2002). A normative “model” of sorts has subsequently stemmed from this idea in cultural policy circles, where creativity becomes a catalyst for economic regeneration, especially in deindustrializing cities, above and beyond community-building goals (Gibson and Kong 2005).

This normative cultural policy script has travelled with remarkable persistence, well beyond its origins in iconic cities in Europe and North America, such that even tiny, remote settlements in the Australian outback have sought to develop creative industries policies (Gibson 2012). In some locations the emphasis is on productive creativity (in terms of employment, firms, and the design of things) while in others the creative city script mutates
into a more general emphasis on culture, the arts, lifestyle and consumption (Luckman et al 2009). On-going debate surrounds the utility of related concepts such as cultural industries, creative industries, and cultural economy (O’Connor 2009), and cleavages between such terms and their various interpretations accordingly influence the particular mix of urban cultural policy moves adopted – from cultural districts planning to arts incubator schemes (Gibson 2008). How policy ideas about creative industries are framed and deployed across and between places as a result of such travels is our particular focus.

The two specific places we discuss in this chapter are Sydney and Wollongong, neighboring cities on Australia’s Pacific east coast. Wollongong, where both authors work, is a small-medium sized industrial city of 280,000 people with few prominent contributions to Australian or international cultural life (though it has always had lively vernacular cultural activities) and which has sought to promote creative industries in a commercial, market-orientated fashion – as both production and consumption. Sydney, where both authors live, is a major world city, Asia-Pacific financial hub, was host to the 2000 Olympic Games, and is home to several creative industry clusters including a global scale film industry and the headquarters of the nation’s television studios, print media, publishing houses, music labels, dance companies and theaters. Yet Sydney has found no need to develop a city-wide cultural policy or creative industries strategy. Both share the same policymaking context and system of governance and are only 70 kilometers (40 miles) apart. But the realities and perceptions of these two cities could not be more different, with profound implications for urban cultural policymaking. Following the lead of Bell and Jayne (2006), we therefore ask: Do city size and proximity matter in how ideas travel, shaping the possibilities for urban cultural policymaking? Answering this question necessitates thinking in a relational fashion about cities, beyond a single locale.
THINKING PLACE RELATIONALLY: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Our emphasis is on the context of cultural policy (Kong 2000). Following Kong et al (2006) and Luckman et al (2009) we are particularly concerned with tracing how urban cultural policy discourses travel and are mutated (or maintained) across geographical space. Relational context is our concern – that is, how cultural policy decisions are made through flows of ideas between places, and in comparison with other places, near and far. Relational thinking has been particularly influential in geography over the past decade, which sees cities less as bounded entities than as intersecting sites of relationships, networks, infrastructures and mobilities (Amin and Thrift 2002). Cities are products of complex geometries of power – and exist in relation to each other as much as possess their own internal logics (Massey 2005). One relevant phenomenon from planning is the concept of “borrowed size” (Alonso 1973), where smaller places capitalize on the features and attributes of much larger neighboring places. It becomes possible, for instance, for firms to relocate to smaller towns proximate to large cities and yet still leverage the specialized labor and informational networks of metropolitan centers (Phelps et al 2001). Hence seemingly “banal” intermediate places near glamorous big cities are important for illustrating more diffuse forms of agglomeration (Phelps 2004). In the context of urban cultural policy-making discussed below in Sydney and Wollongong, borrowed size manifests in ambiguous relations between production and consumption of culture in the two places: a case of seemingly insurmountable cultural differences overlain by opportunities seized and lost due to the proximate positions of a small and large city.

Crucially too, relational geographies are shaped by particular actors such as policy-makers in
institutions and gatekeeping positions (Gallan 2012). Such actors in turn make decisions and hold opinions influenced by many motivations, economic, emotional, and cognitive. Urban cultural policies adopted by cities are thus as much emotive responses to feelings like pride or shame as they are calculated economic strategies. With this in mind, we now briefly discuss the peculiar cases of Wollongong and Sydney – physically neighbors but of different size and inclination towards urban cultural policy-making – before interrogating questions of city size and proximity.

CREATIVITY – A MEANS TO REINVENT WOLLONGONG?

Wollongong pales in comparison to Australia’s larger metropolises in terms of population size, world city competitiveness, and presence of creative industry firms (Waitt and Gibson 2009). Despite this, Wollongong City Council was one of the first Australian municipal authorities to embrace cultural policy-making, aspiring to become the “City of the Arts” in the 1990s, prior to the Richard Florida phenomenon. That this was the case is in itself a challenge to presumptions about large cities in Britain and North America driving urban cultural policy-making, and specifically the creativity agenda. Wollongong’s early pursuit of creativity-led urban cultural policy resulted from a search for futures outside heavy industry. By the 1980s Wollongong was severely hit by the global economic restructuring of the steel industry. The downsizing of the steelworks fed increasing levels of unemployment (Haughton 1990), the city was stigmatized in the Australian media for its high levels of unemployment, pollution and union militancy – an antonym for nearby “world city” Sydney with its tourism, finance and information economies – and the challenges of economic restructuring became a catalyst for the first stirring of engagements with ideas of socioculturally-led regeneration. Shame associated with rust-belt imagery triggered an embrace of urban policy-making.
Ideas of promoting culture (with a twin emphasis on creativity as community capacity building and commercial practice) first appeared in Wollongong in planning documents shortly after a number of national reports had underscored the importance of creativity to the national economy – the Federal Labor government’s *Creative Nation* strategy (1994), and the subsequent Coalition conservative government’s *For Art’s Sake - a fair go* (1996). In 1998, Wollongong City Council embraced a discourse of culture as regeneration potential, within which creativity was both means to build socio-economic resilience and panacea to economic vulnerability. They commissioned a report to enable the preparation of a Cultural Plan, which had previously never been a core interest of local government. Indeed, Wollongong City Council was one of the first Australian authorities to develop cultural planning guidelines. Notably, both the Federal government reports and Wollongong’s own policy-making pre-date the United Kingdom’s Cool Britannia campaign and similar policy efforts in the United States, and the widespread popularity of such industries in planning discourse spurred by Richard Florida and Charles Landry in the early 2000s.

The title of the first consultant report to stem from this initiative used the space-race metaphor of “take off” to imply that Wollongong was ready to fashion a metropolitan future centered on commercializing culture: *Point of Take Off: Cultural Policy Framework and Cultural Plan 1998-2003* (Australian Street Company 1998). In 1999 momentum grew, as evident in the City Council commissioning *Wollongong Cultural Industries Audit* (Guppy and Associates and National Economics 2000). In these city visions, culture, creativity, the arts and cultural industries appeared intermingled conceptually, as integral parts of Wollongong’s social and economic future. In 1998 Council’s arrived at the “point of take off.” Culture was positioned as means by which Wollongong could “break from the past”
(Guppy and Associates and National Economics 2000: 4) – a new means to civic pride in response to the shame of deindustrialization. Nearby Sydney provided huge opportunities to borrow from its increasing global visibility and concentration of commercial creative industries.

On the one hand, initially outlined in Council reports was an ongoing commitment to conventional Council involvement with the arts through supporting emerging artists, encouraging active participation in the arts, and opening the arts to a wider audience through festivals and exhibitions. Particular attention was drawn to how these conventional, yet previously undervalued roles of creative activity were essential in facilitating a sense of “belonging” and “community” through fostering social relationships. Creativity could help “save” Wollongong through rebuilding community and creating social tolerance in suburbs most disadvantaged by the downsizing of manufacturing activities. Artists-in-the-community design initiatives simultaneously celebrated social difference, presented opportunities for free expression, enhanced creative skills, and encouraged participation from marginalized social groups.

On the other hand, *Point of take off* also outlined the convergence of economy and culture as “creative industries” in national policy thinking. The report explained how “cultural industries integrate key aspects of the arts, media, technology and telecommunications sectors from the stage of initial creation and production to distribution, marketing and consumption” (1998: 3). *Wollongong Cultural Industries Audit* provided the empirical evidence of this union of economic and culture in the municipal economy. This report estimated that, in 1998, the cultural industries contributed A$129.4 million (2.7 per cent of total industrial output, or slightly above the national average) to the Wollongong economy,
and, in 1996, city residents spent around A$204 million total on cultural industry products (Guppy and Associates and National Economics 2000). Wollongong, it was presumed, could maximize spillover advantages from Sydney’s flourishing creative scenes.

Both documents pre-empted what would become the conventional creative city script, presenting ideas for how “creativity” could be employed to generate local skills bases for future businesses and facilities. By 2003, the objective was repositioning Wollongong as the “City of the Arts” (Australian Street Company 1998). A mix of initiatives that has since become familiar for major metropolises included “smart corridors,” “cultural incubators,” “sustainable environments,” “liveable neighborhoods,” “cultural precincts,” “tolerance” and “social diversity.” Targeted especially were districts associated with heavy industry, unemployment, and crime – the most intense sources of shame to civic authorities (Barnes et al 2006). According to the authors of Wollongong Cultural Industries Audit, for any cultural industries action plan to succeed it was essential for Wollongong to transform embarrassing landscapes of decay into “energetic city spaces” – because these were seemingly where cultural activities could flourish (Guppy and Associates and National Economics 2000:47).

Following the big city, pro-creative industries agenda, an attempt to “go global” necessitated a new brand for the city. As the consultants explained, “economic change must be accompanied by re-imaging… If Wollongong is serious about cultural industries development then it must prioritise environments in which cultural activities can flourish” (Guppy and Associates and National Economics 2000: 59). The “rebranding” of Wollongong began with the launch of the 1999 Wollongong Image Campaign, a 5-year strategy to re-image the city. Rather than focusing upon maintaining, nurturing, and enhancing creative skills of people already living in the city, the campaign drew on conventional ideas of civic
boosterism to emphasize reinventing the imagined geographies of the city, in a bid to make the city attractive to outside potential businesses, students, tourists and “sea-changers” (especially those people seeking to leave metropolitan Sydney in search of a coastal “village” atmosphere). This team of consultants “branded” Wollongong the “City of Innovation;” allegedly inspired by the “big-city” strengths of the manufacturing and tertiary education sectors (Wollongong City Council 2004). The brand was adopted immediately, and the previous city slogan, “City of Diversity,” was jettisoned.

Now, some years after the global success of Richard Florida’s creative class thesis and Landry’s (and others) conceptions of the creative economy, the normative creative industry model still lingers in policy thinking, and the broad idea of culture-led regeneration still informs New South Wales State Government urban revitalization plans for Wollongong: plans were to “rebrand Wollongong as the cultural centre of the region” (NSW Department of Planning 2006a: 28). Plans for intensive creative industries employment nevertheless appear to be displaced by an emphasis on consumption: to develop improved streetscapes, remove restrictions on high-rise apartment and office blocks in the city center, and encourage waterfront redevelopment through a beachside promenade now also re-branded as “The Blue Mile.” The meaning of cultural policy mutated from aspirational creative industries promotion into (rather unimaginative) urban design enhancement focused on attracting inward investment and migration from nearby metropolitan Sydney.

CREATIVITY – QUINTESSENTIALLY SYDNEY?

If Wollongong’s embrace of a normative creative city script was born from civic anxieties about economic futures, as well as a cultural cringe in comparison to larger, more bohemian
cities, then the story of nearby Sydney is its antithesis: a story of glamour, superiority, and privilege.

Always a center for the arts and creative industries, Sydney through the 1980s and 1990s pursued an entrepreneurial and market-orientated path to creative industries development rather than through explicit cultural policy-making. Whereas city authorities and state governments in Melbourne, Brisbane, and Adelaide all worked hard to attract cultural events, sponsor the arts and seed investment in creative industries (as did Singapore, Auckland, and Hong Kong elsewhere in the Southeast Asian region), Sydney assumed primacy in culture and creativity by virtue of its dominance, since the 1970s, in finance, transport, and tourism – Australia’s “world city.” Compounded by fragmented local government (see below), the New South Wales government, on whom the prime responsibility for planning in Sydney rests, simply assumed creative industries were concentrated in Sydney as a result of market forces – Sydney’s innate superiority – thus obviating the need for overt policy-making. Indeed, Sydney did inherit a vast wealth of creative industries because it had been Australia’s largest city for half a century, and because well-established arts and media companies and facilities were based there previously, including the Sydney Opera House, the Murdoch and Fairfax media empires, studios for all national television channels, and the headquarters of global architecture and urban design firms associated with commercial office construction (Gibson et al 2002; O’Regan et al 2011). Sydney also had thriving live music scenes, fashion labels and nightclubs – typical of a city of its size and type. Unlike any other Australian city (including Wollongong), the New South Wales government therefore felt no particular need to develop a creative industries policy for Sydney when plenty of commercial
creative industries had already grown organically. Indeed, when Richard Florida himself toured Australia in the wake of the enormous success of *The Rise of the Creative Class* (2002), his public trumpeting of Sydney as one of the world’s great cultural cities, with a quarter of its population made up of the “creative class,” was met on the whole with quiet confirmation rather than surprise or elation. Of course Sydney is a cultural capital, people assumed – it is a world city, after all.

There have been instances where urban economic development policy-making for Sydney has meshed with cultural concerns. The Sydney 2000 Olympic Games was conceived as both economic development driver and a focal point for major arts and cultural events initiatives. Likewise, when opportunities arose in the mid-1990s to secure a major global film studio funded by News Corporation’s Fox film label, the New South Wales government circumvented regular planning approvals processes in order to lure and secure investment over rival states. The result was the 1999 transfer and transformation of the (much-loved) Art Deco-era Royal Agricultural Showgrounds into Fox Film Studios.

Absence of an integrated approach to urban cultural policy-making in Sydney is also a function of residual governance structures: Sydney for instance has no single civic council or governing body. It is a metropolitan area covered by 38 local councils, over which key infrastructure and planning decisions are made by the New South Wales state government. Individual local councils within Sydney have at times pursued urban cultural policies and these have included emphases on creativity. But these cover only small fractions of the city and are framed within the scope of local government affairs, including emphasis on local cultural festivals, creativity hubs, and community cultural development programs (Gibson
local government cultural planning frequently promotes tolerance, understanding, and celebration of ethnic diversity rather than creative industries per se. Such efforts rarely “scale up,” and therefore fail to constitute an urban cultural policy. Vast parts of the policy-making arena for which local government does not have responsibility (e.g. artists’ livelihoods, metropolitan scale cultural facilities) are not considered. The result is that Sydney, satisfied in its own success as a global financial and tourist city, is without an overarching urban cultural policy or framework.

The 2000 Olympics and the Fox Studios developments were therefore not so much strategic urban cultural policy-making to support local enterprises, but rather opportunistic, ad hoc initiatives born from entrepreneurial governance in service of the rhetoric of place competition – seeking to attract mega-events or a large corporate player who could contribute to and confirm Sydney’s “world city” image (cf. Kong 2007). Glamour trumped community capacity-building. Subsequent controversies and critiques centered on the removal of planning powers from local government (and concentration of authority in the single hand of the New South Wales state planning minister); white elephant status of Olympic precincts and facilities; the lack of connection between the Olympic precinct and its surrounding neighbourhoods, and between Fox Studios and Sydney’s pre-existing film-making community. Both the Olympics and Fox Studios development lacked transparency; attracted major public subsidies; alienated public land, and bypassed local planning controls in such a way as to lift “a commercial venture out of the normal planning process” (Sydney Morning Herald, 25/11/1995). In the case of Fox Studios, the development strategy “implicated the state in a process of reducing accepted levels of public participation and local government involvement in the approval process and in substantial but mostly unpremeditated
culture (sport, film) were therefore less consistent with a creative city script, *a la* Wollongong, and more in sync with a pro-development, city boosterish agenda fueled by pride, and obsessed with world city status.

**SIZE MATTERS?**

Now that some policy-making context has been described for each of our two case study cities, Wollongong and Sydney, we turn to more deeply consider the ambiguities of city size and proximity. Often assumed, but rarely critically interrogated, is the realistic capacity of numerically smaller cities to transform both place images and urban economies towards creativity. This is a central question for our analysis of Wollongong and Sydney. Quite obviously Sydney is able to support a critical mass of creative activities not possible in Wollongong: scores of live music venues, theaters, and dance companies; opera houses and companies of world standing; major film studios and architectural firms. However, just as Bell and Jayne (2006: 5) remind us, “in a global urban order characterized at once by dense networks of interconnection and by intense inter-urban competition, absolute size is less important. …it’s about ways of acting, self image, the sedimented structures of feelings, sense of place and aspiration.” These emotive and affective elements of urban cultural policy development are infused by a sense of scale emanating from experiences of place.

Such a focus goes some way to explain how, despite early intentions to creative transformation, Wollongong has struggled to achieve sustained successes in repositioning the city’s economy and image. Arguably this is because the particular rhetoric adopted since the 1990s stressed replicating big city creative industries and activities, as cosmopolitan antidote
local circumstances. While substantial industrial restructuring occurred in Wollongong during the 1980s (and was repeated in 2011), the steel plant in fact remains open. The city retains a large blue collar workforce, although middle classes have increased through growth in health services and the University of Wollongong. The retention of heavy industry means that aspirations to transform Wollongong into a city of innovation have had to jostle with other competing ideas and emotions about the drivers of the city’s economy (cf. Jayne 2004). The deindustrializing assumption underpinning the pro-creativity argument does not neatly apply here. Thus, in terms of place narratives, older emotional associations between Wollongong, working class communities, coal mining, and steel-making continue to dominate the image of the city – and politically, shape local industry development priorities. Wollongong’s inner-city has not been emptied of its working class community or heavy industries and the metropolitan creative city script clashes with this residual identity of a regional industrial city.

Part of the problem has been the underlying neoliberalism apparent in much planning for creativity in big cities; in Wollongong as elsewhere planners and policy-makers have been encouraged to focus on a pre-established key list of creative industries, and hence, on the private sector, on firms and entrepreneurs, on the so-called “creative class” who populate them, rather than on people more generally (as individual creators, as residents or citizens within a city) (Ettlinger 2010). As is often also the case in large cities host to powerful vested interests, in Wollongong fringe groups, amateurs, community non-profit collectives and those practicing unusual forms of creativity are missing from analysis and policy-making (cf. Mayes 2010). Recent efforts to document practices in Wollongong as diverse as custom car design, surfboard shaping and Indigenous hip-hop have gone some way towards redressing
the lack of recognition of vernacular forms of creativity (Warren and Evitt 2010; Warren and Gibson 2011; Gibson et al 2012). However, in policy discourses a more conventional framing persists, of creativity as established arts and commercial creative industries – in aspiration of big city concentrations of capital and cosmopolitan culture.

In Sydney meanwhile, underlying issues created by its size and popularity have not been adequately addressed by urban cultural policy making. For example, during the 1990s and into the 2000s, a housing cost squeeze threatened the ability of many creative producers to continue their activities, limiting the number of people attempting to undertake creative work while living in Sydney. While this affordability problem is apparent in popular places of various sizes (for example, tiny but immensely popular Byron Bay on the New South Wales Far North Coast), it is particularly acute in Sydney. Rises in rents resulting from the city’s continued prosperity meant that many grassroots creative producers struggled to meet accommodation costs or to devote enough time to creative pursuits. Inner-city suburbs with reputations for student and bohemian culture became less affordable, and began to see the construction of new higher density residential apartment blocks, conversions of previously cheap warehouse space into luxury “loft-style” accommodation, and the eviction of many of the original artistic collectives (cf. Zukin 1995).

On top of this, reactions of newer generations of gentrifying residents to “unwanted” aspects of inner-city living ironically reduced certain cultural activities. This was particularly the case for many live music venues. Some venues were forced to close doors after noise complaints made by incoming gentrifiers (Gibson and Homan 2004). Music venues that made such locations “trendy” in the first place were threatened as part of the very transformations
they inadvertently triggered. Other cultural facilities (such as the Albury Hotel in Darlinghurst and the Newtown Hotel, which were once the city’s premiere drag queen performance venues) were closed because of rising rents (and the temptation for landlords to install higher-paying global brand retail tenants). The net effect is that those most responsible for “kick-starting” the creative economy are marginalized, bearing the brunt of the urban change that results from creativity-led gentrification in successful, large cities. A flow-on effect has been that creative people have moved from Sydney to other areas. In 2009 and 2010 the mainstream media ran a sequence of stories about how creative producers had moved from Sydney to other capital cities, notably Melbourne and Brisbane, and to peri- and non-metropolitan areas where rents were comparatively lower and amenable lifestyles could still be pursued. Metropolitan size and world city status brought Sydney prosperity and critical mass to enjoy sophisticated and diverse commercial creative industries, but without requisite planning or regulation its success and continued growth led to diminishing returns, brutal housing market pressures, and eventually an alarming artistic exodus.

PROXIMITY MATTERS?

The case of two nearby cities – one large, one small – additionally rests on the extent to which “borrowed size” is an apparent trend or mere aspiration. Following Bell and Jayne’s (2006) logic, we would add that the physical distance between two cities is supplemented by powerful discourses of proximity. In this way proximity, like size, becomes qualitative and relative, rather than quantitative and absolute. Any analysis of Wollongong’s city economy and image must be contextualized in light of its proximity to Sydney. Meanwhile in Sydney, proximity to nearby Wollongong means incorporation of Wollongong’s main port, Port
Kembla, into transport and logistics plans for the Greater Sydney metropolitan region. In cultural terms, Sydney’s relative proximity to competing Melbourne and cities in the wider Asia-Pacific region such as Singapore, Hong Kong, and Los Angeles more frequently informs policy imaginations. Hence, while Wollongong consistently grapples with issues of losing young up and coming creative workers to Sydney, and having to compete for audience share with the offerings of Sydney’s creative scenes, Sydney in turn is now concerned with a loss of artists to Melbourne and Brisbane, with mega-events that attract world media attention, and with maintaining its relative position on world city league tables vis-à-vis other Asian and Pacific American counterparts.

Especially prominent is Sydney’s on-going rivalry with Melbourne – Australia’s other major metropolis in Victoria, an hour’s flight south. Fifty years of supremacy in global financial affairs and international tourism (and arguably a lackadaisical attitude) have meant that New South Wales State Governments of both left and right political persuasions have assumed dominance over Melbourne in cultural affairs as well. Sydney’s absence of policy-initiatives promoting culture and the creative industries was a product of its superiority complex – that is until public opinion and media coverage swung towards Melbourne, embarrassing Sydney and catalyzing a series of policy responses. Momentum finally developed when Melbourne had seemingly assumed the mantle of Australia’s “cultural capital” having secured several high profile cultural and sporting events, a highly-successful domestic tourism advertising campaign that trumpeted Melbourne’s bohemian inner-city culture and “laneway” café/arts hubs, and a sequence of media reports on Melbourne’s more sympathetic approach to grass-roots music, design, and fashion industries. Coupled with extant out-flows of artists and musicians to Melbourne, by the late 2000s suddenly Sydney had a problem with its
increasingly confident southern competitor. Yet, even when the NSW government responded with particular policy moves, these again occurred within boosterish agendas focused around cultural tourism, mega-events, and the ever-present world city status anxiety. In 2007 then Premier Morris Iemma formed Events NSW as a strategic government-backed corporate body to develop new events and attract major festivals and sporting events to Sydney, in direct competition with Melbourne, and as a buttress to on-going efforts to maintain world city status and global media visibility. Its focus was therefore initially metropolitan (“it will drive a more aggressive approach to attracting big name events to Sydney” (Premier of NSW 2007a) and geared towards international place marketing (“It will also help cement Sydney’s status as Australia’s global city” (Premier of NSW 2007b)). The focus was squarely on spectacle and on Sydney’s ability to maintain supremacy over Melbourne, at the expense of policy-making further afield in the state, including Wollongong (Gibson and Connell 2012), and favoring imported “big name” acts and curators at the expense of nurturing local talent.

Meanwhile, against the grain of failed attempts to kick-start metropolitan scale creative industries, Wollongong’s proximity to Sydney opened up other new opportunities. Although culturally distant and antonymic to glamorous Sydney, changing discourses of proximity eventually conspired to render Wollongong a viable place for spillover cultural activities – Wollongong was simply too close physically, and too scenic, to be forever symbolically distant from Sydney. Coupled with Sydney’s affordability problem for artists and cultural producers, Wollongong has experienced a sustained in-migration of certain kinds of creative workers seeking more affordable housing, and a lifestyle change. This is heightened because of the spatial configuration and aesthetics of Wollongong. The city is linear, comprised of several small centers hemmed in along 30 kilometers of coastline, and physically constrained
by the Illawarra Escarpment to the west and the Royal National Park in the north. Those parts of Wollongong’s linear string of settlements closest to Sydney are understood as picturesque – small hamlets nestled between dramatic rainforest escarpment, national parks, and popular surf beaches – and these have grown organically as hubs of creative activities, without the need for place branding or creative industry policies. The result is a juxtaposed and polarized Wollongong – in different parts underprivileged and luxurious, industrial and tranquil – and thus troubled by competing visions of what constitutes its industrial base and economic future. In Wollongong, actual transformations related to culture and creative industries have therefore stemmed less from purpose-planned interventions and intentions (the importation of the big city creativity script), and more from spontaneous changes in more scenic parts of the city closest to Sydney, where out migration from Sydney was possible.

Again, there is ambiguity and irony around the extent to which Wollongong is borrowing from Sydney’s size and cultural gravity. In practical terms, for both creative producers and consumers in Wollongong, a market of global proportions is only an hour’s drive or train ride away. In 2006, it was estimated that over 20,000 people (or nearly 16 per cent of the workforce) travel daily to and from Sydney (NSW Department of Planning 2006b). Many of these commuters are employed in the so-called creative industries in Sydney, particularly those living in the northern suburbs of Wollongong. Rates of employment in cultural and recreational service industries are much higher in this part of Wollongong, as are house prices. Most of these commuters may understand Wollongong as both “close to Sydney” and “small.” They work in the creative industries, and reflecting Alonso’s (1973) concept of borrowed size, operate in and through Sydney into global professional networks. Their very presence in Wollongong’s northern suburbs is a form of “borrowing” from Sydney, yet they
may also simultaneously recoil from Wollongong’s local, mostly amateur arts and cultural scenes (in contrast to Sydney’s glossy presence in global film, music, and fashion industries). Heightening understandings of relative smallness and proximity are present when the northern suburbs are constituted as “villages,” and valued for their quaint, quiet seaside ambience – but these understandings are a world apart from Wollongong’s heavy industrial south-side.

Rather than moving to Wollongong’s inner-city or problematic south-side industrial districts (as Wollongong planners might wish they did), creative workers have been consistently attracted from Sydney to the northern outskirts, to beach-side amenities in small hamlets. This compares with similar experiences in the United States and Canada, where smaller “quality of life” settlements proximate to big cities have generated inward streams of migrants and investment (see Navarez 2002), though cost of living is a factor too.

Curiously, despite the abundant examples of creative worker in-migration to northern beachside hamlets, this part of the city never factored strongly in civic visions of Wollongong as a “creative city.” Lacking “big ticket” industries found in large creative cities and the social attributes of Richard Florida’s creative class, the northern suburbs of Wollongong rated no specific mention in the cultural industries audit or earlier planning documents. On the northern strip, regeneration occurred almost completely apart from local government planning initiatives and beyond re-imaging strategies. Wollongong Council did play a role in having to approve individual redevelopments of old cottages into seaside mansions, but other than this ad hoc decision-making as a planning authority, the most successful example of creative city transformation in Wollongong was organic and driven by spillovers from Sydney, and non-corporate, more vernacular forms of cultural production and especially consumption (café culture, beach lifestyle, and an artistic ethos).
At the same time, both size and proximity were reconfigured discursively in other ways that worked against Wollongong’s transformation into a creative city. For instance, desires to generate a lively nightlife and street scene were always going to be difficult to achieve given proximity to Sydney. Survey results from the Australia Street Company (1998) suggested that many residents, particularly in Wollongong’s southern suburbs, rarely attended public cultural venues, preferring commercial and home-based activities. Furthermore, on the occasion they did attend a cultural venue they associated it with “the arts”; this was in turn normally coupled with a “big night out” in Sydney. The aspirations and leisure travel behaviors of many Wollongong residents – who see Sydney as close and large, and therefore more enticing – undermines the future possible viability of fledging creative businesses, live music venues, and eateries locally. This “nightlife-commuting” to Sydney then further reinforces the reputation of Wollongong’s downtown area as boring, anti-cosmopolitan, and dangerous. Fears of unregulated activities in public spaces made desolate by “nightlife-commuting” and a preference for home-based activities resulted in banning activities such as busking at night on the city’s main shopping street. In contrast to the logic of borrowing from Sydney’s size and status, smallness and proximity combine in a circular process limiting prospects for start-up cultural and creative entrepreneurs in Wollongong.

**CONCLUSION**

By focusing on city size and proximity in this chapter, we bring into discussions of cultural policy-making the relative geographies of urban settings. We do not suggest that city size and proximity are preeminent factors. In Wollongong and Sydney class, gender, identity and ethnicity are also deeply woven into cultural policy debates (see Waitt and Gibson 2009; Warren and Gibson, forthcoming). Nevertheless, important complexities arise from the
materialities and perceptions of the relative positions and gravity of cities within an urban hierarchy. The size and proximity of cities become ambiguous depending upon how they are woven into everyday lives of different people. Hence, depending upon the way it is talked about, Wollongong can be simultaneously “big” or “small,” “near” or “far.” Wollongong remains antonymic to “global” Sydney, but on the city’s north side it has in a quiet way borrowed from Sydney in terms of an evolving artistic community within commuting distance. Urban cultural policy-making has evolved largely disconnected to this demographic process, and instead focused on “fixing” those parts of Wollongong most repulsive to civic boosters: plain suburbs and streetscapes, social problems of unemployment and crime, and the need to jettison an industrial image in favor of a more urbane, cosmopolitan identity (Barnes et al 2006). In contrast, the way people normally talk about Sydney has nothing to do with Wollongong; it is naturally assumed that Sydney is relatively big and important; a place where other kinds of interstate and international proximities and rivalries resonate strongly – fueled by embarrassment and civic pride.

The city is therefore not a single bounded entity that is mutable to the desires of urban planners. Instead, the cases of Sydney and Wollongong show how cities are networks of interconnections and flows of people, ideas and investments (Amin and Thrift 2002). Creative workers in Sydney seeking more affordable accommodation and “quality of life” in a comparatively small place have moved to form a notable creative community in Wollongong’s northern beaches, yet at the same time, residents of Wollongong seeking entertainment and access to creative products instead by-passed this and commuted to Sydney for shopping and nightlife. Hence, the functions of a city within networks of movement are as important as smallness defined strictly through population size.
These two cities also demonstrate how the intersection of discourses of size and proximity can inhibit the flourishing of creative industries. On the one hand, New South Wales state planning has imagined Wollongong not only as proximate to Sydney, but as part of Greater Metropolitan Sydney and positioned Port Kembla as Sydney’s future “working-port.” Creativity is still imagined as panacea to deindustrialization, but within a big city frame rather than one geared around local vernacular creativities. Yet many residents and civic leaders continued to think about Wollongong as a small town with strong working class legacies; with skepticism towards culture, art, leisure, and creativity. Working-class pride buffed by legacies of manufacturing, engineering, and science left little room for Wollongong to become a “City of the Arts.” Meanwhile, for a “big night out,” attendance at a festival, event or music gig, Wollongong was always going to be seen as less than the highly-regarded “scenes” of nearby Sydney. Instead, organically developed creative “hamlets” emerged along a scattered string of Wollongong’s northern beachside villages outside cultural policy-making. This was more to do with changing narratives of proximity to Sydney, the circulation of discourses in Australia of beach-side living as idyllic quality of life (in direct parallel to experiences in Southern California – see Navarez 2002), and the vernacular pursuits of grass-roots artists, musicians, writers, and documentary makers who could work from home studios, and would prefer scenic locations in which to live and be inspired but who could only afford relatively inexpensive property prices.

The scripting and response to regeneration stories join in complex and competing understandings of place, city size, and proximity. How city size and proximity are discursively and emotionally constituted matters enormously, as much as physical realities, troubling linear narratives of urban regeneration informed by metropolitan creative city
discourses. Instead, size and proximity are understood and felt in contradictory ways: the ambiguities of scale and proximity are integral to understanding on-going tensions in urban cultural policy-making.

REFERENCES


Part III

THE IMPLICATIONS OF URBAN CULTURAL POLICY AGENDAS FOR CREATIVE PRODUCTION
CHAPTER 10
The New Cultural Economy and its Discontents: Governance Innovation and Policy Disjuncture in Vancouver

Tom Hutton and Catherine Murray

INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

Since the 1980s, a diverse cultural economy of specialized industries and labor has formed part of the post-staples trajectory of urban economic development in Vancouver. A vibrant community of artists, the largest in Canada on a per capita basis, underpins Vancouver’s new cultural economy. This community which are almost exclusively situated in the SME (small- to medium-enterprise) sector, includes film and video game production and post-production, software, computer graphics and imaging, architecture, aboriginal cultural tourism, and urban design sectors, among other industrial centerpieces (Barnes and Hutton 2009).

The morphology and development pathway of Vancouver’s cultural economy has been shaped in part by the distinctive governance and agency structure of the cultural sector; by land use policies and enhancements in the urban public realm and other ecological and consumption amenities; and by the intensity of interactions generated by the social density of the metropolitan core. It is also enabled by the enrichment of human capital facilitated by both public and private sector institutions. All of these factors contribute to the operation of agglomeration economies
and cultural production systems. Yet, not surprisingly, the development potential of Vancouver’s cultural sector of creative industries and labor is sharply constrained by a number of factors, including the upscaling and dislocative dynamics of the City’s property market, the growth machine effects of redevelopment on the supply of performance space in the city, and, especially, the inchoate and fragmented yet surprisingly resilient nature of cultural policy coordination.

In this paper we offer an analytic account of Vancouver’s cultural policy problématique, from the disciplinary perspectives of cultural geography and political studies. To this end we provide a discussion of governance agencies and institutions, which function wholly or in part to support the development of Vancouver’s cultural sector. Next is a brief triptych of case studies chosen to demonstrate how these institutional and agency structures perform within the urban landscape. We believe a narrative with resonance in explaining the Vancouver dynamism must reflect Vancouver’s privileged (if contested) status in the annals of contemporary urbanization and urbanism, as well as interrogate the direct impacts on Vancouver’s residents and more particularly its communities. Finally a conclusion offers both a concise summary of observations as well as conjecture on implications.

GOVERNANCE, AGENCY AND CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS IN VANCOUVER

Our general premise is that cultural geographers often under-examine the political institutional factors outside of the tidy world of planning. In this view, political systems matter, especially how they are constituted, worked through, and ideologically “pitched” in any conjuncture. Vancouver has alternated municipal social democracy and neoliberal urbanism after 1970 in
accidental but almost perfect democratic balance (Peck 2009). The growth oriented NPA or Non Partisan Association has been in power 21 years since 1967 while the mutating left parties including TEAM (The Electorate Action Movement), COPE (Committee of Progressive Electorate), and Vision share power including the current Mayor re-elect, Gregor Robertson. Over time Vancouver has built a hybrid style of cultural economy via social-enterprise that has materialized largely through independent city leadership, strategic social redistribution, and a blend of public and private resources that can sustain diversity in medium to small-scale cultural production. It has therefore thrived on opposites, complements, and instabilities (Gough 2002).

Evidence for the progressive character of its cultural economy may be found in the fact that Vancouver attracts the highest per capita incidence of artists in its boundaries in Canada, engages the highest proportion of citizens in cultural participation and volunteering, and has generated proportional cultural GDP in film and new media production. It has pioneered an urban model of development including community amenity bonusing and Community Amenity Contributions (CACs). These have significantly reshaped the cultural landscape and promoted a model of densification that is now being exported (Soules 2010). Furthermore, residential housing regulations have sustained a commitment to 20% affordable housing targets despite an acknowledged inflation in property values that has yielded greater poverty than other first tier Canadian cities. Vancouver is one of the few Canadian cities to award free tenancy in publicly-owned live-work studio space among its cultural programs. Vancouver has instituted fair wage policies in some city suburbs, facilitating at least some social housing (Eby 2007), and the city has also implemented social enterprise zones in its most marginalized, poor, and oldest downtown neighborhood (Roe 2012; Mason 2007; Tremain 2010; Ley and Dobson 2008).
Yet Vancouver’s class base is demarcated in a stark East-West and growing rich-poor divide (McCann 2008; Holden and Scerri 2011). Policy attention to homelessness was heightened during the Olympics, and remains a major local priority under the newly re-elected center-left Vision party. Further regressive evidence of a consumption-propelled creative economy base (where culture is instrumentalized only as a hook for foreign direct investment) is also easy to adduce. Vancouver represents almost a textbook case of the neo-liberal compact in global city competition yet is not recognized as a global city in most urban texts (Pierre 2011; Hackworth 2007). Thriving on Asian immigrant investment, real estate, and its role as an export shipping hub, Vancouver has aggressively courted tourism by way of massive investment in the harbor side Convention Centre, a renovated B.C. Place Stadium, mega events like Expo ’86 and the 2010 Winter Olympics, leisure walkways and protected urban site lines to the ocean and mountains for condominium investments.

Vancouver’s urban development is co-produced, in an “open yet stable, socially progressive yet fiscally conservative and pro-development regime” (Brunet-Jailly 2008: 375). The city aspires to balance social redistribution and growth initiatives, cultural industries and performing arts, professional and community arts, while remaining committed to local neighborhood planning including polycentric community centers.

In the following section, we highlight five main institutional dynamics that have shaped this political regime presiding over the evolution of Vancouver’s urban cultural economy policy. They involve the multiple levels of jurisdiction at work in the city, specific
character of the local political system, negotiated autonomy for cultural planners or
dependence of the sector on its political masters, and reaction to centrifugal tendencies of
suburbanization.

**Bypassing but Bargaining with the Nation-State**

Because of its marginalization and lack of federal attention in cultural policy (with the
lowest per capita federal spending in the province, broadcasting policies which
concentrate licensed indigenous networks in Toronto, and no national cultural
institutions), the city-region has accrued some claim to moral capital which it can
leverage in negotiations with the nation-state. Despite this, the city has been effective in
selectively leveraging multi level cooperation on key district developments as a quid pro
quo for being bypassed. The Granville Island revitalization in the 1970s, and the
Vancouver Agreement, 2000 (discussed under the Victory Square case below), intended
to revitalize without displacing the poor in the oldest and most “wicked” compound of
failed social policies—the Downtown District on the East Side. While these may not be
culture-led regeneration projects exclusively, they have significant cultural economy
overlays, implicating arts and planning schools as major partners in development, placing
municipally-owned cultural facilities, fostering new media incubators, and seeding
investments in public art like murals and themed historical trails amid mixed use
development (North Sky Consulting 2007).
Leading but Exploiting the Province

The provincial government, unlike Ontario, has no explicit creative economy framework, and indeed, is often characterized by the arts sector as an absent partner. But British Columbia (BC) has instituted labor tax credits for service film production in the city, facilitated intra-industry networking and labor agreements voluntarily restraining union rates, and invested in provincially owned studios which have benefitted the Vancouver scene’s thriving service film production sector. Vancouver has been able to intervene in countercyclical funding at a time of provincial austerity in cultural spending to protect its lively and visual arts. It has also been able to slow idiosyncratic partisan provincial meddling over the relocation and expansion of its major visual art gallery institution, with the Office of Cultural Affairs (OCA), the design community, and arts entrepreneurs, among others, joining to (so far) effectively counter proponents of the move led by the right leaning Liberal party and influential developers and realtors (see Arden 2011). As well, major casino speculation on valuable provincially owned downtown land has been stopped amid widespread resistance to a lottery culture, which is evocative of the stop Strathcona expressway movement of the 70s, which drew Jane Jacobs’s fond approval. From grassroots activists, to engaged elites, cultural entrepreneurship is strongly embedded, generating for instance philanthropic programs to support music and the arts by local notables such as Sarah McLaughlin, Michael Audain (a freedom rider from the South), and the late dance arts legend Y.H. Lui. And, as a voting bloc, no Premier or provincial minister responsible for culture can afford to alienate these constituencies.
A Flexible Partisan Local Political System

The city has been able to effect such cultural change because of its special Charter which affords it a legal autonomy *vis–à-vis* its provincial government, which is historically protected and quite different from Montreal or Toronto (Tennant 1980). As a corollary, it has also developed an autonomous municipal party system. The partisan character of the system has enabled not only attention to the cultural economy, but also political mobilization. New cultural champions have emerged and local cultural activists elected to municipal and later provincial office. Electoral campaigns have offered some prospect for clarification of competing cultural visions, most recently on whether to institute an arms-length cultural foundation, according to the oldest party of the right called the Non Partisan Association (NPA), or instead an integrated cultural advisory board (absorbing the public art committee and others), responsible for peer review and policy oversight, which is preferred as the compromise from the center party in power, called Vision. While there are ideological differences in partisan policy styles, no municipal party has significantly rolled back the cultural contributions of its predecessors: once investments or policy innovations have been made, they have tended to stay, in part because of a high degree of discretion afforded to its professional civic service (Mason 2003) and in part because of strategic necessity in the absence of national or provincial cultural safety nets.

Path Dependency and Professional Cultural Planning Autonomy

There is thus a kind of path dependency to cultural development in Vancouver, which takes on its own generative power. The at-large system of voting for councilors, despite
the narrow losses on referenda on a ward system in the central city, is said by critics to have protected a preponderance of new professional elites from the West End in local politics, content to advance practices of new public management and bureaucratic professionalism (Sussmann 2006). It is said by its proponents to stand for the view of the city as a whole community in which fragmentation, whether geographic or functional, should be avoided and resolution of conflict promoted (Tennant 1980). Either way, the at-large system has led to a tidy clientelism (Stern 2002; Stokes 2007) and incrementalism in the politics of cultural administration, featuring long-serving staff and cultural administrators, and stable, annualized funding which persists over the long term. The major civic grants go over time to professional arts organizations like the Vancouver Art Gallery, Symphony or Museum, which literally exist mostly due to gifts of civic property and civic operating budgets as well as on higher levels of private citizen spending and volunteering than in many Canadian cities. But increasingly, new art forms (the Dance Centre) or regional film festivals (the Vancouver Film Festival, or Queer Film Festival) as well as district heritage revitalization in Chinatown are actively supported through the granting programs. Commitment to subsidy survives due to judicious use of consultations on major space developments between civic elections. Vancouver’s Office of Cultural Affairs (OCA) controls a quantum of direct municipal funding for culture that is unparalleled in Canada on a per capita basis, been sustained over the years, and deploys a granting infrastructure with more staff than even provincial bureaucracy (Murray 2009).

Nonetheless, there are other powerful and senior arms-length elected or appointed boards (Parks, Education, Economic Development and Tourism) with which the OCA has
competed and cooperated. After 40 years, OCA policies have achieved a functioning matrix
design where cultural impacts on everyday activities in other operating policy jurisdictions,
if not thought of first, are usually taken into consideration. Yet, like many North American
cities, while one of Vancouver’s areas of strength is its clear norms and goals for the
culture sector over the last thirty years, sophisticated evaluation of the impact of its
policies is still underdeveloped. The causal role of cultural economy policies in economic
development is far from worked out (Markusen and Gadwa 2010), limiting Vancouver’s
ability to withstand more global neoliberal shocks to the civic cultural ecosystem. Political
organization of the sector is spotty. Despite the emergence of a service-based alliance of
arts organizations locally, it oscillates between lobbyist and service missions, and there is a
persistent fragmentation of cultural interests, a failure to “join up” governance or
experiment with new forms of governance in revitalization districts, thereby widening the
ambit of the cultural planner (Sacco et al. 2007; Habel 2010; Tremain 2010).

Some Coordination but Decentralized Regional Scale

Since most of the 2.3 million population in the city region of Metro Vancouver resides in
adjacent municipalities, we must examine the extent to which they have avoided the typical
“amenity” trap in suburbanization, considering arts and culture as ancillary to the culture-
economy rather than drivers. The fastest growing suburb, the City of Surrey, is now
embarking on its own cultural plan, cultural granting program, and local
architectural competition for major cultural icons like the new Surrey Library by notable
architect Bing Thom; it can boast that the plurality of its residents now live and work within its boundaries. Other smaller cities like Port Moody also aspire to being a “city of the Arts” with investment in facilities and programming. Contrary to the expectations of rationalization popular in urban theory, the 22 local authorities of the Metropolitan region have not chosen to amalgamate (quite unlike Toronto or Montreal). The lack of an effective coordinated cultural policy despite years of lobbying by the City of Vancouver in the Greater Vancouver Regional District (now renamed Metro Vancouver), suggests either permanent malfunction, a de facto hub and spoke cultural economy, an evolving polycentricism around “natural” historic communities (Davoudi 2003; Braham 2011; Markusen and Gadwa 2010), or an entrenched system of regional flows across them below the formal level which can sustain effective cultural development. We believe it is all three. But it works, from time to time. Political municipal gridlock can emerge (with localities in the North-East sector of the region unable to win mass transit rail lines or in turn unwilling to agree to raise per capita subsidies to arts and culture at the expense of West links to the airport), but occasionally progressive covenants get passed, and value coalitions spontaneously emerge (around waste recycling, for example, or the Metro Vancouver cultural portal called MAX to cross promote cultural activities and venues and develop intra regional cultural tourism).

**SPATIAL PLANNING AND THE CULTURAL ECONOMY**

From these essentially *sectoral* aspects of cultural governance and programming, we will now turn to a consideration of how the repertoire of local *spatial* policies and planning
have shaped Vancouver’s cultural economy “in place” – on the ground, as it were. These include the basic instruments of regulation and land management, including community economic development (CED), business improvement areas (BIAs); social and community planning; heritage planning and programs; and in some cases housing, transportation, public realm, and amenity planning undertaken within multilevel governance formats and arrangements (see Hutton in press for an account of MLG and urban development in Vancouver).

The **Central Area Plan**, approved by Vancouver City Council in November of 1991 reallocated land resources from commercial to residential use, privileging new housing in the core beyond a consolidated (and markedly smaller) Central Business District (Punter 2003; Hutton 2004). But at the same time the **Central Area Plan** included preferences for mixed use and heritage designations together with an inner city “industrial” character, it also set the policy directions for development in the CBD fringe and inner city. Yet while strategic, high-level programs such as the **Central Area Plan** have the power to once-in-a-generation reallocate large territories within urban space, it is at the micro-scale that we can detect the intimate relations between policy change and the emergence of cultural industries, institutions and employment.

**Reference Cases: Yaletown, Victory Square and the “Eastern Core.”**

For this discussion we offer a shorthand depiction of three very different approaches to the impress of governance and agency on the evolution of important civic sites,
configured as contemporary expressions of the classic industrial district, or, alternatively, as cultural quarters, with each telling an instructive and resonant story with both contingent features and more general characteristics. The story of Yaletown conforms to a property-led, creative quarter development, followed by cultural amenity negotiation. By contrast, Victory Square represents what we argue is a socio-culturally led regeneration with a high degree of political improvisation, and progressive intent in a disadvantaged urban area with intractable problems. Finally, the “Eastern Core” represents an incipient effort at classic innovation-creative industrial policy, stalled at present.

**Yaletown: Vancouver’s cultural economy epicenter**

Yaletown, a heritage district widely-acknowledged as having the highest-integrity built environment within Vancouver’s inner city, stands as one of the global exemplars of an urban cultural quarter, and encompasses an upscale blend of specialized creative production (video games, architects, computer graphics and imaging), housing (loft conversions) and amenities, in terms of ecology and consumption. Yaletown represents the peak of the Vancouver land market, reflecting the intense demand from the cultural, commercial, retail, and residential sectors.

Clearly market players, including creative enterprises and property market firms, have been central to the ascendency of Yaletown, but governance and agency have also performed critical roles in this iconic storyline of the new cultural economy. First, the
enactment of stringent heritage by-laws in 1986, including both an HA-3 general designation and a special HA-4 classification for the area’s historic and distinctive loading docks provided protection for the appealing textures of the Yaletown landscape, for which creative workers and residents have a marked affinity. Second, the defining residential program of the 1991 Central Area Plan produced high-rise condominium communities on either side of Yaletown, greatly increasing the social density of the area, and generating as well as a rich amenity landscape that complements the social nature of the contact-intensive new cultural economy. Third, the public realm enhancements and investments (including the vital hub of the Roundhouse Community Centre and other major cultural institutions in walking distance) add significantly to the appeal of the district. Finally, the recent completion of the Canada Line rapid transit service, with a station in Yaletown, greatly enhances the connectivity of the district both to the CBD (now 5 minutes away) and the proximate residential communities which domicile a part of the Yaletown creative workforce, increasing the district’s access advantage over many other areas within the city. Yaletown fits the property-led model of development with urban planners and developers dominant, but moderated by public realm enhancements which supply at least some of the cultural amenities needed. The political formation of the new creative class of urban professionals in residence is creating a constituency to argue for more family-friendly policies (including access to child care and green space to fill out the neighborhood) to avoid the worst consequences of short-term serial loft living.
Victory Square: Culture-led Regeneration in the Revalorized Inner City

Following the model of a spatially-differentiated cultural economy in the city where the mix of industries and firms is filtered both through the lens of preference and affinity and also through property prices and rents, Victory Square on the western margins of the Downtown Eastside has provided for some time a lower-cost (in relation to Yaletown), grittier terrain for cultural experimentation, production and expression. Through a progressive multi level ten year Vancouver Agreement, three levels of government, planners, civil society, aboriginal and antipoverty groups, combined to negotiate redevelopment, minimize displacement, and mitigate the worst of gentrification. Involving a combined investment of $28 million dollars, the Vancouver Agreement is widely seen as responsible for a rise in local incomes (of some 30%) decline in drug related deaths and crime levels, and social changes in attitude (see: Mason 2007; North Sky Consulting 2007; Temain 2010; Graham 2011). It has received the Institute for Public Administration of Canada’s highest annual prize for innovative management; a United Nations Public Service Award for improving transparency, accountability and responsiveness in the public service; and a Partnership Award from the Association of Professional Executives of the Public Service of Canada.

Since the 1970s Victory Square – Vancouver’s first financial and commercial center, and an important retail district for much of the twentieth century – has been on a slow downward trajectory of disinvestment and decline, as the heart of the urban core’s downtown migrated steadily westwards. What remained took the form of low-margin
commercial and retail activities, and a shabby, in some cases derelict streetscape approximating outwardly at least the worst of US rustbelt cities. Within this down-market cityscape young artists and startup cultural performance individual and groups found at least a temporary home, attracted by the combination of affordable rents, suitable space, and a gritty urban habitus conducive to the creative spirit. Reflecting this condition, the 1995 Draft Victory Square Plan portrayed an imagery of decline or at best stasis, shaped by a precarious balance of about 1,000 sing room occupancy (SRO) residents, artists, building owners and property interests, and heritage enthusiasts. The long-time presence of the Enver Hoxha bookstore on West Hastings, peddling hardline Communist Party literature modeled on the Marxist-Leninist ideological purity of the former Albanian strongman, captured a bit of the quirky atmosphere of late-20th century Victory Square.

Victory Square includes impressive heritage buildings including the striking Toronto Dominion Bank Building and the Sun Tower. But at the heart of the district was Woodward’s, one of the leading department stores of the city, situated within a distinctive 8-storey red brick building, which had been expanded by periodic additions over much of the last century. Woodward’s closure in 1993 seemed to sound a death-knell for Victory Square’s vestigial position within the core, just as a wave of capital relayering was about to sweep over Vancouver’s inner city. For years the Woodward’s site lay vacant, in mute testimony to the larger territory’s slide, as various proposals for redevelopment founded.

The City of Vancouver purchased the Woodward’s property in 2003. It commissioned a
public process with a wide array of stakeholders, including marginal communities resident in the area. A complicated deal was brokered in 2009 following a protracted set of protests, which culminated in a squat by the poor and homeless in the district concerned about being dispossessed by the conversion of single room only hotels. The result was some 500 market housing units, over 200 non-market units, the Simon Fraser University School of Contemporary Arts, government offices, a cultural not-for-profit enterprise called W-2, developed as a community “front porch” in Woodwards which served as the alt.media hub during the Olympics and Occupy movement and retail space. For all appearances the project is injecting positive revitalization energy to Victory Square, although of course the specter of gentrification and dislocation continues to be part of the scenario. Nonetheless, the creative impetus provided by the Woodward’s project has contributed to the burgeoning cultural economy of the district and the city as a whole, augmenting other important cultural institutions (notably the Vancouver Film School) domiciled in the area. Accompanying this cultural trajectory is the development of a corollary upscale consumption sector, characterized by a transition from the seedy beer parlors of the 1970s and 1980s to trendy wine-bars and cafes, attracting the creatives and would-be hipsters that are part and parcel of the scene. Following the market failures of the years of decline, governance and agency in the form of the City of Vancouver and community-based organizations have taken center stage in the cultural makeover of this iconic Vancouver heritage district.

The “Eastern Core”: Visioning on Core’s Frontier

For our final vignette in our accounts of governance in the formation of the city’s cultural
economy we turn to the instructive case of Vancouver’s Eastern Core. For much of its
existence this area, formed by progressive in-fills of False Creek, was known by the more
homely moniker of False Creek Flats, and housed a large complex of transportation,
warehousing, and distribution facilities that connected the City’s port and industrial
districts with important national rail and road networks.

In common within similar districts in other cities, False Creek Flats projected an imagery of
decline by the last years of the twentieth century. So by the mid-1990s, in the midst of the
tech-boom and the meteoric ascendency of the dot.coms, a new policy process managed by
the City’s Central Area division undertook a revisioning exercise, which by 1999 led to
the development of a plan incorporating a new I-3 zoning designation for a “Proposed
High-Technology Zone,” intended to facilitate a technology-based economy that
represented the urban zeitgeist of the times.

This vision proved mostly a delusion, as the concept of a nascent Silicon Valley North
foundered on the shoals of market realities in the collapse of the dot.coms in 2000 and
afterwards, and a policy dispute over the details of the building by-laws, which in the
eyes of the senior City official responsible at the time seemed to allow for a new office
district beyond the parameters of official policy – a conflict which led to his dismissal.
The formal policy narrative lapsed for a time but was picked up recently in the launch of a
new visioning process under the rubric of reimagining the “Eastern Core.” This plan
suggested that the district be re-sited from the frontier of the inner city to a more
integrated future with the central city. The iconic Emily Carr University of Arts + Design would be relocated from Granville Island, and a strategic planning exercise would push the boundary of the Central Area from Main Street, on the Eastern Core’s western boundary, to Clark Drive on the area’s eastern margins.

An “ideas competition” for the future redevelopment of the Eastern Core attracted hundreds of applications by November 2011, from as many as fifteen nations as well as from a multitude of local designers, urbanists, students, and members of the public. Many of the applicants responded to Director of Planning Brent Toderian’s dictum that proposals should include little or no housing, but rather should focus on the employment and production potential of the site, including cultural and green industries. This policy stance represented a clear shift from two decades of intensive residential development in the core since the approval of the Central Area Plan, although some contestants were not able to resist a temptation to prolong the City’s housing-led regeneration and redevelopment. But at the time of writing the policy direction and development trajectory for the Eastern Core was thrown once more in abeyance, as City Council dismissed Toderian, echoing the harsh political and professional outcome of the last exercise, and demonstrating the elusive quality of reimagining in the early years of the new millennium. In this case, the concept of the culture and innovation-led industrial regeneration of the Eastern Core was perhaps in conflict with City Council’s affirmed priority of developing affordable housing. The Eastern Core, like other serious decisions including relocating the major cultural institution the Vancouver Art Gallery, are now ideas in abeyance, likely to reappear in three to five years.
CONCLUSION: CONTINGENCIES OF GOVERNANCE IN THE NEW CULTURAL ECONOMY

In this chapter we have tried to demonstrate the contingent nature and effects of governance and agency in the shaping of Vancouver’s cultural sector. Alongside market, labor, and social factors, we have shown that governance, institutions, and policy are instrumental to the shaping of the city’s cultural sector – in its composition and growth dynamics, degree of public support, and also in its spatial configuration.

In the Vancouver case there are relatively few mega-corporations and institutions in the cultural sector, but, instead, we discern an extraordinarily lively small- to medium-size enterprise (SME) array of creative firms, agencies and activities. This is reflected in – and in some large part shaped by, as we have demonstrated – a complex and somewhat fragmented governance and institutional platform derived from the disjuncture within the larger systems of administration and policy in the Greater Vancouver region, including the lack of a compelling and effective cultural governance and policy structure operating at the regional level, and exacerbated by the fragmentation of powers implicit in the 22-member structure of Metro Vancouver – a confederal, rather than executive, regional body.

Internally we demonstrated how “disjuncture and complexity” of governance, including multi level bargaining dynamics, policies for urban structure, local areas, and heritage, have combined over time to shape a distinctive geography of creative production and labor situated on the sites of the old Fordist resource economy of the inner city – a classic
example of transition and succession. And the “disjuncture” in this case is shown in the
City’s attempts to foster the idea of a “cultural precinct” in the downtown, or Eastern
core, along the lines of many other cities, although the terrain mapped out by the City
fails to include any of the specialized creative production zones of the inner city. A
decision on whether to relocate the Vancouver Art Gallery on the north shore of False
Creek, closer to the inner city creative production districts, or, alternatively, to have it
remain closer to the heart of the downtown (Arden 2010), might offer a clue to the next
installment of the cultural governance saga in this influential saga of twenty-first-century
urbanism. Perhaps all we may say at the time of writing is that despite chronic policy
disjuncture, the regime of cultural governance in Vancouver continues to work fairly
effectively, ameliorating the worst of the growth machine excess, committed to social
justice at least intermittently, and powered by its self-image as a creative city: aspiring to
social and environmental sustainability, and global recognition as a vibrant center of
experimental visual and new media arts.

REFERENCES

March.
Barnes, T.J. and Hutton, T.A. (2009) “Situating the New Economy: contingencies of


CHAPTER 11

Creating Urban Spaces for Culture, Heritage and the Arts in Singapore:
Balancing Policy-Led Development and Organic Growth

Lily Kong

INTRODUCTION

Urban spaces for culture and the arts exist in various forms. There are state-vaulted cultural monuments (such as the Shanghai Grand Theatre and Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao), officially-formulated or organically evolved arts clusters (such as Sheffield’s Cultural Industries Quarter and New York’s SoHo respectively), ordinary everyday spaces in which there are spontaneous eruptions of artistic performance (such as spaces used by buskers), and “underground” spaces where alternative arts find space for expression (such as in clubs). Some of these spaces may be newly constructed urban sites designed to stimulate cultural creativity (Flew 2005: 4), for which examples abound (such as Singapore’s Esplanade – Theatres by the Bay, and Hong Kong’s long-debated West Kowloon Cultural District). Other spaces are derived from existing facilities, both ordinary spaces of everyday lives and more spectacular heritage sites, revitalized and re-used in ways different from their original purpose (Kong 2011a: 452). One interesting example is Amsterdam’s Westergasfabriek (WGF) located in a former gas works factory area, where a giant gas-holder is used to host events like operas and parties, and the general site has been redeveloped into exhibition and performance space (Hitters and Richards 2002: 239).

The value and importance of urban spaces for culture and the arts have grown in recent times.
The emphasis on these types of places is important for cities attempting to leverage cultural capital and boost their global status. Such cities seek to develop infrastructure that facilitates cultural activities, embodies cultural ambiance, and supports cultural vitality. These factors work in tandem to create a more vibrant cultural life (Kong 2007). Development of urban spaces for the arts is often part of a strategy of city branding (Kong 2012), designed to enhance the reputation of a city and, consequently, its competitiveness in attracting talent and economic investment. Another key motivation is to construct shared identities and offer a source of pride to the community, as well as to improve social cohesion (De Frantz 2005). Celebrating and sustaining shared local heritage through the use of such urban spaces strengthens community bonds.

This chapter focuses on one particular type of urban space for culture and the arts – the cultural cluster – and examines the role of policy in the formation and growth or decline of such spaces. Drawing on two case studies in Singapore, I examine the successes and failures of two different policy approaches - the coordinated, top-down sectoral mandate in Chinatown and the more laissez faire approach in Little India that has led to a more vibrant outcome. These two case studies represent excellent comparative material, given their commonalities as historical districts, ethnic quarters, and more recently, as sites of arts and cultural activities. Together, they present cases that embody multiple definitions of “culture” (as architecture, heritage, and arts), and demonstrate the relative successes and failures of policy intervention.

**CHINATOWN**

In Singapore’s Chinatown, government policies for cultural place-making were quite well
aligned, with mutually reinforcing efforts by different agencies that sought to make this a quintessentially “Chinese” place in (ironically) predominantly Chinese Singapore. This included carving out subsidized space for Chinese arts groups. Unfortunately, the cluster never came close to generating a lively Chinese cultural scene in Chinatown.

Singapore’s Chinatown was created during the colonial era of the early 1820s, when a town planning committee allocated separate quarters for the different local ethnic communities, including one for the Chinese along the Singapore River (Kong 2011: 457). Over the years, the boundaries of Chinatown continued to expand due to the influx of Chinese immigrants who were attracted by new opportunities in Singapore. Architecturally, Chinatown featured rows of shophouses with individual trades – by craftsmen, hawkers, peddlers and others – being practiced along the area’s long, narrow streets. Places for worship and communal activities, such as temples, also sprang up (Cornelius-Takahama 2000). This distinct space for the Chinese community continued in post-independence Singapore; however, it took place in increasingly dilapidated, overcrowded conditions while the rest of the island began to modernize and develop. In the early 1980s, the rows of shophouses were in danger of being demolished to make room for a more modern metropolitan center. All this was to change in 1986.

In that year, a Chinatown conservation plan was announced. A large-scale reclamation in the Marina area, next to the financial district, ensured that Singapore would have sufficient land in the city center for its commercial use into the future, and Central Business District growth channelled towards Marina South. Under the plan the historic parts of the city center, with their low plot ratios, would be kept intact. Led by the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA), the plan paved the way for conservation of the iconic shophouses, acknowledging
Singapore’s architectural heritage at a time when it was becoming increasingly incompatible with modern living (Kong 2011). The old trades that characterized the area – such as the old Chinese clog makers and the stove makers – could not thrive as Singapore’s population modernized and took up new patterns of consumption. In Chinatown, therefore, questions arose concerning what was being conserved and what was quintessentially “Chinese” about the area. Indeed, it was through the policies and actions of government agencies that Chinatown became a “quintessentially Chinese site,” a cultural space reminiscent of Singapore’s historical past.

Three government agencies aligned in the effort to re-make Chinatown into a Chinese cultural site, namely, URA, Singapore Tourism Board (STB) and the National Arts Council (NAC). Their efforts coalesced around the development of the area into one centered on the theme of all things “Chinese,” be it the type of business and agencies promoted, the types of arts that were emphasized or the design of street finishings (Kong 2011: 458). Several policies from across the different government agencies drove the development of Chinatown.

First, the urban conservation policy of the URA, in an effort to protect Singapore’s heritage in the face of rapid modernization, designated Chinatown as one of its key conservation areas (URA 2006). This policy was enacted in the form of URA’s Conservation Master Plan for Singapore prepared in 1989. The Master Plan emphasized the importance of conservation in Singapore’s urban planning, and took steps to prevent further loss of historic buildings to redevelopment. Areas with colonial and historically important architecture, including Chinatown, Little India and Kampong Glam, were all identified as conservation protection sites. Shophouses in such neighbourhoods escaped demolition and were instead renovated and preserved (Yuen 2002). In addition, the Conservation Master Plan established a
framework for promoting good urban restoration practices, consulting with the private sector and encouraging conservation through education (ULI 2008).

Second, working in tandem with the URA was the economic policy imperative of the Singapore Tourism Board (STB), which saw this project as an opportunity to develop an attraction and to help increase tourism revenues. This was initiated in the mid-1990s when STB made plans to revitalize the area with tourists in mind. Aware of fears that Chinatown would lose its authenticity in the process, the authorities tried to assure an unconvincing public that STB would be “recalling and revitalising the Chinatown spirit so fondly remembered by Singaporeans” and “bringing forth those attributes that made this area so unique and special in our heritage” (quoted in Yap 1998: 40). STB proposed dividing the Chinatown site into three zones with color-coded infrastructure and signs - the red-themed “Greater Town” (which would house a theater and museums); the gold-themed “Historic District” (the site of temples and clan associations); and the green-themed “Hilltown” (where boutique hotels, pubs and café would be located). In addition, these zones would include themed streets such as “Food Street” (foodstalls and al fresco eateries), “Bazaar Street” (offering Chinese crafts), and “Tradition Street” (accommodating traditional craftsmen and merchants). To provide a hub for Chinese activities, a Village Theater was also built to serve as a venue for opera performances, poetry recitals, calligraphy and other activities (Chang and Huang 2005: 262). The practical aim underlying these efforts was to shape Chinatown into a place that would be more upscale and appealing to tourists.

Third, the goal of preserving Chinatown as a distinctly Chinese landscape also tied in with the city’s cultural and arts policy by presenting an opportunity to support Chinese arts through clustering them in the Chinatown area. This effort centered on two main streets—
Smith Street and the adjacent Trengganu Street, which housed non-profit arts groups in its shophouse units since 1998, including specialists in Cantonese, Beijing or Teochew Opera, calligraphy, music and Chinese literary arts (Kong 2011: 458). Their occupancy was supported by the National Arts Council (NAC) Arts Housing scheme, which aimed to provide affordable spaces to arts groups and artists. Under this scheme, rental charges by the Singapore Land Authority were significantly subsidized by NAC, thus lessening the financial burden on arts groups and providing them with spaces for rehearsal, exhibition, performance and other needs (NAC, 2012). Tenants usually pay only 10 per cent of the rental, and any utilities or maintenance costs. The concentration of Chinese arts and culture groups along the Chinatown belt was a conscious effort by NAC and dovetailed with the overall attempt to remake the site into a traditional Chinese enclave (Yeoh and Kong 1994).

Notwithstanding the convergence of vision, policy and strategies, critics have called the Chinatown approach artificial, boring, and reminiscent of a “superficial theme park” (Yeoh and Kong 1994). Though the policies and strategies of participating government agencies supported and reinforced one another, the eventual result was underwhelming, with the resulting space appearing scripted and forcibly put together. High levels of policy convergence produced sub-optimal results as culture became force-fit into government-bureaucratic scripts.

A key critic of the approach in Chinatown was the Singapore Heritage Society (SHS), a non-profit, non-governmental organization that has attempted to influence the production and implementation of policies relating to heritage. SHS was founded in 1986, and is “dedicated to the preservation, transmission and promotion of Singapore’s history, heritage and identity” (Singapore Heritage Society 2011). The group attempts to raise awareness of Singapore’s
history and cultural heritage, through talks, forums, organized heritage tours, and the publication of books. It has played an advocacy role periodically, seeking to advance civic awareness of heritage issues. It is arguably the most established post-independence civil society group concerned with heritage in Singapore, and, as with other civil society groups, has had varying levels of success in drawing attention to issues and in effecting change.

SHS argued that the evolution of Singapore’s Chinatown had been “truncated artificially” due to the massive relocation of street hawkers and itinerant vendors into the Kreta Ayer Complex in 1983 (Kong 2011b: 93-95). This had drained the area of life and energy. STB’s plans, with themed streets, elemental gardens and distinct districts and streetscapes, would also turn Chinatown into a “place more Chinese than it ever was” (Kong 2011b: 93). The emphasis on the touristic dimensions would lead to a glossing over and discarding of what exists, as if Chinatown was an “empty physical structure to be re-engineered culturally,” imposing “uniformity and superficiality” in the process (Kong 2011b: 93).

Another criticism that SHS levelled was that STB’s plan imposed sharp boundaries on Chinatown, an area that had always been fluid and defined by its proximity to Singapore River with its canals and waterways. SHS argued that STB’s plan would cause the complex evolution of place to be lost. In fact, STB had “wrenched the place out of its context and ‘framed’ it for its own purposes” (Kong 2011b: 93). SHS also took issue with what they saw to be the homogenization of Chinatown: the presentation of a uniform history emphasising the Mandarinized Chinese aspects of Chinatown, rather than acknowledging the dialect groups, trades, and multi-ethnicity that also exists among Malay and Indian residents, businesses, and places of worship.
Finally, STB was criticized for imposing a “freeze-frame” approach that yielded a sterile, static and uninteresting engagement with the past, thus reducing Chinatown to little more than a theme park. The elemental gardens were the locus of intense criticism, as an artificial assemblage to Chinatown. The “Fire Garden,” for example, with its over the top fountains, was said to exoticize Chinese culture. Fundamentally, SHS’ criticisms were targeted at STB’s privileging of tourism as the basis for renewal. The conservation effort should, instead, have been about personal and collective memories of the individuals and groups who once lived and worked there and those who continue to do so.

The NAC’s efforts to cluster Chinese arts groups in Smith and Trengganu Streets have not yielded the desired outcomes. The potential benefits of clustering arts groups in Chinatown were never actualized. Whereas cluster theory posits that physical proximity can encourage creative synergies and social development within the cluster (Mommas 2004; O’Connor 2004), the co-location of Chinese arts groups within Chinatown has failed to enhance interaction. When interviewed, arts groups showed little interest in, or awareness of, activities carried out by other groups. Some did not even know what kind of arts neighboring groups were practicing (Kong 2011a: 458).

Besides poor internal dynamics, attempts by arts groups in Chinatown to engage the external community also fell flat. Concentrating Chinese cultural groups in one locality did not help to attract people who might have been interested in Chinese arts. The lack of foot traffic even led some arts groups to organize their exhibitions or performances outside of Chinatown, in order to capture more visitors. Contrary to the authorities’ vision of burgeoning cultural activities in Chinatown, most Chinese societies were holding their performances and activities in other locations. In the opinion of one member of a Chinese literary group,
Chinatown is void of cultural meaning and is only a place for food and leisure (Kong 2011a: 459). She further shared how efforts to engage the audience during poetry recitals held in Chinatown proved frustrating and futile, as people had trouble relating to the high culture of the literary arts.

Several reasons may be posited for Chinatown’s lack of success in achieving intended outcomes. A key factor was orienting development toward a “Chinese”-themed landscape (Yeoh and Kong 1994). This was a fundamentally flawed approach since the traditional Chinese businesses supported in this plan were not sustainable in the modern economy, and efforts to play up the “Chinese” character of the place went beyond the historical specificity of the Chinese community in Singapore (Yeoh and Kong forthcoming). This was further compounded by the fact that the clustering of Chinese cultural groups in Chinatown was due primarily to the lure of rental subsidies and not the active fostering of inter-artist networks. The Chinatown of old was a site of poverty housing early Chinese migrants, not a site of high Chinese culture. The combination of these issues has resulted in a space where sustainability and cultural meaning have been brought to question.

As Kong (2011b) has demonstrated, Singaporeans converge in large numbers in Chinatown during key Chinese festive periods such as the Lunar New Year, to experience a certain ambiance associated with the authentic. In 2009 and again in 2010, more than two million people were present during the Chinese New Year festivities. It is worth asking why the district would be packed with such crowds when essential New Year goodies can be found all over the island, in shopping malls and neighborhood shops. It suggests that Chinatown may have succeeded in retaining a significant place in the national imagination, but one that is tied only to the natural rhythm of annual festivities. Certainly, the stalls selling Chinese New Year
goods did not happen by chance. The efforts of the Chinatown Business Association, STB and the local community organizations deserve credit for helping to make this happen. However, the fact that they are tied to a well-established and significant festival for the Chinese population in a traditional site has had a positive effect. The “culture” that is supported is that of tradition and everyday life, not the culture of the high arts. Further, unlike other countries where Chinatown is an island of Chinese activities in a sea of non-Chinese, Singapore’s Chinatown is a spot of Chineseness within a larger majority Chinese community. To be able to retain a high level of identification as an interesting and distinctive heritage area among Singaporeans, it would need to possess a certain quality and attraction that has yet to be defined and actualized (Kong 2011b: 99).

The case of Chinatown demonstrates the complexity of place-making. Singapore’s Chinatown has been the subject of multiple efforts by various government agencies to make it a sustainable urban and cultural site that is simultaneously a heritage hearth and a tourist attraction. These efforts have drawn criticism, with heritage interest groups, the general public, and academics at various points highlighting the inauthenticity of the site. The outcome today is highly textured, with simultaneous successes and failures, varied views and different levels of participation. Significant policy alignment did not enable the desired outcome to be easily achieved.

**LITTLE INDIA**

While political cohesion and deliberate policy and strategy played a central role in Chinatown’s re-creation, Little India was not subject to the same intense policy attention. That is not to say that Little India was not subject to policy and strategic intervention. There
certainly are fundamental similarities with Chinatown in that Little India was one of the first areas identified for urban conservation by the URA alongside Chinatown, and the NAC also identified some shophouses for use in its arts housing scheme in Little India. However, private forces played a larger role in determining the type of tenants and activities, and the STB did not enter the fray in the same way it did in Chinatown. The significantly more \textit{laissez-faire} approach to urban cultural policy in this case allowed arts and cultural groups specializing in the ethnic arts to evolve organically in Little India, and for a well-received general ambience of authenticity to evolve.

The creation of Little India dates back to the 1800s, when it began as a colony established by Indians who had come to Singapore with the British colonialists. Located near the Singapore River, Little India became a prime location for the cattle industry (LISHA 2010), which led to the growth of agrarian economic activities. The booming cattle trade also led to the employment of migrant workers from India. By the end of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century, a substantial population of Indian migrant workers had arrived in Singapore, seeking employment opportunities in sectors other than the cattle industry. The growth of the Indian community naturally gave rise to the building of places of worship, such as temples, and increasing commercial activities (Ong 2009). Today, Little India has also become a tourist destination offering a variety of Indian products while retaining its authenticity as a charming and colorful district where many local Indians and subcontinental migrants gather. Culture and traditions are kept alive through festivals such as Deepavali and Thaipusam celebrated onsite (LISHA 2010), while distinctly Indian offerings like \textit{henna} tattoos, \textit{chai} and Ayurvedic medicine are found in this bustling area.

There is much background to Little India’s story, including the conservation efforts and the
struggles of the small, traditional Indian retailers in the newly conserved shophouses with higher rents. But Little India thrived as market forces prevailed. The area boasts a heady mix of stalls trading in traditional Indian and “ethnic” goods alongside chain stores, fast food outlets, restaurants and eateries, and pubs. A key difference between Little India and Chinatown is the S$48 million Mustafa Centre on Syed Alwi Road, which injected new life into the area the moment it opened for business. Open 24/7, it has brought many visitors to the area, and with them, a certain vibrancy. By 1998, there were reports that competition was heating up with some 140 restaurants in the area. Between 1997 and 1998 alone, 30 new restaurants had sprung up, offering more than just the usual fare of fish head curry and roti prata, commonly associated with Indian cuisine, but also cuisines from all parts of India (Wong 2008).

The vibrancy of the general trade can be attributed to the fact that distinct offerings are available here such as special Indian spices, colourful saris, henna products and other such merchandise unique to Indian culture and heritage. Unlike Chinatown where there is little that is distinctive on offer (given that much of the rest of the Singapore island (75%) is made up of a Chinese population), Little India still offers interesting and unique commodities that distinguish it from other places on the island. For the significant number of migrant workers from the Indian sub-continent in Singapore, it is a regular site to visit for the material products it offers, but also as a gathering place with others of the same ethnic origin. This unique combination of factors has given Little India a vibrancy and liveliness that is not manufactured.

The commercial vitality of the district has grown in tandem with the arts and culture scene. Arts and cultural activities that developed along Kerbau Road, termed the Little India Arts
Belt (LIAB), as well as communities of artists in nearby Perumal Road, underpin the liveliness of the area. The Kerbau Road LIAB benefited from a subsidy policy by the National Arts Council in the form of the Arts Housing scheme (similar to the Chinatown case) (NAC Annual Report 2004). Under the Arts Housing Scheme, LIAB was established in 2001 to help arts groups find spaces in shophouses to practice and perform (Wong 2008: 11). This ties in with the government’s conservation program, which focuses on finding new uses for shophouses. Today, the LIAB houses diverse art forms ranging from the traditional to progressive (Wong 2008: 11), with tenants comprising Indian and Malay ethnic arts, dance, and contemporary theater groups. The Perumal Road cluster nearby was completely organic in origin. Artists began by looking for cheap studio space in 2004 and were drawn by the sights and sounds and charms of Little India. These artists began to pursue their craft and to conduct private lessons in the old apartments along Perumal Road. The apartments were built before air-conditioning was common; therefore, they have high ceilings and ventilation openings in the walls. Because they are spacious, they are ideal as studios. For instance, renowned documentary filmmaker Tan Pin Pin shares a four-room flat cum office with a composer and sound designer. The residents describe the area as being “spiritual and different” despite being in an urban setting, resembling “an oasis for artists in the middle of the city” (Kong 2011b: 114).

Three factors can be identified as contributing to the spontaneous development and continued success of the cultural clusters in Little India: serendipity, sensory experiences, and shared trust (Wong 2008). First, there are opportunities for serendipitous encounters between members of the arts groups in Little India’s numerous shops, corners, and streets, which can result in creative production (Wong 2008: 30). The active use of space, in contrast to Chinatown, is a fundamental prerequisite for such serendipitous encounters. Such unplanned
encounters among members of the arts community in Little India have led to artistic collaborations. For example, the owner of an arts gallery in Little India once attended an exhibition at another arts gallery in Little India, where a chance meeting led to collaboration (Wong 2008: 31). The frequency of such chance encounters is also due to the high-density and geographic compactness of Little India.

In regards to sensory experiences, the lively cultural life of Little India serves as a rich source of sensory stimulation and thus, inspiration, for arts groups. One representative of an arts group shared how the colorful, chaotic and disordered setting of Little India coupled with crowds of migrant workers, sparked off an idea for an open-air performance in conjunction with International Migrants Day. Other artists talk of how the intense and myriad colors in Little India – whether in the form of textiles for use in saris, spices for sale, or food – provide creative stimulation (Wong 2008: 36). The sensory experiences of Little India include the bustling eateries found throughout the area. The numerous stalls and restaurants located in Little India, with their convivial atmosphere, serve as informal places for members of the various cultural clusters such as directors and producers to meet, exchange ideas, and discuss collaboration possibilities. Food and food places in Little India have thus enabled a network of exchange and identity building (Searles 2002).

Finally, an atmosphere of shared trust among members of the cultural groups in Little India has helped the scene evolve into what it is today. This climate of shared trust was facilitated by the location of the clusters within the relatively compact Little India, which enabled various artists and arts groups to get to know one another over decades (Wong 2008: 41). As Aydalot (1986) highlights, mutual trust encourages members of a community to work with one another through the sharing of knowledge, information, and resources. In Little India,
ideas are readily shared, problems discussed, and help rendered – there is a strong sense of co-operation and collaboration (Wong 2008: 42).

In sum, Little India’s success in generating a vibrant atmosphere and shared lifestyle was largely attributable to interactions within each cluster and strong internal social dynamics, which have evolved organically and independently without the help of detailed policy initiatives. This organic evolution and character has also been facilitated by the vibrancy of the trades, made possible in part by the distinctiveness of Indian products in a predominantly Chinese Singapore. This has been further compounded by the success of capital ventures, which have brought further life to the area, the gathering of migrant workers, and the self-selection of artists to locate there.

**CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, I have focused on the creation of urban spaces for culture, heritage and the arts in Singapore by focusing on two heritage districts in Singapore, each with arts clusters nested within. I have examined the relative roles of government policy and strategy, non-governmental groups, private forces of capital, and urban denizens in shaping the artistic, cultural, social, and economic character of these places. Governmental actors, through deliberate policy and coordinated strategy, have attempted to shape Chinatown actively. Despite a congruence of vision and direction among different government agencies, including those concerned with urban planning, economic growth through tourism, and arts and culture planning, and despite the efforts of non-governmental groups to shape the course of development (mainly from critique), the outcomes remain mixed.
I have also examined the relatively light touch from governmental actors and non-governmental organizations and the free play of market forces and individual choices, in the making of Little India. As a consequence of serendipitous encounters, full sensory experiences, and shared trust among the community, the area today is a successful space for culture, heritage, and the arts in Singapore.

These cases offer insights into how official policies can fail to impact urban development in the ways desired, how non-governmental participation influences urban governance but not necessarily reshape urban character, and how spontaneous, organic evolution may result in desired outcomes. It would be a mistake, however, to advocate that there is no place for official policy or interest group participation, and that only organic evolution is authentic. Rather, the relative contribution of each play out differently in geographically and historically contingent ways. Even with the best-laid plans, city making remains an art.

REFERENCES


Little India Shopkeepers & Heritage Association (LISHA) (2010) *Dating back to the 1800’s*. Online. Available HTTP: 


55 – 78.

Singapore Heritage Soceity (2011) About Us. Online. Available HTTP:


CHAPTER 12

Maastricht: From Treaty Town to European Capital of Culture

INTRODUCTION

In 1991, Maastricht - on the southern tip of The Netherlands – hosted the European Union and Commission (EU, EC) in its expansive and ambitious phase. Here, with the Treaty of Maastricht enacted in 1993, the foundation of the common currency, the Euro, was laid. Twenty years on, as the Eurozone and its weaker members struggle to survive economically and politically, this small city looks to its own identity crisis, located in a transborder Euregion adjoining Belgium and Germany. This crisis of identity is exacerbated by national populist politics and withdrawal of the Dutch distributive project which saw polycentrism and a hierarchy of city-regions as the focus for higher scale cultural facilities and resources. Maastricht is thus on the periphery nationally, regionally, and symbolically, distanced from any metropolis in a Europe that is dominated by major (creative) cities, (cultural) capitals, and (knowledge) regions (Evans 2009; van Heur 2009).

One response to this geopolitical and cultural deficit has been a typically boosterist, now familiar project to revive the notion of Maastricht as the cultural hub of a multilingual Euregional area, by bidding to host the Dutch European Capital of Culture (ECOC) in 2018, 25 years after the Treaty of Maastricht (Mulder 1993). This historic association may in the future be seen to be one the city may wish to forget, but it should also be remembered that this event also saw the explicit introduction of the notion of Culture to the European project for the first time: The Community
shall contribute to the flowering of the cultures of the Member States, while respecting their national and regional diversity and at the same time bring the common cultural heritage to the fore (Treaty of Maastricht, TITLE IX: CULTURE Article 128, 1993). Less than 10 years from before the Treaty, the European City of Culture (ECOC) project had been inaugurated in Athens (1994) to be celebrated annually thereafter. It has served as an urban renewal, rebranding and “eventful” (Richards and Palmer 2010) vehicle for capital and regional/provincial cities, and more recently the ECOC has been one opportunity for smaller, peripheral cities to promote their cultural and creative city credentials. In many senses, the impact of this cultural event has been diluted, in part due to its longevity and inevitability and in part due to the annual “twinning” (e.g. Liverpool and Stavanger ECOC 2008; Essen/Ruhr and Istanbul ECOC 2010) and planned national hosting, removing the international competitive city element (Harvey 1989; Hall 1998). As a geopolitical European project - now rebranded Capital of Culture - it also influences and redirects existing cultural policy and resources, in a similar way to major cultural icons, e.g. Guggenheim Bilbao (Evans 2003), and other mega-events, notably Olympics and EXPOs.

This chapter situates the process and rationale for Maastricht’s cultural and urban development within national, European and city-regional cultural policy, including issues of cultural identity, spatial (and therefore social) equity and regionalism – viewed through the lens of the European Capital of Culture Bid Book “Via 2018” (www.via2018) preparations. In this case study, local, regional, and supranational cultural politics aspire to coalesce, but in reality an urban central hegemony persists, reflected in the key actors directing the project and an arms length organizational delivery structure which is separated from, but dominates local and provincial cultural policy and programming (and future planning).
In the uncertain period within which the formation of this project is being undertaken, a constructive and creative future needs to be envisaged and a culture-led road map developed by which this transborder vision can be pursued with a rigor that is nevertheless adaptable and resilient to change over time. With the fragmentation of European financial - and in consequence, social, economic, political and cultural - systems, the notion of European culture and unity is paramount. As is the importance of representation and engagement. The evidence of event-led regeneration and cultural development is however populated with unfulfilled promises and uneven distribution of benefits, so in both respects the stakes are particularly high.

**CULTURAL POLICY AND EMANCIPATORY POLITICS**

As a critical and practical response to these tensions between urban central hegemony and broader coalitions, key research themes are articulated here in order to inform and potentially evaluate and operationalize this transborder cultural project. In turn, these are applied in terms of an event programming framework which is designed to address both the themes and the underlying conflictual positions, towards what might be seen as a more emancipatory cultural development process. As van Heur and Peters (2010: 5) observe:

> the notion of emancipation – with its historic links to Enlightenment discourse – is no longer in usage as either an analytical or a political concept in describing and intervening in a contemporary society with a strong distaste of anything that implies universalism. But clearly, among cultural workers and many citizens, emancipation remains a desirable goal.
In presenting a framework for cultural strategy development, they draw on Castell’s theory of the network society (1996) in order to generate a basic vocabulary that allows us to understand the dynamics of emancipation under conditions of Europeanization and globalization. In critiquing the Maastricht ECOC proposition, they suggest that a more sophisticated understanding of the different dimensions of emancipation might offer a normative framework that can be used to guide and evaluate concrete projects within the ECOC program (ibid.).

This approach is further developed in this chapter as a form of action-led research. This also recognizes that the process of emancipation always encompasses both integration and transformation (Williams 1961), making “emancipation” a much more critical term politically than the currently highly popular notion of participation. Whereas participation, in principle, focuses on the moment of taking part *by* a group of people in something that previously was out of reach *for* these people, it usually does not pay much attention to if and how participation transforms the context in which actors operate (Kaufman 1991, in Nederveen, 1992). Participation all too often features in access and inclusion policies with many good intentions, but no sustainable or democratic effects. Clearly, this is also a problem confronted by many mega cultural events, since despite all the rhetoric around participation, in many cities the actual program only manages to widen access to existing culture, but never reaches the stage of tackling the sources of political, cultural, and economic inequality in a way that could lead to sustained social and cultural inclusion (van Heur and Peters 2010, ECOTEC 2009). This also falls short of both European and national cultural policy objectives.
The organization and provision of institutional arts and culture in the Netherlands has followed its socio-political structure, which has rested on three pillars of catholic, protestant and social-democratic (socialist) groupings or “spheres sovereignty,” each with their own social and cultural organisations including broadcasting, newspapers, sports clubs, universities - even healthcare, banks, as well as trade unions - and of course, political affiliations. In the case of Maastricht and the Limburg region, this means a compact between local state, catholic church, and latterly, higher education institutions. Loosely class-based, more liberal parts of society had never conformed to these distinct groups, but the social and amenity infrastructure had reflected them, although this has weakened since the late-twentieth century as national societies (and government) have generally become less dominant. Dutch cultural policy objectives had sought to reflect the Council of Europe’s four cultural principles, particularly the promotion of diversity, and the support for creativity and participation in cultural life, stressing the multi-faceted nature of cultural identity. Recently, however, the urgency of speeding up the integration of ethnic minorities into Dutch society has been placed at the forefront of the political agenda. Naturalization courses for foreigners wishing to become Dutch citizens became obligatory in 2003. These courses also include a language provision: every new Dutch citizen must be able to speak Dutch. In cultural programs, more focus is placed on cooperation and exchange between cultural entities, and less on the cultural autonomy of ethnic groups, a new direction in political thinking. This is pertinent to the Maastricht Via 2018 ECOC program which promotes a Euregional cultural identity across Belgian and German borders (and non-Flemish, i.e. French
and German-speaking, and non-European migrant communities within Limburg Province) - and therefore linguistic as well as cultural/ethnic diversity. This regional imaginary contrasts however, to the largely gentrified, white-European historic, catholic, university town of Maastricht, and its more post-industrial socially, culturally mixed hinterland and Euregional neighbors. Inevitably this leads to the question of “whose regional culture” is being represented.

In the early 1970s, a debate also began in The Netherlands concerning the issue of decentralization. This followed what had been an established polycentric planning policy (below) that had promoted the development of small and medium sized cities, although in economic as well as in cultural facility terms, the major cities and Randstad region has continued to dominate the national cultural scene and economy. In the 1980s, the division of roles and tasks between state, provinces, and municipalities was reconsidered, in order to increase the efficiency of public cultural policy. A system of mixed responsibilities came to an end and the state took full responsibility for maintaining symphony orchestras, including regional orchestras, and performing arts groups with a national reach. Apart from a small number of state museums, museums in general were placed under the responsibility of municipalities and provinces. The same applied to libraries and archives. In this decentralization process the provinces were given the task of spreading, regulating, and maintaining the supply of culture at provincial level. The municipalities bore greater responsibility for maintaining the various venues and facilities and for scheduling performances. By 2000 85 percent of funding for arts and heritage came from central and local/provincial state subsidy with 13 percent from commercial and individual philanthropy and a small balance from the state lottery, which allocates 8 percent to arts, culture, and heritage (Smithuijzen 2004). Since 1997, joint financing agreements between central
government, regions, and cities have been made for shared activities. With the most recent public spending cuts, however, this distribution and resourcing has been threatened. For example, the forced merger of the separate Limberg and Brabant regional orchestras into one. This will affect the more monocentric cities and regions like Maastricht, which have developed a range of performing and visual arts venues, companies, and museums, despite a population of only 120,000. These shifts arguably present an opportunity for a more collaborative regional approach to cultural planning, based on a polycentric spatial structure.

POLYCENTRICISM

A Polycentric Urban Region (PUR) promotes regional economic competitiveness through stronger interaction between neighboring cities, which encourages specialized and complementary assets while avoiding large-scale urban sprawl and destructive territorial competition (Scott 2001). Dutch spatial policy refers to *stedelijkenetwerken*: “urban networks,” with six networks designated as of national importance, including the Maastricht-Herlen-Aachen-Liège (MHAL) region. The MHAL region has a population of about 2 million, of which 60 percent live in these four cities. The region has a polycentric circular structure (Figure 1). The wider Euregio Maas-Rhein cross border region (CBR) was inaugurated in 1976 and is one of over 70 such CBRs in Europe, with a total population of 3.7 million. Despite its longevity, efforts at supporting connections between trade and functional links of CBRs have been weak. Many of the transborder and collaborative projects initiated in the last decade have responded to this challenge, for instance, health, life science & technology campuses, but engagement with communities, enterprises, and cultural organizations has not followed suit.
In addition to resource pooling and inter-city interaction, polycentrism can also promote specialization. Ideally specialization should produce not competition but a broader range of higher quality metropolitan services to firms, residents, workers and visitors, e.g. advanced producer services, education, health, specialist retail, recreation and leisure and cultural facilities, as well as housing. To achieve these advantages, coordinated policy making and planning is required across the region, particularly where distribution of resources and facilities requires some cities to subordinate their local interests to the regional “good.” This therefore requires a framework defining trade-offs for lost opportunities/amenities and a “whole population” approach to cultural planning (Evans 2008) sensitive to the aspirations of the incumbent municipalities and less mobile local communities.
EUROPEAN CULTURAL POLICY

At the same time, current EU Cohesion Policy and Europe’s 2020 Strategy for “smart, sustainable and inclusive growth” are aimed at fully mobilizing culture and creativity for regional development and job creation (EU 2010). One of five Policy actions emphasizes the “strengthening of cross-border, transnational and interregional cultural initiatives as a means of linking the diverse peoples and regions of Europe and strengthening economic, social and territorial cohesion.” The EU’s imperative for using culture and creativity as part of the European Project in the current political and economic climate – where the survival of European unity and solidarity is at stake – therefore requires a degree of reconciliation if not integration with national, as well as regional and local policy and resource distribution.

The Maastricht Euregional ECOC bid represents a microcosm of this Europeanization Project, which is generally presented as one of economic (free trade area/common currency) and social policy harmonization. Whilst economic unity and systems are in crisis, European leaders look to culture (and the formula: creativity + innovation = growth) to maintain cultural and political identity. In this dualist system, local and regional authorities appeal to European (EU, Council of Europe) policy and programs, bypassing national politics – or at least mitigating restrictive policies and limited funding. However, requirements for national government approval for European funding and “match funding” have in practice made it difficult to transcend national politics. This use of culture as a proxy for growth in local economies reflects both the difficulty (and resistance) to mainstreaming culture as an economic and political tool, and the tensions between the rationales for public subsidy of the arts and culture, and economic, “market failure” imperatives. As explicit European projects, European Capital of Culture (ECOC) festivals
represent a localized response to this political dynamic. Maastricht’s Via 2018 bid is deliberately exploiting this opportunity, since EU policy explicitly promotes cross-border and inter-regional cultural development, emphasizing in particular regional identity and belonging.

**MAASTRICHT VIA 2018**

In national cultural policy and provision, Maastricht offers a monocentric range of cultural facilities. This is contrast with its neighboring towns that – whilst hosting smaller scale arts centers and theatres and a range of cultural facilities such as youth music centers – lack many facilities that Maastricht offers, like art education institutions, major cultural events, and convention centers. In cultural capital terms the town is on the receiving end of a national touring circuit. But this does not reflect the transborder, multicultural context – including the larger cities of Liège (Belgium) and Aachen (Germany) and post-industrial towns such as Genk (Belgium). Maastricht is thus a small cultural/historic city – not a creative city in either the occupation (“class”) or production (Scott 2000) sense – within a polycentric region with patchy cultural provision, and with larger neighbors subject to different national cultural and regional policy regimes.

This position has been reinforced by the Via 2018 event organization established by the municipality with its neighboring authorities. The director of the local Vrijthof theatre was named artistic leader in 2009. To provide the political and financial clout required to pursue the regional agenda (and co-financing) a chief executive was then appointed in 2011, again with a local establishment figure, this time from a housing property company. An artistic advisory
committee was also created from local/regional cultural organizations, but this time with the addition of external experts drawn from previous Capitals of Culture, e.g. Brussels, Essen, and Linz. This is a case of “fast policy transfer” (Peck 2005) and a cultural elite (Evans 2003) providing experience and models developed elsewhere to underpin the so-called creative process. By the time of the Bid Book draft in March 2012, however, several of these external experts had withdrawn, frustrated by lack of transparency in the cultural program development.

In ECOC cultural politics, this complex situation also poses problems nationally. A Dutch “Capital of Culture” (Maastricht) is being presented and promoted as a regional/sub-regional project incorporating a network of towns and cities in Belgium and Germany. From the EU perspective, the notion of a “regional” (vs. city) ECOC has found disfavor in Brussels following the Essen/Ruhr 2010 ECOC, who thought it too dispersed (involving over 50 towns and cities, each with a one week share of the festival). Whereas Marseilles ECOC 2013 is promoted as “Marseilles-Provence 2013,” however even here, this regional strategy has revealed fault lines between better-off surrounding districts and towns and the (ethnically) divided city itself (Andres 2001). Several of the other Dutch 2018 bids are regional and collaborative in scope, e.g. Brabantstadt (Tilburg, Breda, Eindhoven, Wageningen) and Friesland-Leevarden. However, Maastricht’s situation is unique in having to reconcile a transnational region, whilst the other festival cities are within 100% Dutch territory. This is both a presentational and political problem.

A political vision of cultural policy as an emancipatory force is expressed in terms of specific research problems and questions which seek to address both the context and rationale for
Maastricht’s ECOC bid in terms of the city-region (van Heur and Peters 2010). Table 1 articulates three key elements of this vision: *Bridging Spaces, New Urbanities,* and *Strategies of Representation* (Evans and van Heur 2011). In practice these need to be articulated and unpacked in cultural policy and resource allocation terms, and their inter-relations in political/policy, community, and economic spheres at varying spatial scales need to be elaborated. In the present context, this vision is an example of action research engaging with the *real politik* of cultural policy and mega-event development.

These emancipatory ambitions have subsequently been adapted by the Via 2018 ECOC organization as their “four pillars” – three themes plus the meta-theme of “Destination Europe.” This translation of political vision into cultural policy by the event-based Via 2018 organization reveals the boosterist nature of their rationale for a Euregional cultural strategy. For instance, they responded to the social exclusion problem (1) with an emphasis on transport connections as a mechanism to achieve social cohesion and exchange; by a focus on innovation and quality of life in attracting investment, as a response to the peripheral and provincial nature of the region; (2) by offering residents in the region a voice and invitation to participate in cultural development, as a substitute for representative governance; (3) by including these citizens in the (emancipatory) development of cultural policy and programming.

**TABLE 12.1: Maastricht Via 2018 Problematic, Themes and Issues**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problematic – Main themes and • issues</th>
<th>Via 2018 Bid Book ‘pillars’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Bridging Spaces</strong></td>
<td>Developing Connections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social exclusion of people, urban and rural neighborhoods, from the global economy and</td>
<td>We wish to create physical connections in this</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
opportunities, e.g. jobs, wealth, resources
• Emancipation
• Identities (‘Whose Culture or Heritage’?)
• Accessibility & Connectivity/Transport
• Social inclusion/cohesion
• Quality of life/Health inequalities
• Demography/Ageing

region, and public transport is a central theme in this respect. And we wish to establish mental connections, with communication links being developed between the cities, provinces, countries, cultures and particularly between the people in this area

2. New urbanities
Large city/metropolis hegemony and model (e.g. Creative City) not relevant to smaller and peripheral cities and regions
• Polycentricity
• Regional development
• Creative Industries & Clusters
• Networks (inc. HEIs)
• Knowledge Region & role of the University
• Comparative Advantage and Distinction

Developing new forms of urban development
Metropolises are considered the number one location for development and innovation. The Meuse-Rhine Euroregion is not a metropolis, but it is a place for innovation. Globalisation is offering opportunities to medium-sized cities where the quality of life is excellent. Subjects considered include the relationship between urban and scenic areas, the cohesion between science, art, culture and innovation, creative industry and the development of tourism

3. Strategies of representation
Distrust in the political establishment at local and national (and EU) levels - feelings of under/mis-representation
• Governance - Culture &Governmentality
• Citizenship & Rights to the City
• Community/Cultural Planning
• Capacity Building
• Community Arts
• Inter-Cultural city-region

Representation strategies
Both those who feel at home in the current globalised society and those who are unable to benefit from the achievements of the present knowledge society should be heard. Citizens residing in the European Union on a temporary or permanent basis should be made to feel part of the Maastricht European Capital of Culture 2018 project. Broad sections of the population will be invited to participate

Sources: van Heur& Peters (2010); Evans & van Heur (2011);

How can this vision be realized? It is crucial to include the majority “community” in the cultural process. While they are largely outside the cultural elite and at best disinterested in the Via 2018 project, they are fully engaged, one way or another, in the wider culture and urban development dynamics. Without generating broader engagement, tokenistic or superficial references to the “community/culture,” “local issues” and “heritage” may result.

The cultural program and events might achieve this goal by adopting some specific proposals:

i. **Literal** - e.g. artistic or cultural content or subject (story, theme, language(s), depiction - past, present or future – fictional, dramatic or “real,” e.g., characters, history, place, events, artefacts, public art, installations, time-based media, etc.

ii. **Audience** – e.g. participation (representation, areas/locations), profile and mix – i.e. age, ethnicity, gender, origin, “class,” language, religion, heritage etc.; collaborative, co-creation, amateur-hobby-professional, students, schools, etc.

iii. **Authentic** - e.g. vernacular - architecture, images, language, local & regional history, landscape, industry, regional/national identity/ies, religion, local artists, creators, companies, galleries, groups (inc. children, youth, societies, church groups, e.g. music), creative tourism

iv. **Comparative and Inter-Cultural** - e.g. international artists, companies, academics – other European “peripheral” and transborder regions, smaller cities, non-European (but addressing common/shared themes, above) and collaborations, e.g. Malta 2018 (“twin” ECOC), new migrants
v. **Action Research** - e.g. measuring impact of VIA2018 (and other interventions, policies, change) and the experience of different groups, residents, visitors and localities – over time (comparative sample areas, e.g. Impacts08 2010), e.g. participation, engagement, attitudes, awareness, inter-generational, networks, social capital and cohesion, social enterprises, creative enterprises

This agenda provides a rationale for cultural development in community and regional terms, and could help artistic programming address the underlying themes and fundamental social issues in a more emancipatory way. Most importantly, this proposal provides an example of how event planning and post-event phases can be integrated with mainstream cultural policy and provision, including impact and evaluation and longer term sustainability questions.

A preliminary example of this agenda in action is an event staged during the 2012 TEFFAL art fair and co-produced by the Via 2018 agency entitled “exit.” This is a collaboration between a Dutch choreographer and Belgian theatre-maker working with a dozen teenagers from neighboring Dutch and Belgian Limburg, on the theme of “performance without borders.” For a reflexive example undertaken within this thematic and research framework, the preparatory and selection process (professional and amateur) would be important, as would the performance venue(s), participation, and engagement throughout the creative and production stages, and in the follow up, evaluation stages. Without this, such an event could be tokenistic - and perhaps this is a microcosm of the wider cultural politics and strategy of the mega-event and cultural development aspirations.
# TABLE 12.2: Summary Evaluation Framework for Proposed VIA 2018 Cultural Projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Via 2018 Cultural project, programme, or event</th>
<th>Research theme(s) addressed</th>
<th>How does project address the theme(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Play</td>
<td>1. Bridging Spaces</td>
<td>Historic-contemporary theme (social history of region, industrial past and present, inter-generational)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. New urbanities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Strategies of representation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral History project</td>
<td>2. New urbanities</td>
<td>Ceramic industrial and mining heritage (factories, mining sites) artefacts/private collections, old and new architecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Club Ceramique</td>
<td>3. Strategies of representation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Choir competition</td>
<td>1. Bridging Spaces</td>
<td>Multi-lingual, Catholic-Protestant; Islamic-Jewish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Strategies of representation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battle of bands</td>
<td>1. Bridging Spaces</td>
<td>Young bands across Euregio, multi-lingual/mixed; touring regional towns and cities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Poppodiums Maastricht &amp; Heerlen)</td>
<td>2. New urbanities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Strategies of representation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opera Zuyd</td>
<td>1. Bridging Spaces</td>
<td>German, Dutch &amp; French (English) performances, pieces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. New urbanities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-Cultural City exhibition and museum workshops</td>
<td>1. Bridging Spaces</td>
<td>Multi-faith, multi-ethnic, lifestyle and inter-generational exchanges, e.g. libraries, public spaces/squares/markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Strategies of representation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

CONCLUSION

Clearly the economic, political, and social context globally and within Europe itself presents Via 2018 with an opportunity. This emanates from the inheritance of structural change that has led from the industrial to the service (e.g. education, retail, tourism) and knowledge (e.g. creative industries, life science) economy of today, but one that is distributed unevenly economically, socially, and spatially. To effect this transformation, this inequity needs to be addressed based on the inherent creativity and cultural assets of this diverse region. The political challenge is to reconcile the “pull” of national identity and cultural politics with the “push” of Euregional polycentric cooperation. Whilst the current crisis in the Eurozone and beyond may seem to be global or outside the control of local people and politicians, it should be recognized that for smaller cities, the cultural economy means “localization” – and the increasing importance of the local environment, infrastructure, connectivity, and cultural relations (Hospers 2006).

For this community, emancipatory cultural policy promises significant movement towards shifting from a post-industrial to a knowledge and learning region (Evans, Peters and Boogard 2012), even in a time of stringent public expenditure reductions and retrenchment. Via 2018 is only one part of this city-regional transformation and vision, but the ECOC build up, 2018 event year, and post-event legacy could potentially add value and reach domains that other policy interventions and activities have so far failed to reach. From discussions with Maastricht’s Arts and Cultural Officers, the leverage offered by this event to capital investment in infrastructure (transport, facilities) compensates for the diversion of resources from mainstream projects and programs, since it should finally integrate an historically disconnected region.
Experiences from more recent Capitals of Culture such as Lille ECOC 2004 (Paris and Baert 2011) and most recently Essen/Ruhr 2010 do indicate that the regional dimension has enabled both a geographical distribution of impacts and helped widen participation in both culture and the knowledge economy. This has engaged university networks and collaborations, arts and cultural organizations, creative industries, and municipal and regional authorities - including the imaginative re-use of industrial facilities. In Lille, the *Etablissement public regional* was set up as a regional public institution which prioritized culture, *prior* to the ECoC, with a 30 year cultural policy and development strategy. Like Maastricht, Lille has a widezone of influence, tracing an arc through the former coal-mining urban centers and beyond. Another northern arc links the Belgian cities of Tournai, Kortrijk, Ypres and beyond. This territory concentrates more than 3.5 million inhabitants (similar to the EMR region) living within 30–45 minutes of Lille. Celebrated transborder innovation growth regions, such as Øresund, have also successfully used a cultural planning approach to promote a regional identity and program linked to its knowledge economy, rather than one that detaches culture from economic life, and vice versa.

Speculating on what Maastricht and the Euregion Meuse Rhine might look like in 2018 is perhaps foolhardy, not least in a time of crisis where for many, the future looks bleak and European solidarity fragile. Given that the ECOC outcome will not be known until 2013, the trajectories of win or lose will obviously differ in intensity and response. A political backlash could result either in reaction to failure to win, wasted resources, false expectations etc., or to the costs – actual and opportunity – of delivery in the case of “success.” However, in planning and working towards the Capital of Culture event, it is important that a cultural planning approach is
adopted early on - not just planning in the traditional economic, infrastructure, and resource sense – but also by recognizing how culture and creativity can act as an “emancipatory agent for change.” Starting the cultural planning process with a vision articulated through real-world societal themes might also provide a more engaged evaluation and programming strategy that moves from the limited impact and post-event rationalization typically associated with such mega-events (Getz 2009).

At the time of writing, this thematic approach has been incorporated into the bid book drafting (Via 2018 2012), whilst the proposed evaluation framework rests on a distributive network spread throughout the transborder region, offering local communities and organizations (e.g. cultural, education) a voice in both the project evaluation process and in the event programming and participation. The test will be how far this approach survives the local and regional political adoption and resourcing journey, and the jury selection and final award. If retained in the cultural strategy (whether or not the Bid is successful), the final test will of course be delivery and promise-keeping, which only the integrity and commitment of key politicians and actors can ensure – with hindsight this may be a tall order. However, through an emancipatory approach to cultural policy in the region, politicians, cultural organisations and decision-makers should more directly be held to account by a more engaged stakeholder community.

REFERENCES


www.via2018. (no date) Online. Available HTTP:

CHAPTER 13

Rethinking Arts Policy and Creative Production: The Case of Los Angeles

Elizabeth Currid-Halkett and Vivian Wang

INTRODUCTION

The 21st century city has placed the arts as a central force in economic development and urban revitalization. Broadly speaking, the cultural industries have been viewed as important by both scholars and policymakers as a significant component to urban economic development involving everything from film subsidies to arts districts to cultural festivals (Pratt 2005). There is, however, a great divide in how scholars view the impact of arts development and the way in which policy has addressed arts in economic development initiatives.

The purpose of this chapter is to study the relationship between urban arts policy and the cultural milieu within a city. Using the case study of Los Angeles, we study whether extant arts policy addresses the needs of the city’s cultural occupations and industrial sectors. In order to put Los Angeles in context, we undertake a broad survey of national arts policy. We consider whether arts policies in other metropolitan areas may be informative for Los Angeles’s arts policy and offer new trajectories for developing initiatives towards the cultural industries. We aim to understand the following: 1) To what extent is there a larger pattern to how arts policy is implemented in the United States? 2) In the case of Los Angeles, what are the industries and occupations that drive the city’s cultural competitive advantage? 3) What is arts policy, which
institutions are responsible for it and how does it relate to the actual artistic and cultural economy of Los Angeles? Through our analysis of Los Angeles’ cultural industries and occupations, we argue that the city’s targeted arts approach fails to maximize its competitive advantage.

CULTURAL INDUSTRIES IN URBAN PLACES

Urban places tend to attract creative people because cities offer the resources, built environment, and external economies that are conducive to the creation of cultural products (Molotch 1996; Jacobs 1969; Scott 2000). Creative producers benefit from the spillover effects of an artistic labor market and social network (Caves 2000). The cultural industry network includes artists, critics, dealers, and suppliers, all of whom rely on other cultural producers to some extent to shape and create their work (Becker 1984). In cities, the creative social scene enables artists and producers to develop connections with gatekeepers and each other, which may ultimately impact their careers (Currid 2007).

While the aforementioned research documents the mechanics of how cultural industries work, there is another emerging stream of scholarship outlining how the cultural industries contribute to economic development and quality of life (Glaeser et al 2001). This research finds that high amenity cities grow faster than low amenity cities (Glaeser et al 2003). Similarly, Clark et al (2002) argue that amenities can shift urban growth dynamics as increases in earning power have led to a rise in leisure pursuits. These new dynamics have created unique tastes that encourage niche markets and specialized professions such as the restaurant critic or art blogger, along with travel guides and art listings (Lloyd and Clark 2001; Clark et al 2002). Florida (2002) argues that
these amenities attract the creative class.

The incorporation of arts and the cultural industries as a development tool and an amenity-driven urban strategy has aided in the branding of cities (Zukin 1995; Currid 2009; Currid and Williams 2010). Many attributes, including the diversity of cultural products and services contribute to a city’s authenticity, or at least the perception of this quality (Zukin 2009). For example, the development of large museums and art centers enable cities to develop global cultural brands (Grodach 2008, 2010). Such strategies include the promotion of place through culture and, in tangible terms, various cultural amenities. Of course, the interplay between culture and commodification is multifaceted. While culture often aims to differentiate, commodification can have a homogenizing effect.

ARTS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Scholars have considered the impact of arts on economic development from a cultural, economic and policy perspective. To understand why artists locate where they do, Markusen and Schrock (2006) argue that artists choose places to live not only based on amenities, but also on the basis of characteristics such as a “nurturing artistic and patron community” that promote and foster arts and an “affordable cost of living.” (Markusen and Schrock 2006: 1661) This may be due to the fact that artistic workers are often self-employed. Size of city may also matter since large cities often have residents with disposable income to support the arts. In addition, urban cities tend to attract tourists who support the arts and artists’ work.
Other research on the arts has sought to unpack how art worlds “work.” A definitive aspect of the extant research is the importance of the social milieu to cultural production and success in artistic careers. Not only do these factors play a role in production and consumption, the concentration of social networks also sustains the mechanisms that underpin cultural economy: density, transfer of artistic skills across industries, and valorization of cultural goods and services. Cultural products are often subjective, and rely on gatekeepers to facilitate access (Godart and Mears 2010; Currid and Williams 2010). Here, scholars have done case studies of artists and their environments including “neo-bohemia” in Wicker Park (Lloyd 2010) as well as New York City’s creative industries (Currid 2007). Particular places with cultural centers may play a role in “place branding” (Molotch 2003; Scott 2005) and thus impact the way in which particular goods generate “buzz” (Currid and Williams 2010).

In documenting the mechanics of art worlds, this research also demonstrates how cultural industries impact economic development in cities. The urban economy now requires cultural content to be commodified and distributed in goods and services, generating jobs and entrepreneurial activity. The success of such ventures is, in part, because these large metropolitan cities have the global influence to distribute and consume new cultural products. In addition, the clustering of similar firms results in advantages from concentrated labor markets and industry information (Scott 2005; Currid 2007). We see this in the film industry in Hollywood (Scott 2005) as well as fashion in New York City (Rantisi 2002). Access to labor and physical structures (e.g. studios, soundstages, production facilities) allows for an efficiency that supports industry success and dense agglomeration economies. Thus, the very nature of how art is produced generates the agglomeration effects that drive revenues and create jobs.
As the cultural industries are increasingly viewed as a significant driver of economic development, arts policies are becoming a prominent feature in urban settings. To that end, scholars need to analyze how and if arts-related policies impact urban development. Subsidies for museums have been the bases for early cultural industry policies, with the implicit goal of “branding” the city for tourism (Evans 2009). More recently, arts related policies have focused on creative industries-based economic development. However, the development of cultural clusters may not be adequate for economic and cultural revitalization. Evans and Foord (2008) argue that planning for arts and culture in an incremental manner based on specific industries is insufficient and that we need to consider a more comprehensive analysis that includes cultural resources as well as the people and places. Mommaas (2004) shows that it is important to consider the interaction of culture and the market, in other words, organic and commodified mechanisms, in discussing the impact of the arts on economic development.

Politics undoubtedly plays a role. Civic governmental structures impact the feasibility and success of arts related policies. Grodach (2012) found that political factors influence cultural policy in Austin, Texas, including past policies and local governance structures. Pratt’s (2005) work on cultural policies in the UK found that the hybrid nature of cultural production and an ambiguous definition of the cultural industries have resulted in difficulties in cultural policy planning. This contributes to the tension between market forces and public policy in relation to cultural industries (Hesmondhalgh 2007; Pratt 2005). Ultimately, how does arts policy prop up both organic and commodified culture simultaneously? As organic culture often underpins much of commodified culture (whether indie bands that sign on to record labels or unemployed
screenwriters who end up in Hollywood) these two groups become equally significant in policymaking. Whereas commodified culture, the film industry, or museums, may drive present revenues, organic culture is the labor pool and innovation for the future.

**ARTS POLICIES IN THE TOP 20 MSAs**

For an overview of arts policies in the United States, we did a systematic search of arts policies in the top 20 metropolitan statistical areas (MSA) using Factiva and Google News for arts policy articles and researching each metropolitan area’s cultural affairs department website (or its equivalent). We used these data to establish a typology of arts policies. While not a complete survey of all arts policies, it is a sample of the types of arts policies that can be found in major cities in the U.S. that can help us understand and assess arts policy in Los Angeles. We found that arts policies range from having a specific focus or goal to having general and broad aims. While many metropolitan areas have specific arts targeted policies, many are “cultural funds,” dedicated to general arts and cultural support. Some of these policies are broad in scope and do not have particularly specific goals or objectives. Of the policies found in each of the top 20 MSAs, we categorized the policies into the following three types: Art for Society, Arts Districts, and Cultural Funds, each discussed in detail below. Art for Society includes any funding that is specified for the public consumption of the arts, whether targeting public art work or acquiring new art for museums. Arts Districts include arts policies that aim to encourage the clustering of arts related establishments such as museums, galleries, or live and work spaces for artists. Cultural Funds refer to policies that are for both general and specific funds that emphasize the creation of a fund for arts and cultural activities to strengthen or promote various projects related
to the arts.

**Art for Society**

“Art for Society” policies are essentially those that offer support for institutions and art that has a broad appeal. This type has the most variation in policy objectives and the largest number of policies. Projects range in size as well as purpose. The grants support a variety of arts programs that range from providing funds to arts organizations to commissioning new works to encouraging both public and private investment in the arts. Cities either have a general plan for arts and culture or specific targeted funds for certain groups. Some policies focus on artists while others emphasize organizations. Policies that focus on artists include the “Art in Storefronts” program in San Francisco that temporarily places art installations by San Francisco artists in vacant storefront windows. Similarly, Seattle’s Municipal Art Plan sets aside a percentage of city project art funds for artist created public projects. Examples of Arts for Society policies that focus on organizations include Arts Commissions in both Minneapolis and St. Louis, which promote and foster arts and cultural institutions and encourage the development of the arts. Their goals include promoting artists and cultural diversity as well as seeking financial support.

Most cities have programs that support nonprofit arts organizations. Many metropolitan areas have arts and education directed initiatives such as Chicago’s CityArts Grants that support “social services agencies with established arts programs” (City of Chicago 2011). Chicago’s Neighborhood Arts Program Grants target low and moderate income neighborhoods and encourages instructional art projects for youth at risk, senior citizens and people with disabilities.
Similarly San Diego’s Public Art Program supports arts education, Pittsburgh’s Cultural Policy priorities include the “advancement of arts education” (Greater Pittsburgh Arts Council 2011) and Office’s mission includes expanding “arts education for young people” (Philadelphia’s Office of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy 2011).

**Arts Districts**

Policies that focus on developing Arts Districts tend to target neighborhoods and communities that could benefit from arts programs by building and enhancing arts districts, encouraging the geographic clustering of various types of arts uses. The majority of Arts Districts policies emphasize the creation of an arts-focused neighborhood, with the goal of combining opportunities in arts with economic redevelopment. Detailed policy strategies include making the district a focal point for the arts and enhancing the neighborhoods with arts and entertainment uses.

Many cities propose mixed-use neighborhoods that combine housing, commercial as well as arts related uses. For example, Miami’s Arts and Entertainment District used the performing arts center to encourage economic development in the Omni/Park West area. The Dallas Arts District is an area of 17-blocks, one of the largest in the country that is home to various cultural organizations such as the ballet, art museums, and the symphony. Detroit’s Sugar Hill Arts District in contrast is a two-block neighborhood with a history of jazz music, nightclubs, and hotels. This district’s cultural policy encourages the creative economy through the development of artist work and living spaces.
Cultural Funds

Policies under the Cultural Funds category range from those that target a relatively broad population of artists and arts related organizations to the “application of the arts” for economic development purposes. An example of a fund that focuses directly on artists and art organizations is the Philadelphia Cultural Fund which was established in 1994 to “promote, enhance and serve arts and cultural institutions and organizations within the City of Philadelphia” (City of Philadelphia 2011). This fund awarded by “peer panels” seeks to support Philadelphia arts and cultural organizations. They currently operate two grant programs described as “General Operating Grants” and “Youth Arts Enrichment Program.” The General Operating Grant covers those organizations dedicated to “creating, preserving and/or exhibiting visual, literary and performing arts, architecture, science and history” (City of Philadelphia 2011), however, individual artists are not considered for the grant (though organizations may be “encouraged to have artists in their programs.” In Houston, the Houston Arts Alliance has created a fund that awarded 250 arts and cultural organizations annually.

In addition, policies in all three categories specifically use the arts to target economic development. Some support the creation of an arts community or the artists in the area while others use an arts district to attract further economic development. For example, ArtsBoston, an organization supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, uses resources of the arts community and tourism agencies to support cultural economic development. Funding includes support for the first comprehensive online cultural calendar and encourages the tourism industry to promote the arts.
CASE STUDY: LOS ANGELES

We use the case of Los Angeles to study how policy informs and relates to the artistic advantages of the city. Using the Los Angeles MSA 2009 County Business Patterns and Occupational Employment Statistics, we study the artistic composition of the region. We undertake Location Quotient (LQ) analysis comparing Los Angeles occupations and industries to national averages to measure the sectors and jobs that have the highest concentrations and offer the greatest competitive advantage to Los Angeles.

Undoubtedly, the cultural industries play a major role in the city of Los Angeles. Hollywood is world famous for its film industry, known for producing well-recognized actors and actresses as well as famed directors. This is the documented “buzz” creation culture that distinguishes Los Angeles from other places. In our study of County Business Pattern industrial sector data, we find remarkably high LQs for motion picture and other film related production and distribution as expected. Motion Picture and Video Production possesses a 14.97 LQ for employees and 7.14 for establishments. Other motion picture related sectors possess LQs for employees and establishment of over 11 and seven, respectively. The city also produces substantial work in the cultural industries outside of film, in industries such as software and music, with employee LQs ranging from 2.12-7.79 (establishment LQs are equally high). However, the city does not possess any unique advantage in newspaper or book publishing, sectors that still reign supreme in New York City (Table 1).
### TABLE 13.1: Los Angeles Film and Media LQ

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>LQ Employee</th>
<th>LQ Establishment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motion Picture and Video Production</td>
<td>14.97</td>
<td>7.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postproduction Services and Other Motion Picture and Video Industries</td>
<td>11.75</td>
<td>7.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motion Picture and Video Distribution</td>
<td>11.04</td>
<td>7.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Record Production</td>
<td>7.79</td>
<td>4.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated Record Production/Distribution</td>
<td>7.17</td>
<td>4.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Recording Studios</td>
<td>6.93</td>
<td>4.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music Publishers</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>5.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Sound Recording Industries</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>2.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Television Broadcasting</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>1.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periodical Publishers</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motion Picture and Video Exhibition</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio Broadcasting</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Software Publishers</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper Publishers</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Publishers</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Publishers</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Underpinning the success of the film industry is a strong concentration in motion picture-related sectors, such as agents and screen writers. Los Angeles possesses an LQ of 7.67 for agents and managers of artists and a 6.49 LQ for artists, writers and performers. While less remarkable, the data on the arts industry also highlight the presence of other non-film arts industries such as musical groups, theater, and galleries, all of which have LQs above one (Table 2).

**TABLE 13.2: Los Angeles Arts LQ**

| Industry                                                        | LQ  | LQ  |
|                                                                | Employee | Establishment |
| Agents and Managers for Artists, Athletes, Entertainers, and Other Public | 7.67  | 5.91   |
| Figures                                                        | 6.49  | 8.57   |
| Independent Artists, Writers, and Performers                   | 1.77  | 3.04   |
| Musical Groups and Artists                                      | 1.32  | 1.40   |
| Theater Companies and Dinner Theaters                          |       |        |
| Promoters of Performing Arts, Sports, and Similar Events without Facilities | 1.22  | 1.47   |
| Promoters of Performing Arts, Sports, and Similar Events with Facilities | 1.16  | 1.18   |
| Galleries                                                      | 0.89  | 0.52   |
| Museums                                                        | 0.24  | 2.79   |
| Other Performing Arts Companies                                 | N/A   | 1.28   |
Analysis of the occupational data from OES demonstrates similar results. Los Angeles not only has a strong overarching industrial concentration, but particular artistic occupations are strongly represented in the city. The top twenty highest arts occupation location quotients in Los Angeles range from 1.94-7.06. Overall, the city is 22.08 times more concentrated in entertainers and performers than other metros. Additionally, film and video editors, media workers and producers and directors are some of the most represented with LQs of 7.06, 5.31 and 4.84, respectively. Of the top twenty arts occupations in Los Angeles, eight are film related while 12 are not. Those non-art related occupations include fashion designers (4.35), craft artists (4.11), and dancers (3.90) (Table 3). These craft-based, design-intensive industries include fashion and other crafts. They have definite cultural identities and show that the film industry is not the only cultural industry to grow since World War II (Scott 1996).

**TABLE 13.3: Top 20 MSA: Occupations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>LQ</th>
<th>Employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Entertainers and Performers, Sports and Related Workers, All Other</td>
<td>22.08</td>
<td>10030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Film and Video Editors</td>
<td>7.06</td>
<td>4780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media and Communication Equipment Workers, All Other</td>
<td>5.75</td>
<td>3280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media and Communication Workers, All Other</td>
<td>5.31</td>
<td>4300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Producers and Directors</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>15210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-Media Artists and Animators</td>
<td>4.49</td>
<td>4920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fashion Designers</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>2790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craft Artists</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sound Engineering Technicians</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>2380</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Los Angeles Arts Policies

So how do Los Angeles’ art policies shape or inform the artistic advantages that the city possesses? Conversely, do the city’s policies deal with any of the weaknesses in the city’s artistic economy? Some of the ways in which the City of Los Angeles supports the art and cultural economy include policies that target arts and culture to revitalize urban development.

Several governmental funding agencies work on arts related policies. The Los Angeles Cultural Affairs Department is a city agency, appointed by the Mayor that focuses on arts and cultural experiences though “marketing, communication and relationships with community partners.” (Department of Cultural Affairs City of Los Angeles 2011). The Los Angeles County Arts
Commission, an advisory group to the County Board of Supervisors, focuses on fostering the accessibility of the arts in the Country of Los Angeles. The California Arts Council is a state agency appointed by the Governor and the Legislature that encourages and supports arts awareness and the development of arts programs. The Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles (CRA/LA), created its Art Program in 1968 as a vital part of the plan to “eliminate blight and revitalize Los Angeles through focused redevelopment activities in designated project areas” (CRA/LA 2011).

In the recent past, Los Angeles has mainly enacted Art for Society type policies. The 1992 Los Angeles Cultural Masterplan has recognized the importance of both “art as an industry” as well as “art as a public investment” (Department of Cultural Affairs City of Los Angeles 2011). The plan discusses supporting artist development in the form of funding individual artists, and recognizing the need for art space, for live, work and exhibition use. However, it also states that there are limitations on access to work space. In the 1992 Masterplan there was no proposed solution to this issue; however, in the recent 2010 Framework for Cultural Planning, similar concerns were stated and it was suggested that vacant buildings might be used for artists live and work spaces.

Los Angeles supports the arts with policies that specify the development of a fund to assist with arts-related projects. In late 2004, Los Angeles County established a formal civic arts policy that integrates artist expertise with major development projects by dedicating one percent of “design and construction costs on new County capital projects” to be allocated to finance the “civic art components” of these projects. The Civic Art Program’s goals and objectives include the
creation of an improved “physical and cultural environment” while expanding new “cultural tourism opportunities” to expand the “economic vitality” of the County of Los Angeles (LA County Arts Commission 2011). Cultural funds support various programs as well as cultural centers. The Department of Cultural Affairs for the City of Los Angeles operates cultural centers and grant programs that foster the “production, creation, presentation, exhibition and managerial support of artistic cultural services” (Department of Cultural Affairs for the City of Los Angeles 2011). Other programs including the Public Art Division and the Music LA Program support artists in the community and encourage young people to study music. These funds ultimately support Art for Society programs that enhance the quality of life for people in the community.

Los Angeles supports the arts through both public and private investment. The CRA/LA’s Art Project has supported public art since 1968. Developers are required to provide 1% of development costs to arts related projects for many cultural facilities. This fee contributes to incorporating on-site art, a cultural facility, or the Cultural Trust Fund managed by the CRA/LA (CRA/LA 2011). Through this policy, major arts and cultural facilities such as the Museum of Contemporary Art, as well as the Ricardo Montalban Theater in Hollywood, have been built and rehabilitated.

In addition to city and county level support for the arts, the state of California has also made industry specific policies for certain creative industries. Because the film industry is a major revenue generator for Los Angeles, the state of California offers state-wide tax credit in the form of the California Film and Television Tax Credit Program. This program was enacted in February 2009 and offers $100 million in annual tax credits to low-moderate budget film and
television production. Debate is underway as to whether the program will be extended (it is set to expire in 2014). Part of the underlying goal is to retain the city’s film dominance in the wake of runaway production, which while not wholly manifested, remains a perennial threat.

While Los Angeles has specific arts policies that target funds for public art, it has fewer detailed policies that focus on supporting artists and artist communities other than artist live and work space (Los Angeles Cultural Plan 2008). Similar to arts policies in other cities, Los Angeles has also established policies that fall under the categories of Art for Society, Arts Districts, and Cultural Funds. However, like many other major metropolitan areas, Los Angeles has fewer specific policies that provide assistance for artists who have a particular expertise and presence in Los Angeles. As we see with the location quotient analysis, this can be especially helpful for cultural industries that have a strong presence and the greatest competitive advantage in Los Angeles such as music, fashion, dance, and crafts.

Some of the limitations of Los Angeles’s cultural policy include the shortage of specific artist development policy, especially in the wide range of cultural industries that are present in Los Angeles. We believe that this shortage may be a function of the film industry and major museums’ overwhelming influence on the city’s cultural economy. In a policy brief on Los Angeles, Ann Markusen (2010) argues that Los Angeles lacks a coherent strategy for the cultural industries including an absence in artist-centered policies. One difficulty in this is due to the lack of reporting of artists in the employment data. Creative workers are often self-employed and work on a part-time or contractual basis, and can be difficult to be accounted for. However, these are the very types of work that in aggregate contribute to the overall cultural economy in cities.
LESSONS FOR LOS ANGELES AND BEYOND: WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM SCHOLARS AND PAST POLICY

Policy directed towards the arts has tended to amalgamate the arts with the larger creative city agenda (Pratt 2005, 2008). However, Florida’s (2002) definition of the creative class includes broad swaths of the economy extending beyond cultural occupations to include scientists, doctors, lawyers, and financiers. In short, artists are not the same as the creative class. To that end, Markusen (2006) argues for supporting the uniqueness of artists’ work and that they should be cultivated and nurtured in localized economies. As the social lives of artists are integral to their careers, policies should be aimed at supporting artists’ training and networks. Since artists tend to be the first to face the pressures of gentrification, affordable living spaces such as work and live loft space ought to be made available. In the case of Los Angeles, downtown offers some artist work-live space; however, the downtown housing stock is bifurcated between high end lofts that price out most middle class residents and adjacent desolate, blighted streets. The city’s downtown has yet to establish a thriving and cohesive middle class neighborhood with a more seamless block to block transition. In New York City, the very policies that enabled artists to establish live-work spaces in Soho ultimately priced the artists out (Zukin 1989). Thus, arts policy ought to avoid only “bricks and mortar” subsidies to art facilities and instead support the arts through other means such as community spaces, for example funding smaller arts facilities, not simply the large ones.

Fundamentally, arts policy must consider the uniqueness of place. As the case of Los Angeles demonstrates, a city’s creative fortunes hinge on more than the obvious and branded aspects of
the creative economy. Hollywood, for example, is only half the story of Los Angeles’ arts structure. The city has a rich and competitive advantage in music, media and fashion, all of which are underplayed in the branding and economic development schemes for the cities artistic economy. The city’s rich indie music scene and indigenous street art are presently organic but will likely fuel the future labor pools necessary for the city’s cultural economy. Political wars also thwart the organic aspects of the cultural economy. Historically, Los Angeles has been home to one of the richest mural cultures in the world. The 2009 Sign Ordinance lumped murals in with advertising thus making many of them illegal, in essence disassembling a huge part of the city’s cultural identity.

Other tensions emerge within arts policy. We find that measuring the arts is no easy task. While we have used two datasets to capture the arts industries and occupations, artists themselves are not easily counted. For example, actors, clearly a significant occupational group in Los Angeles, do not show up at all because the numbers of actors employed by firms fulltime (rather than hired by contract) are so low that they violate Census confidentiality. Yet, we know that actors are the lifeblood of the city’s film industry and there is an obvious disconnect between the data and the reality of the city’s creative economy.

In addition, arts policy in Los Angeles reflects traditional cultural activities such as arts in the public or nonprofit domain. Thus, most of the policy targeting the arts is focused on districts, nebulously defined cultural funds, and public space rather than the artists themselves and the mechanisms underpinning their careers and production. While art has been thought to generate
economic development, much of the efforts to further this endeavor focus on the end product as opposed to the means (the artists and their communities).

Cities have both organic and commodified versions of artistic production. These different aspects of the cultural economy require different policy approaches: one is oriented towards people and the other towards industry. The cultural industries in urban places rely on the organic production of artists and cultural products as well as the branding and marketing of these goods and services. However, commodified culture inherently depends on grassroots cultural producers and artists who provide much of the backbone of innovation to film, fashion, and design. As these sectors of the cultural economy are discrete yet co-dependent, cities must cultivate more specific and nuanced policy making in the development of a cultural economy.

REFERENCES


Dallas Economic Development. Arts & Culture. Online. Available HTTP:

The DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities. Online. Available HTTP:
<http://dcarts.dc.gov/DC/DCARTS/Commission+on+the+Arts+and+Humanities>
(accessed September 2011).

Department of Cultural Affairs, City of Los Angeles. Online. Available HTTP:


Grants-Houston Arts Alliance. Online. Available HTTP:


San Francisco. Office of Economic and Workforce Development. Online. Available HTTP:


(accessed September 2011).


Seattle- Arts Public Art. Online. Available HTTP:


Sugar Hill Arts District | New Economy Initiative for Southeast Michigan. Online. Available HTTP:

<http://neweconomyinitiative.cfsem.org/grants/our-grantees/sugar-hill-arts-district>

(accessed September 2011).


Part IV

COALITION NETWORKS, ALLIANCES, AND IDENTITY FRAMING
INTRODUCTION

As the cultural and creative industries (CCI) become increasingly important to cities, there is growing discussion of what policy approaches are most desirable for these sorts of economic development (Florida 2002; Scott 2006; Currid 2007; Pratt 2008, 2010; Zukin 2010; Grodach 2012). Policy considerations are complicated by the mixed interests of industries that are reforming at the intersections of what have previously been distinctive sectors (Scott 2008; Currid 2007; Hutton 2008; Indergaard 2009). These discussions are only now beginning to explore the political factors that shape policy making for the CCI.¹ This includes divisions between sectors (and within industries like fashion) due to differences in positioning vis-à-vis production chains, cultural capital, and land use dynamics.

Establishing the CCI as an “object of governance” (Jessop and Oosterlynck 2008) is problematic. The CCI typically have less established positions in relation to policy-makers than do more mature industries. Moreover, what the CCI are in terms of interests and identities is unsettled, given the collision of what had been distinct cultural “worlds” (Currid 2007) and their more radical entanglement with segments of the technology sector and advanced business services (Hutton 2008; Indergaard 2009).
This chapter uses the case of New York to examine two axes in the politics of urban cultural policy. One concerns efforts within the CCI to align segments with common interests and identities vis-à-vis economic development policy. The second entails the struggle of CCI segments to counter real estate interests. These politics reflects the fact that New York’s economy, while dominated by finance, insurance, and real estate (FIRE), also is endowed with a CCI base that is rich and deep. It has also been marked by a boom-bust cycle that structures political opportunities (Tilly and Tarrow 2007) for CCI development coalitions.

**BRAVE NEW WORLD: A POLITICS OF HYBRIDS AND BOUNDARY-CROSSERS**

Explicating the social worlds of cultural producers has the potential to enlighten policy as it reveals the collective dynamics, virtues, and needs of particular CCI ensembles. Theories of industrial districts, innovative agglomerations, and regional innovation systems all explore such worlds, as do recent accounts of “creative fields” (Scott 2006; Indergaard 2009) and “extended production districts” (Hutton 2008) where multiple CCI interact.

Of special interest is Currid’s analysis (2007) of the “social worlds” of New York’s cultural industries. Drawing on Becker’s idea of “art worlds” (1982) she portrays the evolution of social spaces that helped join industries such as film, fashion, music, and art. While they do cultivate their own following, discipline, and norms, they are also part of a far more encompassing and symbiotic whole. These separate industries operate within a fluid economy that allows creative industries to collaborate with one another, review each other’s products, and offer jobs that cross
fertilize and share skill sets (Currid 2007: 7).

The social world that conjoins these industries is composed of coffee shops, bars, and other nightlife venues that came together in a downtown scene - an “oddly fused medley of sounds, graffiti, painting, design, and performance. It was here in the 1970s that art, music, fashion, and design collided into…an all-encompassing cultural economy” (Currid 2007: 30-31). A decade later, this “world of nightlife” had become a key foundation for a “premier global creative hub” (Currid 2007: 36). However, rising real estate costs and other problems have put this economy at a “critical juncture” (Currid 2007: 11). Currid advises policy-makers to meet the needs of specific cultural industries and to “cultivate the density” and “social environment” (Currid 2007: 13) that abet synergies across industries.

Despite her insights, Currid ignores political factors that expose the CCI to real estate pressures and limit their influence on economic development policy in New York. The neglect of politics characterizes much of the literature on the CCI (McCann 2007). Grodach (2012) finds that political factors (e.g., a sector’s political resources, local institutions) shape cultural economy policy while Hutton (2008) suggests there is a tension in global cities (e.g. London) between real-estate oriented development policy and production-oriented policies supporting innovative sectors. Indergaard (2009) claims creative industry coalitions in New York have struggled on account of real estate’s clout. Research also shows political factors to be involved in the making of CCI ensembles (Hutton 2008; Indergaard 2009). Pratt’s claim (2009) that cultural production chains often include manufacturers overlooked by policymakers supports the view that politics influence which segments get recognized as creative (Christopherson and van Jaarsveld 2005).
The situation is complicated by CCI’s growing interactions with technology. A report on New York’s design sectors states that creative clusters commonly host mixes of disciplines such as architects, graphic designers, industrial designers, and software developers. Cutting edge clusters are emerging around digital design, for example, a Brooklyn enclave of “hundreds of companies” that are developing iPhone and iPad apps (Giles 2011). Drawing on Jessop and Oosterlynck (2008), Indergaard contends that the marriage of culture, technology, and commerce in New York raises difficult political questions about how identities, boundaries, and interests of the CCI are to be represented to policy-makers (2009).

Jessop and Oosterlynck (2008) argue that systems of territorial economic governance must construct objects of governance. Such schemes “seek to (re)define specific subsets of economic activities as subjects, sites, and stakes of competition or as objects of regulation and to articulate strategizing projects and visions oriented to these imagined economies” (Jessop and Oosterlynck 2008: 1158). Creating an economic imaginary involves struggles “to shape the identities, subjectivities and interests of the forces involved” (Jessop and Oosterlynck 2008:1157). Whether an imaginary will be institutionalized depends on whether it resonates with a dominant narrative and is supported by existing economic structures, state projects, or other kinds of institutions. Crisis improves the odds that an imaginary will lead to a new path of development. This suggests that we might look for shifts in the “political opportunities” (Tilly and Tarrow 2007) for CCI coalitions to shape policy.
THE POLITICS OF CULTURAL ECONOMY POLICY IN NEW YORK

Since the early 1980s New York has been dominated by finance and other advanced producer services. However, the economic contribution of the creative sectors has been increasing (Schoales 2006; Currid 2007) and there has been increasing overlap among the cultural sectors, advanced business services, and technological segments due to a digitalization of culture and business that began in the 1990s. This has spurred a series of CCI growth coalitions seeking support from city hall. However, the local urban regime’s commitment to property development (Fainstein 2001; Sites 2003) hinders CCI agendas (Indergaard 2009).

Creative Industry Coalitions, 1995 to 2008

The city’s first creative industry coalition formed around new media firms during the 1990s tech boom. Venture capitalists took the lead in organizing a new media association and in creating an identity for the district (“Silicon Alley”). However, a real estate agenda guided the most important support effort. Mayor Giuliani, the city’s Economic Development Corporation (EDC), and the Alliance for Downtown New York (a real estate group) agreed to subsidize wired space for new media firms in 14 underutilized Wall Street buildings. After the boom went bust in 2000, real estate interests relaxed their embrace of the new media. Many new media firms, whose presence had boosted the image of the neighborhood, were priced out (Indergaard 2004).

Although Mayor Bloomberg’s administration has richly funded arts and cultural groups ($803
million over four years (Currid 2007)), his economic development policy has exposed the CCI to skyrocketing real estate costs. Today’s city hall sees economic development as synonymous with global competition for corporate investment. To this end, it has used rezoning and provision of public amenities (e.g., waterfront parks) to encourage property development especially of upscale residences. This has helped fuel gentrification that has displaced many creative firms and workers (Indergaard 2009).

In the wake of the 2001 Trade Center attacks, the Center for an Urban Future (CfUF) advised the city government to develop policies for “emerging” industries (e.g., digital media, biotech). The CFUF and entities such as the Rockefeller Foundation also encouraged the formation of several creative industry coalitions. Three downtown coalitions led by arts groups were created to lobby city hall and the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation (LMDC) – a state-created body in charge of rebuilding the Trade center area. The disruption caused by the attack and federal pledges of billions of dollars for rebuilding were seen as a new opportunity for policy making. The coalitions presented imaginaries that hinged upon the joining of cultural and arts groups (their constituents) with media and technology. They envisioned that these emerging ensembles required a governance system, protection from real estate prices, and production facilities for small firms: they presented public agencies (e.g., city planning, cultural affairs) with district schemes and invitations to forums (one coalition also held a protest at City Hall). Although the agencies and the Alliance for Downtown participated for a time, they lost interest after the onset of a downtown housing boom (subsidized by federal recovery funds); the LMDC did give five million dollars to be distributed to cultural organizations affected by 9-11. A fourth coalition, the “Creative Industry Coalition,” formed in response to the planned rezoning of Brooklyn’s
industrial waterfront; arts groups joined bars, cafes, art-oriented retailers, manufacturers, and activists in several protests demanding height restrictions for new waterfront condos and a higher percentage of affordable housing units. In response, city planning agreed to a few modest changes. The CfUF and Rockefellar Foundation helped form a fifth coalition, “Creative New York,” to represent a citywide “creative core” of nine industries: design, advertising, film and video, broadcasting, publishing, architecture, music, visual arts, and the performing arts. The coalition asked that these industries be governed as one sector and be supplied with affordable space and worker training. The administration translated the Creative New York program into terms compatible with its own agenda. The Mayor decreed that New York be marketed as America’s art and cultural capital while the EDC set up a desk to serve the arts and non-profits: the City Housing Department created a $100 million fund for artists to buy homes so that they would benefit from the real estate value they created (Indergaard 2009). As long as the mid-decade boom lasted, City hall resisted anything resembling industrial policy. Since 2008 the CfUF (still touting the “Creative Core”) has had success in advocating “innovative collaborations” (Bowles 2009).

**KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY POLICIES (AND CONFLICTS)**

After the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers in 2008, city hall felt compelled to develop new strategies. The EDC² began holding meetings with various industry groups to chart out a new development strategy while Bloomberg began to talk about diversifying away from finance. EDC unveiled a “knowledge-based growth model” (NYCEDC 2011: 3) based on an imaginary
of the city as an “environment that galvanizes creativity” (NYCEDC 2011: 3). It featured a broad definition of innovation as “the design, invention, development, and/or implementation of new or altered products, services, processes, systems, organizational structures or business models” (NYCEDC 2011: 3). Among other things, the new EDC agenda is geared to help established sectors such as media and fashion “transition to 21st Century business models” (NYCEDC: 17). To this end, the EDC reports it is constructing “an ecosystem to develop entrepreneurs across industries and stages of business with access to information, training, and innovative competitions” (NYCEDC no date: 1). While the EDC’s main thrust is to inject technology and business practices into CCI segments, it has also touted the importance of new forms of collaboration. This has created unexpected opportunities for media and fashion segments to influence economic development strategy.

Media Meets Tech: A Contested Collaboration

In late 2008, EDC initiated meetings with over 200 representatives of large media firms, start-ups, venture capitalists, and universities. Growing intersections of technology and the CCI—in this case, industries involved in the generation of media content (e.g., tv, film, video, music)—were evident as media reps stressed that digitization and a shortage of software engineers were key challenges. They asked the city to create an MIT-style “media lab” where academics and engineers could work together to help restructure the industry. In July 2009 Bloomberg announced the MediaNYC 2020 strategy that included retraining for media jobs, a tax exempt bond program to help firms construct or improve research and production facilities, a flexible
workspace for free lancers, and a competition to develop online or mobile software apps making use of official city data. Most notable was the launching of a NYC Media Lab located at New York University’s Polytechnic campus in Brooklyn. The lab is intended to help develop,

  
  collaborative research projects on topics vital to the City’s media industry such as: next generation search technologies; format for digital mobile content; computer animation for film and gaming; emerging marketing techniques; and new devices…in development that may affect content distribution.

  
  (City of New York 2010: 2)

To support the media initiative, the EDC organized a start-up exchange where entrepreneurs could meet with other entrepreneurs as well as venture capitalists. Subsequently there was a barrage of criticism that the EDC outreach efforts had overlooked the grassroots tech community. One firm founder noted, “This event was not mentioned on any of the top NYC tech mailing lists I am part of” (Flood 2011: 1). The founder of a new media start-up remarked, “I keep my finger on the pulse of what’s going on, and if there are real initiatives from the city, I haven’t heard about it and none of my cohorts have heard about it either” (Flood 2011: 2). An organizer of monthly tech events noted that when she asked the EDC about co-sponsoring an event, it showed little interest. A computer engineer suggested that the city create a board of advisors “culled from the start-up community” (Flood 2011: 2). Another new media founder protested, “If they want to know what’s going on, they need to listen from the bottom up, not just the top executives” (Flood 2011: 2). He said the EDC should send reps to the monthly NY Tech Meetup which has over 16,000 members. An EDC spokesperson replied that its reps and two
deputy mayors had made presentations at Meetups (Popper 2011a). A venture capitalist rejoined, “Sending out e-mail blasts and having high level people speak for five minutes at a couple of meetings here and there is not relationship building, nor is it the kind of participation we’re looking for” (Flood 2011: 2). Some techies did praise the city’s efforts while the CfUF’s director deemed the dialogue itself to be a sign of progress. “We wouldn’t have been having this conversation five years ago, because the city wasn’t at the table. In the last two years there has been a big shift, with the city really trying to get behind the local tech industry” (Flood 2011: 2). Indeed, the city has responded with some changes. Bloomberg created the new position of Chief Digital Officer and drew from the tech community to fill it. He also visited the NY Tech Meetup where he announced a new Mayor’s Council on Tech. The ten-person panel, most of who are startup founders and CEOs, is to help find opportunities to support innovation (Popper 2011b).

**FASHION DILEMMA: REIMAGINING A CREATIVE SPACE/INDUSTRY**

In 2009 the EDC launched Fashion NYC 2020, a year-long study of the industry’s challenges and advantages so as “to maintain its status as a global fashion capital” (NYCEDC 2010: 1). After contacting 500 industry professionals, the EDC announced two strategies: 1) “positioning the City as a hub of innovation for emerging designers as well as specialty and multichannel retail,” and 2) “attracting the next generation of design, management and merchant talent” (NYCEDC 2010:1). Subsequently, the rhetoric regarding innovation and creativity has been co-opted by factions of an industry divided by cross-cutting pressures.
In November 2009, the EDC supplied $200,000 to help the Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA) set up a Fashion Incubator offering low-cost design studios and services to young fashion designers. Bloomberg later announced additional measures including a NYC Fashion Fund to help emerging designers access capital for financing production, while also supplying them with a list of “vetted” manufacturers so as to aid in “creating a network of high quality manufacturing” (NYCEDC 2010:.1-2). Other initiatives include a contest to develop new retail concepts, selecting students from US and foreign universities to interview with fashion firms, and a “boot camp” to help young designers develop business skills (e.g., create business plans).

However, some fashion industry advocates have complained that the city has failed to protect Garment District manufacturers who are essential to designers. The CFDA, Municipal Arts Society, Design Trust for Public Space, and several fashion designers joined with garment manufacturers to oppose EDC plans to reduce the zoning protection for garment manufacturers from 9.5 million square feet over a 13-block area to a single 310,000 square foot building. Real estate interests have lobbied for a relaxation of zoning protection, which had not been strongly enforced up to this point. Twenty hotels have opened in the district in the past six years and ten are planned (Pasquarelli 2011). The executive director of the Fashion Center Business Improvement District (BID), who favors relaxed zoning laws that draw lucrative residential and office tenants remarked, “You have a huge amount of space that’s being held for production, but you don’t have enough production to absorb all that space” (Pasquarelli 2010: 24). She claims that top designers are “leaving for neighborhoods that are hipper and groovier, with destination
dining and more of a 24/7 youth appeal” (Pasquarelli 2011: 2). In fact, the pull of hip associations is one of several forces dividing fashion. It suggests an impulse toward distinction and the accrual of cultural capital (Zukin 2010). This is reinforced by real estate interests, hungry to exploit higher rents from land uses with such associations. Moreover, the cross-industry collaboration documented by Currid (2007) may also work to pull fashion’s design segment away from its manufacturers.

The politics of the matter have been complicated by the fact that arts groups displaced by gentrification (Smith 2002; Zukin 2010; Zukin and Braslow 2011) have been flooding into the district to take advantage of its low rents. Some arts and theater groups have joined with the BID to promote the Garment District as a neighborhood for arts and culture. Since 2005 the area has held an annual festival. There are now 150 arts-related groups in the area, including 20 performing arts groups, 16 art galleries, and a dozen artists. Many of the arts groups had been priced out of the Times Square area, while galleries are fleeing real estate prices in Chelsea; the performing arts groups also need larger spaces. For example, the cheap space has allowed the Pearl Theatre Company to place its administrators, costume shop and rehearsal studio together near its performance space. The company’s managing director touts the area as an arts district. “In terms of the Off Broadway community, it feels as if there’s as many organizations in the garment district as there are right up in Times Square” (Gregor 2010: 5).

A former director of the Joyce Theatre reports, “there is a critical mass of dance studios in the area”; the Joyce Theatre Foundation has created 11 studio spaces for rehearsals, auditions, and
workshops (Fung 2010: 3). Besides the hotels, the district has also gained luxury residential towers with over 2,000 apartments. The director of the Baryshnikov Arts Center notes, “There are really huge residential towers sprouting up all around us, and with that will come potential audience members” (Gregor 2010: 5). A six-story building has been developed for arts and cultural groups by a partnership that includes two Broadway producers. The Baryshniko Arts Center bought the top floors to use as offices and studio space while the lower levels houses three theaters rented by off Broadway troupes. In 2008, the Orchestra of St. Lukes bought part of the building where it plans to build the DiMenna Center for Classical Music (Gregor 2010). The BID proclaims, “The performing arts groups are a great asset. They complement the fashion industry and demonstrate the creative spirit and energy of the neighborhood” (Fung 2010: 3).

Garment district defenders respond that the garment production cluster is similar to other innovative clusters that city hall now encourages (Treybay 2010). A fashion designer notes, it’s not difficult to understand the benefits of a creative network “when the tech industry moved into large segments of the garment district” but “its unfathomable to many people that the same dynamic interplay exists in the garment district” (Treybay 2010: 1). Seeking to change the industry’s image, the Design Trust for Public Space joined with the CFDA in commissioning a study to document the fashion design and production ecosystem. It revealed that there are 21,500 fashion-related jobs in the district which hosts the headquarters of 850 fashion companies who contribute $10 billion to the city economy annually (Pasquarelli 2010: 1). Such data are being used to back claims that the industry is a cultural force and an incubator of innovation, drawing talented people to the city. Diane von Furstenberg, the CFDA president, has stated that the
fashion industry depends on “beehives’ of small manufacturers while the former director of the Design Trust proposes that “designers rely on a highly complex ecosystem of support” (Pasquarelli 2010: 1).

After Crain’s New York Business reported that some fashion designers were leaving for other trendy areas, the president of a fashion design house reiterated the role of the specialized supplier cluster as an “incubator” for talent and start-ups in a letter to the editor:

It’s true that this neighborhood isn’t SoHo, Hudson Yards, or the meatpacking district. But the garment center has an important resource that no longer exists in those neighborhoods: hundreds of manufacturers and suppliers that work closely with fashion designers to realize innovative, cutting-edge design. Our company continues to produce 85% of our line in the district employing 140 people directly and 400 to 500 people indirectly…we’re a $135 million to $140 million business (Savage 2011: 10).

A fashion designer added, “the full potential of the community as a fashion R&D center has yet to be realized (Pasquarelli 2011: 22). Echoing another EDC buzzword, the President of the Municipal Art Society of New York refers to the Garment District as an “ecosystem,”

connecting students from…institutions like Parsons, [the Fashion Institute of Technology] and Pratt with their first internships and setting a course for their careers. In this complex hub of research and product development, designers from all ranges can engage in the highly iterative creative process. Within a few blocks, they can buy material, get it pleated, purchase zippers, and buttons and have a garment assembled, shown and sold (Cipolla 2010: 11).
The rezoning plan was shelved in mid-2010 due to the recession (Pasquarelli 2010). However, in January 2012 the CFDA revealed that it was moving from the district to a larger office near SoHo - “an area that is fashion conscious,” a snarky real estate exec jibed (Pasquarelli 2012: 1).

CONCLUSION

Researchers are explicating the social worlds of cultural producers in hopes of providing insights for cultural economy policy. However, few have dealt with the politics of such developments in respect to their particular urban contexts. Where the CCI are dense and rich, collisions of the worlds of culture, technology, and commerce raise issues concerning which identities and interests cultural producers should mobilize around as they seek to influence policy. This problematic interacts with a second as cultural economy politics also encounter property-oriented urban regimes. Thus, there are two axes to cultural economy politics: one internal to the CCI wherein specific segments struggle to assemble industrial development coalitions while the other entails their struggles to overcome the hold of real estate interests on development policy.

Property development in New York is encouraged by an urban regime that engages in global competitions for capital. To this end, redevelopment schemes aim to supply amenities that will facilitate image-upgrades for particular areas and marketing of the entire city. In contrast, sectoral growth coalitions representing assortments of CCI have mobilized to promote creative ensembles of varying scales (e.g., city-wide, neighborhood). In delineating various identities,
boundaries, virtues, and needs of these ensembles, they have imagined new arrangements for affordable space, collective production facilities, and sectoral governance.

These different policy impulses can be linked to contradictory features in America’s foremost global city. FIRE has dominated local politics and economics, but there is a dense and diverse base of CCI. In addition, FIRE’s boom-bust rhythm has structured political opportunities for those contending to shape development initiatives; during booms, financial and real estate interests have had opportunities to act as institutional entrepreneurs vis a vis CCI segments (e.g., the Silicon Alley episode) while CCI institutional entrepreneurs have focused on gaining relief from over-heated real estate markets. During busts (and disruptions such as 9-11) CCI elements have seen new openings to lobby city hall for novel policy approaches. However, the main impact of policy in New York up until the 2008 financial crash has been to fuel a dialectic of gentrification: CCI firms and workers push into new areas seeking lower rents and new scenes while real estate redevelopment efforts supported by government rezoning and schemes build on their presence to upgrade the image and value of property. Consequently, many are displaced again. Requests of CCI coalitions for productive facilities and governance systems have received little support from a regime that shuns industrial policy. However, the 2008 financial crisis may also represent a turning point. The regime has introduced novel schemes, including support of the media and fashion industries. That, in turn, is creating opportunities for CCI segments - and enlightened policy advocates such as the CfUF - to influence policy-making.
This study also shows that the politics of cultural economy policy can take multiple forms depending on how CCI growth coalitions form. A growth coalition can form that includes segments of different production chains as was common in the period 2002 to 2007 when multiple campaigns were launched under some version of a “creative industry” imaginary. They defined common problems experienced by diverse industries regarding access to affordable space as well as common interests in the formation of sectoral governance mechanisms. Some defined creative industry interests as extending to skilled manufacturers as well as the drinking and eating establishments linked with cultural producers. A second possibility is that a coalition extends its imaginary to cover the manufacturing segments of the cultural production chain. The prime example of this is the recent efforts of fashion industry notables (e.g., designers) to defend garment manufacturers from rezoning. Garment district defenders have drawn on the new innovation imaginary presented by city hall after the 2008 financial crash. This new strategy, in that it supports CCI segments (e.g. media and fashion) represents a third scenario for cultural economy politics. City hall’s shift to policies that support fashion and the media has had an unanticipated effect of drawing out contentious mobilizations from grass roots media start-ups as well as fashion industry notables. Grass roots media interests are seeking to influence the new policy-making process itself. They are challenging the city’s inclination to treat corporations as the main collaborators in policy-making.

Finally, the study supports the argument that politics has a constitutive role in the formation of CCI ensembles (Christopherson and van Jaarsveld 2005; Hutton 2008; Indergaard 2009). Instructive is the complicated triangle involving claims to the garment district made by the
performing arts, real estate interests, and the garment industry coalition. In the view of some (Florida 2002) the alliance of the arts and real estate promoters of upscale consumption is natural. However, observers anticipate that the rezoning of the Garment District will boost rents and set off the usual cycle of displacement for the arts (Zukin and Braslow 2011). Moreover, Currid (2007) has documented the productive nature of synergies between the arts and the garment industry’s design segment. Interestingly, the creative cache of fashion designers also gives the garment industry coalition leverage in its political efforts to define a more holistic production ecosystem. If city hall had been receptive of CCI coalitions that sought access to affordable space for the arts, then there would be less reason for arts interests to align with Garment District real estate interests. The chronic shortage of affordable space makes it harder to reconcile a troubling collision of two social worlds that fashion innovation depends on - a hip hotspot of cross-pollination with style-makers of film, music and art and the less celebrated production chain where designers collaborate with specialized sample makers.

REFERENCES


--- (2011) NYCEDC Innovation Index, New York.


ENDNOTES

1 The term Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) stresses intersections in a cultural production system where many firms use similar forms of organization (e.g., projects) and labor (e.g., freelance) embedded in urban ecosystems (Pratt, in press). The CCI include tv-program production, film, music, electronic games, architecture, tourism, advertising, fashion as well as nonprofits.

2 The Economic Development Corporation (EDC) is a nonprofit entity that has a staff of 400 and a budget of $750 million. Its central position in city government is evident in its “joint projects” with the Departments of Cultural Affairs and City Planning in Culture and Entertainment, Infrastructure and Transportation, Neighborhood Development, Parks and Public Spaces and the Waterfront. The Deputy Mayor for Economic Development oversees ten departments including the EDC and the Department of City Planning.
CHAPTER 15
What’s in the Fridge? Counter-Democratic Mobilization in Post-Industrial Urban “Cultural” Development

Stephen W. Sawyer

INTRODUCTION

The major Parisian redevelopment project in the former train yards running east along the Seine bears all the marks of post-industrial urban design and development: an “empty” space punctuated with abandoned industrial hulks waiting to be restored or razed under the shadows of a new “authentic” Parisian neighborhood built from nothing. Among these industrial carcasses on the post-industrial Parisian frontier sits the “Frigos” (the Fridge). Having long lost its original function of cooling trains to transport perishable goods, the Fridge has housed an artistic community since the 1980s. A vibrant site of artistic happenings until the 1990s, the Fridge was an institution in Parisian post-industrial underground culture.

This chapter examines the unlikely story of the confrontation between the community of the Fridge and the public-private authorities who pursued the largest urban renovation project within the central arrondissements of Paris since the turn of the century. The dispute over the Fridge stands as an emblematic case of the role culture may play in structuring conflict in post-industrial urban design and politics. The decision to destroy this industrial gothic building plastered in tags and graffiti mobilized resistance on the part of the artists, which both transformed the neighborhood, the local Parisian administration, and the Fridge itself. Building on forms of counter-democratic mobilization, the inhabitants of the Fridge
developed a form of resistance with its own rhythm, intensity, and orientation that proved to be highly effective, allowing them to remain (with their parking lot) and shape the neighborhood scene. Moreover, much of their resistance hinged on the question of whether or not they were a “cultural” space that should be managed as such by the city. In 2010, the Frigos were officially removed from the authority of the Division of Cultural Affairs within the municipality. The building has been saved, but it is indeed the question of what is inside that has remained the object of debate.

TOWARD A POST-INDUSTRIAL “CULTURAL” SPACE: LES FRIGOS

The history of the Frigos and the train yards walked hand in hand until the emergence of post-industrial reconstruction. The site was ideally located at the intersection of the Seine and the eastern entrance to the city. With the introduction of rail transport in the 1830s and 40s, the site became an ideal location for receiving the goods, grain, and wine of a city with a voracious appetite and the wealth to satisfy it. As a result, it became depot site of one of the earliest and most successful train lines in France, the Paris-Orleans. After World War I, the industrial footprint of the area took shape. Both the massive industrial mills (which have been restored and transformed into a university) and the Frigos were built as part of a new industrial complex for receiving, transforming, and storing foodstuffs coming into Paris to be sold at the central market. Built in the 1920s, the Frigos was an essential feature of this construction. The massive shell was in effect a giant refrigerator, built to receive entire train cars within its walls to keep goods cool for long journeys in and out of the city. This function gave the building some of its dominant features including a highly “industrial” feel on the inside with massive tubes and extremely thick walls throughout. The building was also endowed with an impressive industrial gothic style, built in an “L” shape with a tall tower on
one corner. However, the displacement of the central fresh food market out of central Paris (les Halles) to the suburban town of Rungis in the 1960s left the space without its essential purpose. While the building was the property of the SNCF (the French rail transportation agency), it remained empty and largely abandoned until 1980 when they put the first units up for rent in 1980. Artists rented the units, which were rustic at best, until 1985 when a private firm offered to manage the property and provide renovations.

It is worth noting then that the building and its environs were closely wedded to the period of urban industrialization that shaped much of the urban development in Europe from the 1830s to the 1970s. In the 1980s, the site was an ideal type of post-industrial space — it is worth noting then that the Frigo “purgatory” as they call it (the period between the opening of rental units by the SNCF in 1980 and the taking over of a rental management company in 1985) when artists first invested in the space, took place at precisely the moment that Barry Bluestone and Bennet Harrison (1982) published their classic text on the other side of the Atlantic, *The Deindustrialization of America*. Within this post-industrial wasteland, the gothic industrial building took an important turn as one of the centers of Parisian underground culture, filled with avant-garde artists, cultural happenings, and musical events. During this alternative hey-day, one of the most emblematic cultural icons of the young Frigos was the short-lived, but iconic, Parisian punk band *Bérurier Noir*. Their song “Like A Buddha” served as one of the anthems for the anarcho-punk scene in Paris at the time: “You walk and walk in the mountains/you don’t need the state [*Tu marches et marches dans les montagnes/ Tu n'as pas besoin de l'Etat!*]” Along with a few other sites, like the Pali Kao factory, the Frigos fell within the realm of an anti-establishment artistic movement.

There were, however, two important and unique aspects of the Frigo and its inhabitants.
While the residents, guests, and events resembled those of other Parisian squats, and were emblematic for their sheer size and number, the building only gave the appearance of being a squat. In fact, the occupants did pay rent and had, in theory, all the rights French law guarantees renters. In short, these particular inhabitants were actually guaranteed substantial rights by French law. Furthermore, unlike the Pali Kao factory, for example, it was not demolished, but continued to stand through the 1980s and into the 1990s while the rapid half-life of the punk scene slowly ate away at the alternative and anarchist tendencies of the happenings and inhabitants that now had sole responsibility for keeping the Frigos cool.

“BEYOND THE RUINS”

What was awaiting the Frigos beyond the ruins? Like in so many post-industrial cities, the abandoned train yard left high-end real estate (along the Seine in close proximity to the center of the city) completely undeveloped. The national government and the local authorities quickly saw an opportunity for the construction of a massive mixed-use development. As a result, in the early 1990s, a large-scale urban renovation project was announced, claiming to be the largest urban transformation since that of Haussmann in the nineteenth century. The original plan called for two major landmarks in the neighborhood: the new National Library (BNF) and the old Mill, which had been classed as an historical monument. The Fridge, lacking the status of historical monument and located in the center of the train yards, was slated for demolition.

The development of this area was an integral part of socialist president François Mitterand’s turn toward the east of Paris. The history of Parisian urbanism, and especially the grand projects sponsored by kings, emperors, and presidents had traditionally focused on the center
and the western side of Paris. Therefore, Mitterand’s decision to focus on building large, hallmark monuments in the traditional working class eastern neighborhoods was meant to reaffirm his socialist vision of the capital. There was then a deeply political message in the construction of this neighborhood, which was meant to mark the embrace of a working and middle class Paris. The Opera at Bastille, the Institute for the Arab World near Jussieu, the Ministry of Finance at Bercy, as well as the National Library at Tolbiac and the renovation of the Moulins were the pillars of this eastern, popular urbanism. Together, the National Library and the Moulins were specifically designed to establish a cultural pole within the massive new development zone. The irony, of course, is that the one grass-roots site of cultural development, the Frigos, was slated for destruction.

THE CONFLICT

The construction of the library would take over ten years, and during this time, the Frigos remained, but in a cloud of uncertainty. The Fridge sat in between the two “cultural” monuments programmed for the area. No doubt, the anarchic hey-day of the Frigos was over, but its transformation was just beginning. Recognizing the danger that the urban renovation represented for their haven, three occupants, Jean-Paul Reti, Paolo Calia, and Jean-René Fleurieu created an association to defend the building and its inhabitants in 1992 entitled “Association Pour le Développement du 91 Quai de la Gare dans l’Est Parisien” (APLD91). The association immediately confronted the Mayor of the 13th arrondissement and opposed his plan to move the renters out of the Frigos and into the future Grands Moulins. Their initial attempts at slowing down the destruction of the Frigos were successful and quickly this association became the cornerstone of a movement designed to save the Frigos.
In 1998, the occupants of the Frigos established a charter. This charter marked two essential aspects of the conflict between the Frigos and the public/private authorities over the building. First, article 1 determined that the building “must remain, above all, a site of creation and production, an instrument of work consisting of studios” (APLD91). The ambiguous language, which intentionally avoided the self-description as an artistic community, instead emphasized a mix of leftist worker movement rhetoric and cultural tones of creativity. The creative and artistic language was present, but took a back seat in the early moments of mobilization. The discourse used to mobilize politically remained tied to a working class rhetoric (in spite of the anarchist past) and rejected much of the cultural jargon that had become an important element of municipal policy by the late 1990s. Second, the association’s charter also insisted that it should play a role in structuring the area around the building: “Article 3: the building requires an urban design which favors its expansion and visibility within the neighborhood. The current buildings…must not have walls enclosing them” (APLD91). The association did not consider that the Frigos experience ended at the property limits of the actual compound. Rather, it spread into the neighborhood. The aim of the association was (and would remain), then, to set a certain tone for the neighborhood and to structure the urban environment around it. And, the Frigos association would be largely successful in these efforts.

Thus, through the charter and the association, the Frigos still stand. They are now a striking feature of a typical post-industrial glass European neighborhood. Vast graffiti and paintings on the industrial mass break with the monotony of office buildings, creative residential architecture, and general “newness” that plagues the area. While the Grands Moulins have been completely renovated (including an ironic repainting of the original “Grands Moulins” on the outside in giant letters) and house a branch of the Parisian university system, the
outside walls of the Frigos retain their anarcho-punk look.

THE CULTURE OF COUNTER-DEMOCRACY: FROM MINIMALIST PLURALISM TO COUNTER-DEMOCRACY

The question then is: what were the forms of mobilization that allowed them to remain and to resist? How did these forms of political engagement structure the neighborhood? These questions tie into the larger issue of the role of culture and cultural institutions in structuring contemporary urban politics and design, specifically, how culture operates as a catalyst in shaping urban development and mediates forms of citizen efficacy and local power.

In 1962, the question of democratic municipal power received one of its canonical interpretations in the work of Robert Dahl and his now classic text on the American town of New Haven. Working towards a pluralist, and minimalist, definition of democracy, he argued that no single group had a monopoly on local political power. Rather, the city’s politics (in this case New Haven) were shattered and splintered between different elite groups, each fighting for its share of power. The political dynamic he uncovered was hardly that of a deeply egalitarian democracy, but it was also far from a pure plutocracy, oligarchy, or the confiscated democracy of urban machine politics, which completely disenfranchised local groups and citizens. In short, democracy was not necessarily a form of popular government, but it did necessitate multiple actors and multiple power centers. Dahl undoubtedly provided a paradigmatic approach for thinking about local politics and municipal power for an era of political scientists.

Without taking issue with Dahl’s specific conclusions on New Haven, it is possible, however,
to reconsider some of the underpinnings of Dahl’s arguments. Some of these very underpinnings have changed deeply in the post-industrial urban politics of the turn of the century, and especially in the realm of culture. The idea that there has been a paradigmatic shift in the foundations of democratic citizenship and legitimacy on the local level has been pursued most systematically by Pierre Rosanvallon who explored the contemporary transformations in democracy on the local, national, and international levels through the notion of counter-democracy. His essential claims shifted from Dahl (as well as most of his critics) and constructed a theory of local democratic politics.

There are two domains in which Rosanvallon’s counter-democracy argues for a fundamental shift out of Dahl’s minimalist pluralism: first, the legitimacy of the participants. Dahl argued that a small fraction of the electorate actually participated in the making of decisions; he called these figures “pluracrats” and they consisted of “entrepreneurs,” “patricians,” “social notables,” “economic notables,” “ex-plebes,” and “subleaders.” Each of these actors necessarily bargained, influenced, and worked with other “pluralists” who claimed various levels of expertise and legitimacy in order to make decisions. These figures arrived at their position either by election or by “notability,” and then worked amongst themselves. No matter who they were, however, these individuals’ power came from their ability to establish a monopoly on citizen confidence within their particular sphere. Dahl famously noted the role of community business leaders within the mayoral races of New Haven. In short, these men’s business credentials became a means of inspiring confidence among their fellow citizens.

Rosanvallon, on the other hand, has argued that within the current shift toward counter-democracy, it is precisely the monopoly of citizen confidence that is disappearing. As Rosanvallon argues, paraphrasing Georg Simmel, confidence is a hypothesis on future
behavior; it is inherent in the proper delegation of power to another. Two of the classical forms for delegating confidence to local officials were expertise/civil examination and the vote. However, in our current phase of counter-democracy, in which the vote and some forms of political/administrative expertise no longer have a monopoly on legitimacy, we are increasingly looking for ways to institutionalize distrust precisely because we have less confidence in our political leaders. Briefly stated, the three forms of institutionalizing distrust that Rosanvallon defines are the counter-democratic citizen’s capacity to veto, to judge, and to perform surveillance.

Second, Dahl was concerned with understanding how political power limited itself within a liberal framework. Indeed, an essential element of his analysis in *Who Governs?* was his demonstration that power was not monopolized by a single machine or by purely one set of interests, financial or otherwise. He insisted that there were essential checks on the democratic system among the “pluracrats,” even if it remained primarily the realm of elites. Although it was based on a liberal distrust of state power (designed to preserve individual rights and prevent arbitrary power within the state), Dahl’s focus on pluralism differs fundamentally from the democratic distrust outlined by Rosanvallon. “There exists another form of democratic distrust,” writes Rosanvallon, which is opposed to that of the liberals, “whose aim is to ensure that the elected power remains loyal to its original engagements and to find the means to maintain the initial demands in the service of the common good” (Rosanvallon 2006: 15). In short, the aim is to focus the power of state officials and to maintain control over them after and between elections. Citizens hope to maintain control over elected officials and administrative experts throughout their mandate. They are not comforted (as Dahl’s minimalist conclusions would suggest they should be) by the fact that even among themselves, elites, and elected officials must negotiate and share power. What
has emerged, Rosanvallon argues, is a democratic order that no longer functions through the delegation of trust, but instead through the institutionalization of mistrust.

Returning to the Frigos, what follows suggests that mobilization around cultural issues has developed within the context of counter-democracy. While it has traded in some of its anarchic roots and marginality for an extremely well-organized and effective model of citizen action that has been in steady dialogue with local and state officials, it has not overcome its fundamental distrust for politics. The Frigos and their association represent an almost ideal type for counter-democratic action, which looks far beyond the vote and refuses to delegate trust to a political elite. Instead of delegation, their dominant function has been that of resistance or what Rosanvallon refers to as “impediment,” through the mode of counter-proposals.

**TRANSFORMING THE FRIGOS INTO AN OBJECT OF CULTURAL POLICY**

Armed with their association and charter, the APLD set out to defend their vision of the Frigos interests within the urban planning program set up by the public authorities and their private partners, most importantly the SEMAPA (Société d'économie mixte d'aménagement de Paris). Of central importance in the early negotiations was their integration into the ZAC—zone for cooperation (between local residents and public/private authorities) in urban planning. ZACs have become common practice in planning throughout France and are designed to give an opportunity to local residents to impact the construction of their neighborhoods. Local associations are often invited to participate and give their opinions on the direction that the project should take. The APLD was anxious to participate in the ZAC in large part because, as stated earlier, article three of the APLD charter did not consider the
Frigos to be simply a building. Rather, they understood it as an experience that should have an impact on the entire neighborhood.

The fact that the city and the SEMAPA integrated the APLD into the ZAC gave them an opportunity to interact with local officials on a regular basis in shaping the urban plan. “The APLD intervenes everywhere it can and whenever it can to contribute to the current situation” (APLD91). But, in so doing, they did not simply aim to give their opinion. They understood their role to be that of a counter-example to the municipality’s plans. “The harmonious and economical symbiosis between the Frigos’ form and content (the building and the activities within it) pushed the occupants quickly toward expressing a counter-example on the organization of the ZAC” (APLD91). Their claim to provide a counter-example suggests two essential features of their attempts to transform the neighborhood around them. First, they intended to participate regularly in all the deliberations and to take an active role in deciding the shape of the area. This was not pure NIMBYism, but rather a concerted attempt to participate in the shape of the neighborhood surrounding the building. In other words, instead of rejecting anything and everything, they intended to shape what was built around them. Second, they perceived their role as providing a “counter” example. The attempt to propose an alternative was essential as a general method, suggesting that they intended to systematically propose a different counter-proposal.

Thus, if the first great victory of the Frigos was their ability to remain, the second great success of the APLD was its transformation of a building that was to separate them from the Seine. It was on this particular issue that the APLD demonstrated its full muscle and capacity to provide a counter-example and proposal. The lot had been sold and was to be financed by Capital and Continental (C and C) to build a large glass office building. Building on claims
they had been making since their charter, the APLD insisted that this building destroyed the experience of the Frigos, most notably because it prevented any direct visual or physical access to the Seine. While the city and the SEMAPA had agreed to work with C and C, the APLD mobilized against the project, not simply attempting to block it, but rather to transform the project itself. In an attempt to force the city’s hand, the APLD organized occupations of the building site at the same time that they designed a counter-proposal, which divided the building in half. This effectively created two buildings separated by an 18-meter path that allowed the inhabitants of the Frigos to see the Seine. The APLD worked closely with select members of the local administration. In particular, a municipal official close to the APLD and the associations it represented, Jean-François Blet, argued the case of the Frigos in a municipal debate:

The problem raised by this deliberation are the following: the Association APLD presented an alternative project which was coherent and self-financed […]. A suit was filed before the court against this project, which apparently contains real ambiguities, most notably regarding the question of water […]. Abandon the current project of “Capital and Continental” and accept to work in close collaboration with the APLD! (Autorisation 26-2000)

Ultimately, the Frigos counter proposal was accepted, and the 18-meter alley was imposed on C and C.

Aided by their victory and the conflicts within the municipality, the Frigos became an important force in shaping the entire sector of the neighborhood in the years that followed. Most importantly, their work in resisting key figures in city hall placed them in a favorable
light when the conservative majority lost to the socialists in the 2001 municipal elections. Indeed, the divisions within city hall ultimately took their toll as the city shifted to the left for the first time since 1977. The electoral success of the socialist Mayor, Bertrand Delonoe in 2001 was presented as bringing an end to the machine politics and cronyism of a 24-year conservative reign. The two pillars of the new socialist municipal government were culture and cooperation. In this context, the Frigos could be expected to have a privileged position because they had been part of a vibrant associational and artistic activity in the area. It was in this context, then, that the city purchased the building. In their review of their mandate in 2003, they put the Frigos forward as a key feature of their cultural policy and one of the great strengths of their cultural policy. “A tremendous effort for culture has put art into the heart of the city. Forty artists studios (with or without lodging and collective or individual units) were created in the 11th, 17th and 20th arrondissements. The city also purchased the “Frigos” located in the Paris Rive Gauche in order to design it for artists” (Report on Mandate 2003).

However, the city did not simply purchase the building, they also placed its management under the control of the Department of Cultural Affairs. This decision was significant for two reasons. First, even though the municipal authorities had often referred to the Frigos as an artistic community, the Frigos had always interacted with the city’s urban planners, specifically in negotiation with the Department of Urban Planning (DU). Second, as the charter made clear, the major association that represented the Frigos, the APLD, resisted their categorization as an artistic community in favor of rhetoric more closely linked to radical workers movements. In this sense, the decision to place the Frigos under the control of the Division of Cultural Affairs upon its purchase was a radical shift in the management of the Frigos, which might have appeared banal and even enviable to some, but which generated conflict. In her thesis on the role of “off” culture in urban planning, Elsa Vivant (2006) has
argued that the municipality placed the Frigos under the control of cultural affairs precisely because they had been so problematic and acquired too much power within the urban planning process. The aim of placing them under the control of cultural affairs was to remove this influence. From this point of view, managing the Frigos through cultural policy was an attempt to overcome the power that the association had accumulated through its counter-proposals. It also sought to quarantine the Frigos into a sphere where they would be provided more visibility, but pose fewer direct problems for planning the neighborhood. In this case, it would appear that defining cultural policy was an attempt to cordon off the problem posed by the Frigos while at the same time relieving municipal policy of one of the great thorns in its side.

REFUSING A CULTURAL DESIGNATION

However, continuing the mission of their original charter, the APLD refused their new designation as a “cultural” site. “We are neither a museum nor a school” they insisted, reminding the city that their “attachment to the designation ‘site of creation and production’ is not some whimsy but has a precise meaning which our interlocutors would seem to have forgotten” (APLD91). They further insisted that the decision to place them under the control of cultural affairs threatened their self-perception and their desired legal status. “We are aware of the mayor Bertrand Delanoë’s attachment to the experience of the Frigos. He wrote in his year in review of the cultural policy of the City that the city had purchased the Frigos and placed them under the domaine of the city’s real estate park.” They continued, “Alas, perhaps due to poor information or an individual initiative within one of his offices, the Frigos were placed under the direction of Cultural Affairs which is desperate for greater prestige. They are intending to impose the weakest status possible” (APLD91). The Frigos
once again offered a counter-proposal. While they welcomed the fact that they had been purchased by the city, they insisted that placement under the control of cultural affairs was an attempt to reduce their status at the same time that it heightened the Division of Cultural affairs prestige within the city by showing their embrace of local artists. As a direct, material sign of their resistance, residents of the Frigos welded shut a door to a unit that had been rented to an artist by the city of Paris without proper consultation.

Indeed, the APLD and the Frigos did not intend to benefit from cultural policy lying down. The APLD continued its resistance in a 2009 debate with the municipal administration (projet MASSENA-BRUNESEAU minutes 2009). Here, it was precisely the issue of the Frigos’ relationship to Parisian cultural policy that they contested. Summarizing the position of city hall, Jérôme Coumet argued “that the Frigos offer a place for creativity and for artists within the ZAC Paris Rive Gauche.” However, the founder and president of the APLD, Jean-Paul Réti, once again led the charge against the municipal designation of the Frigos as a cultural institutional and therefore part of municipal cultural policy insisting “that the Frigos are not a ‘bouquet of enclosed artists’ but a ‘site of creativity and production in the most absolute sense of the word.’” Réti then provided a counter-proposal that the Frigos should be placed under the control of the city’s local employment and economy department: “In the current project, the APLD deplores the lack of small units reserved for the small businesses as opposed to those consecrated to the construction of offices.” Jérôme Coumet recognized the validity of Réti’s claim indicating that indeed the number of small businesses and the resources designed to support them was insufficient within Paris and the 13th arrondissement stating “the installation of small businesses within the Paris Rive Gauche is unsatisfactory…but we intend to make progress in this area…there must be more focused discussions with developers for buildings with units dedicated to small businesses.”
again, the APLD’s counter-proposal was accepted and the city officials were forced to renegotiate their positions with local land and real-estates developers. However, it should be noted that the capacity to shape the debate and the neighborhood around the Frigos was the result of resistance to being cordoned off into the realm of “culture policy.” As a site dedicated to creation and production, in the words of Réti, the Frigos maintained a far greater influence within the neighborhood.

The APLD’s efforts were ultimately successful. In 2010, the city agreed to place the Frigos under the control of the DDEEES (*La direction du développement économique, de l’emploi et de l'enseignement supérieur*—Division of economic development, employment and higher education). The aim of this division, according to city hall’s website, is to manage employment and education in particular, 7 industrial seed beds, 29 buildings for small businesses, and 5 industrial incubators. As an institution of employment and economic development, the APLD has continued to argue that they should shape the area around them. In a recent post, they argued: “Defining a network of streets in advance, squaring off the corners necessarily rigidifies the neighborhood. The conditions of circulation, the size of the streets define the kinds of activities and careers that can set themselves up there” (APLD91). The Frigos have therefore escaped what they perceived as the administrative ghetto of cultural affairs through resistance and counter-proposals.

**CONCLUSION**

A recent guide book to the Paris Underground betrays a certain discomfort with what the Frigos has become in 2010: “We can only visit the artists’ studios — some have been here for 22 years — during the annual opening, and a calm reigns within these thick walls that one
might even qualify as bourgeois” (Besse 2010: 19). Ultimately, what has become of the Frigos? The building is still standing, its charter is still intact, it has more visibility than ever. And yet in spite, or perhaps because, of its resistance, it has been transformed. As if someone left the door open too long, the Frigos have been brought it to a tepid room temperature. Whether or not the Frigos have retained their underground credentials is obviously of little importance. Rather, the more important question is to what extent this transformation in the perception of the Frigos is not bound to the forms of political resistance and cultural of resistance that the association has incarnated. As the APLD (APLD91) stated in 2006,

The appellation ‘les Frigos’ spreads across two realities that are intimately bound to one another. The building is important as a historical monument. At the same time, it has been host to an exemplary experience that has been built and led by its occupants entirely independent politically and financially. This duality implies a certain merkiness…We may then speak of the saving the “Frigos” while neglecting the experience of its inhabitants.

The Frigos have been victorious in most of their important battles with the administration: they still exist, they shaped the building between them and the Seine, and they are no longer treated as an object of municipal cultural policy. However, this has not been achieved by concessions within the municipal authority itself but by a systematic presentation of counter-proposals. Through these counter-proposals, the Frigos have been brought into the politics of the city. They are far from the cultural elites or pluracrats defined by Dahl; however, as counter-democrats they have revealed an extraordinary desire to participate in the civic life of the neighborhood and an overwhelming lack of confidence in local officials. The paradox of the Frigos is that they would seem to have found their way
into the city not by adhering to its cultural policy, but by resisting it.

**CODA: TALES OF MONTMARTISATION**

The story of the Frigos may be further illustrated by a brief—admittedly speculative, but nevertheless instructive—historical comparison with Montmartre. This former hill-top village (with its provincial undertones) on the edge of Paris at once served as the great site of political resistance in the Commune in 1871 and then of an alternative culture through the last decades of the nineteenth century with such artists as Toulouse Lautrec, Auguste Renoir, Eric Satie, Vincent Van Gogh and many others. The Montmartre of the last third of the nineteenth century had recently been integrated into the rest of the capital through Haussmann’s overwhelming urban planning efforts to rationalize a city, which fed off the industry in its outskirts and the colonies around the world. When it led the Paris Commune against the new Republican regime, Montmartre had become a neighborhood that was both a political and cultural space apart. The neighborhood would long represent a point of political and cultural resistance to these dominant (and dominating) modes of imperial capitalism and municipal policy.

The Frigos from 1980-2010 would seem to capture a similar dimension of the impact of alternative culture in shaping the politics of our contemporary cities. A remnant of the industrial past on the other side of Parisian industrialization in a neighborhood designed to house the future tertiary sector of the city, the Frigos crystallized tensions between the inhabitants who had chosen the site precisely out of rejection of the values of the post-industrial city surrounding them, and the new European economy fueled in part by Parisian real-estate and banking. While their resistance cannot be reasonably compared to massive
political upheaval of the Commune, its small-scale and counter-democratic nature suggest that it too marks a turning point in the organization of Parisian space and its relationship to cultural policy.

Just as the Communards gathered on the top of Montmartre, on the margins of urban life, to “resist” the Republican capitulators, the Fridge factory has resisted the post-fordist occupation of space and remained through its own forms of political mobilization. What is striking is that in the case of the Frigos, this resistance took the form of rejecting its designation as a “cultural” site.

REFERENCES


CULTURE AND URBAN POLITICS: THE ENTERTAINMENT MACHINE

The metaphor of the “entertainment machine” draws attention to the role of culture in urban development (Clark 2003). This model of urban development does not depend on the intensification of land use or the attraction of businesses like the classical growth machine model (Logan and Molotch, 1987), but instead aims to increase local opportunities for cultural consumption. From the point of view of local governments, entertainment machine policies involve, above all, a significant change in the content of their agendas.

The literature on local governance suggests that these types of changes should bring with them different public policies that produce different socio-political processes and governing coalitions (Digateno and Klemanski 1993; John and Cole 2000). Has the new focus on culture in the entertainment machine model generated such a transformation in urban politics? Some trends are evident in the literature. The entertainment machine model is successful among New Political Culture leaders that pay more attention to the citizen/consumer than to traditional political organizations and their classical ideological differences by prioritizing public goods and spaces over separable goods (Lloyd and Clark 2001; Clark et al. 2003). Furthermore, social and cultural organizations become more publically and politically engaged, resulting in a progressive erosion of the classic cleavage between the business world and civic bodies in order to shape more pluralist governing
coalitions (Strom 2008). However, other analyses argue that the new agenda based on cultural consumption and attracting the creative class is adopted by the classic pro-growth coalition (Peck 2005; Grodach 2012).

Both political narratives can to some degree be explained by the very nature of the entertainment machine agenda. This agenda highlights initiatives and services that break down the classic dichotomy between public and separate goods and between developmental and redistributive policies (Navarro and Clark 2009). Furthermore, such agendas often go beyond the boundaries of cultural policies as these have been traditionally understood. Without disregarding the intrinsic aims of cultural policy (fine arts, conservatories, museums, or theaters), entertainment machine objectives are also aimed at improving social cohesion and local economic development (Negri 2007) by offering citizens opportunities for cultural consumption.

However, these broader initiatives can be used for different strategies. Two are crucial: instrumental and planning. The instrumental strategy refers to initiatives for promoting economic development and growth. Culture appears as a new tool to promote entrepreneurialism, innovation, and urban economic development, through for instance major cultural or sporting events, conference venues, tax abatements for cultural industries, or city branding initiatives. Planning strategies by contrast are typically designed to improve the social cohesion of cities by extending cultural infrastructures and services to all residents. Here, culture is understood as a basic good necessary for high quality of life, in for example networks of civic or cultural centers across neighborhoods, schools of music or dance, cultural education programs in schools, support of popular festivals in neighborhoods, or initiatives developed by civic associations (Basset 1993; Bianchini 1993; Dubois and
These divergent strategies available to supporters of entertainment machine policies create a challenge for socio-political analysis: the processes and coalitions that support entertainment machines can take different directions depending on the character of each strategy. Thus, political analysis requires that we break the entertainment machine down to its characteristic issues and strategies to distinguish between planning and instrumental strategies. The basic premise and the main hypothesis of this chapter is that the socio-political process and governing coalition characteristic of the entertainment machine will differ according to whether it is the instrumental or the planning strategy that prevails. More specifically, the first will lead to a governing dynamic similar to the growth machine, while the second will produce processes similar to progressive or anti-growth coalitions.

LOCAL CULTURAL POLICY IN SPAIN: FROM SOCIO-CULTURAL SERVICES TO THE ENTERTAINMENT MACHINE

This proposition is examined here in the case of Spanish municipalities. However, in order to contextualize our empirical analysis a brief overview of urban cultural policy in Spain is necessary. Two main features should be noted. First, urban cultural services have progressively been extended to respond to new citizen demands. This, however, has occurred within a framework of institutional dependency because the regional governments are the main sources of municipal funding, reserving for themselves a significant degree of political authority over cultural policies (Font 2002; AAVV 2004). By contrast, in Northern Europe municipalities spend less on culture but have greater financial autonomy, as well as a lesser focus on cultural heritage (Navarro and Clark 2009; Négrier 2007; Lucchini 2002).
Second, municipalities have extended their cultural initiatives beyond those with classic intrinsic purposes (artistic creation, heritage preservation, and the dissemination of culture) to ones with extrinsic ends related to social cohesion and economic development. This brought other municipal departments into cultural policy (e.g. social services, urban planning). Specifically, during the 1980s, after the Franco dictatorship, the new democratic councils launched cultural services on the basis of a planning strategy by encouraging socio-cultural life and the provision of basic cultural facilities (cultural and civic centers). In the 1990s, this strategy was extended to new services and new kinds of facilities (e.g. libraries, museums, theaters,). However, at the end of the 1990s a new, instrumental strategy began to emerge. Culture, leisure, and entertainment were understood as crucial factors in urban renewal and local economic development (Bonet 1999; Font 2002). Key examples of this new direction are initiatives to promote cultural tourism by combining the local authenticity of heritage with cultural and entertainment amenities, festivals, and events. In this way, municipal agendas have adopted entertainment machine models, but with a certain predomination of the instrumental over the planning strategy, a factor which distinguishes Spanish municipalities by comparison with those of other countries in Europe (Navarro and Clark 2009).

These phases and orientations in urban cultural policy have promoted the mobilization and emergence of new groups, both in the civic sphere and in the business world. In Spanish local communities, associations are mainly oriented to recreation and sports. Like welfare groups, these associations usually focus more on providing services than on political activism, unlike those ones that have a political orientation, such as environmental groups (Navarro and Juaristi 2006). In the business world, the growth of businesses involved in the creation and promotion of arts has been significant, as well as businesses associated with entertainment
and leisure sectors, especially those related to the tourist industry, one of the most important sectors in the Spanish economy (Ministerio de Cultura 2010).

Thus, the municipal agenda has been acquiring the features of the entertainment machine: a transversal agenda that bridges planning and instrumental issues, and the mobilization of more and new civic and business actors. But what factors account for the presence of this agenda in municipalities? What actors are integrated into the governing coalitions of the local entertainment machines? What differences or similarities exist by comparison with the other classic models of governing coalitions? In short, what are the politics of the entertainment machine in Spanish municipalities?

THE SPREAD AND ORIENTATION OF ENTERTAINMENT MACHINES: FISCAL PREFERENCES, POLITICAL ACTIVISM, AND COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS

This section addresses three questions: What priority do Spanish municipalities give to cultural services in comparison with other services? Does the entertainment machine cut across policy agendas? And, what aspects of municipal socio-economic and political dynamics explain their extension? In order to answer these questions secondary data and a survey of Spanish mayors carried out by the Fiscal Austerity and Urban Innovation project was used. This latter includes a question regarding spending priorities for different services and policies. Two items refer to basic initiatives of the entertainment machine: parks and recreational areas, which indicates a planning strategy, and tourism activity, which indicates a more instrumental strategy. Obviously, these items do not allow for an exhaustive analysis of all the cultural issues in municipalities, but they adequately represent central issues in the
agenda for the entertainment machine. Furthermore, it is also possible to compare them with other services.²

The results show some balance between these two items, although tourism is somewhat higher (Figure 1). Nevertheless, both show medium to high levels compared to other municipal services, less than transit, public housing, and environmental protection but more than other basic (waste collection, police) or redistributive services (social services or education). The entertainment machine is clearly an important item on the agenda of Spanish local governments.

FIGURE 16.1: Spending Preferences of Spanish Mayors and Policy Areas

Means (0,100): spend less <- > spend more

To analyze municipal policy agendas, we relied on factor analysis (Table 1). This shows that mayors’ spending preferences are organized into the three functional areas of public policy normally identified in the literature (Peterson 1991: Stein 1990): distributive or allocative policies (parks, streets, police, waste collection and environmental protection), welfare or redistributive policies (education, social welfare, health, and public housing) and developmental policies (attracting business and tourists). However, it also shows that the entertainment machine issues appear in two different areas: parks and recreation among basic urban services, and tourism with economic development. Thus, among Spanish municipalities the entertainment machine exists across policy space, just as it does among mayors of 17 European countries (Navarro and Clark 2009).

To answer the third question, regarding the socio-political processes that underlie the entertainment machine orientation, regression models were performed, taking the spending preferences of mayors as dependent variables and certain socio-economic and political features of municipalities as independent variables. With regard to the former, two indicators were created which show the importance of the instrumental strategy compared to the planning strategy, similar to those elaborated by Navarro and Clark (2009). First, developmental policies minus allocative ones, and second, the two entertainment machine strategies: attracting tourism minus parks and recreation areas. The socio-economic features are: the population of the municipality (Census, 2001), because economies of scale favor the development of cultural industries and cultural consumption amenities; the percentage of the municipal budget spent on culture (Ministerio de Administraciones Públicas, 2004), as a sign of the public effort devoted to the intrinsic ends of culture; the number of people under 18 (Census, 2001), the percentage of creative class in the municipal labor market, because these
### TABLE 16.1: Spending Preferences of Spanish Mayors and Policy Areas

Factor analysis (factor loadings). Varimax rotation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policies and services</th>
<th>Components (Distributive services)</th>
<th>Components (Welfare services)</th>
<th>Components (Economic development)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>.121</td>
<td>.836</td>
<td>-.034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Welfare</td>
<td>.178</td>
<td>.613</td>
<td>.373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>.185</td>
<td>.797</td>
<td>.021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Income Housing</td>
<td>.180</td>
<td>.593</td>
<td>.204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks + Recreation</td>
<td>.744</td>
<td>.148</td>
<td>.151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street + Parking</td>
<td>.597</td>
<td>.153</td>
<td>.190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>.690</td>
<td>.342</td>
<td>.062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waste collection</td>
<td>.775</td>
<td>.083</td>
<td>.062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental protection</td>
<td>.604</td>
<td>.139</td>
<td>.366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiscal incentives to business</td>
<td>.090</td>
<td>.190</td>
<td>.817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attract tourism</td>
<td>.331</td>
<td>.024</td>
<td>.753</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explained variance (%)</td>
<td>23.473</td>
<td>20.771</td>
<td>14.696</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explained variance acum. (%)</td>
<td>23.473</td>
<td>44.244</td>
<td>58.940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean: spend less (0) &lt;-spend more (100)</td>
<td>74.91</td>
<td>74.93</td>
<td>67.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


are groups that show high demand for cultural and recreational services (Florida 2002), and finally the importance of the tourism sector (La Caixa, 2002). Political variables include: the
ideology of the governing party and the energy with which different sectors of the local political system attempt to influence the municipal budget. Based on previous research five different groups of actors were identified: civic political groups (neighborhood, environmental and feminist groups, for example), groups that provide cultural and welfare services (recreation, sport and cultural groups), business groups, the municipal administration, and finally, higher levels of government.

The analysis shows that there is support for the instrumental strategy (tourism) in municipalities if tourism is a significant economic activity, where there are economies of scale (municipal size), and where business groups are very active, like at other levels of government (Table 2). These are groups which posses crucial resources for the implementation of tourism initiatives. This dynamic basically resembles the features of the traditional growth machine. However, there is also a dynamic similar to the classic anti-growth machine in municipalities with younger populations and a bigger creative class: in these cities, citizen preferences are oriented more towards parks and recreation (and allocative policies) than tourism (and developmental policies). These young and creative sectors demand opportunities for cultural consumption opportunities that may be offered by the “tourist city” but have also other demands related to quality of life, neighborhood relations and local authenticity more related to the idea of public spaces and protection of the environment as mechanisms to limit or manage growth (Deleon 1992). The creation of a “tourist city” can generate economic growth but it can also erode the social climate that usually attracts the creative class (Judd and Fainstein 1999), generating opposition from these groups and also from traditional residents of these tourist districts in city centers that see their lifestyle altered. Finally, the analyses show that the ideology of the governing party does not appear to have any influence in either of these dynamics, something which would tend to indicate the importance of the New Political Culture in the presence of the entertainment
machine (Clark et al. 2003), or the strategic importance of tourism as a tool regarding local development in Spain regardless of the ideology of the government.

TABLE 16.2: The Entertainment Machine in Municipalities: Socioeconomic and Socio-politic Characteristics

OLS Regression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th></th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Allocative Developmental</td>
<td>&lt;&gt;</td>
<td>Park+recreation Attract tourism</td>
<td>&lt;&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constante</td>
<td>-.172</td>
<td>.756</td>
<td>.820</td>
<td>.346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size(log)</td>
<td>.142</td>
<td>.069</td>
<td>.041</td>
<td>.158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism Index</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.020</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative class (%)</td>
<td>-.016</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>.010</td>
<td>-.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people (%)</td>
<td>-.059</td>
<td>.018</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>-.066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cult. expenditure (%)</td>
<td>-.001</td>
<td>.007</td>
<td>.832</td>
<td>-.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gov. Party = left</td>
<td>.028</td>
<td>.089</td>
<td>.749</td>
<td>-.062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activism: political ass.</td>
<td>.023</td>
<td>.080</td>
<td>.771</td>
<td>-.048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activism: service ass.</td>
<td>-.104</td>
<td>.070</td>
<td>.137</td>
<td>-.035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activism: business</td>
<td>.137</td>
<td>.067</td>
<td>.044</td>
<td>.174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activism: municipality</td>
<td>-.047</td>
<td>.060</td>
<td>.428</td>
<td>-.122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activism: upper levels</td>
<td>.065</td>
<td>.054</td>
<td>.225</td>
<td>.154</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R2 = .124

Sigf. levels: Bold: p<0,050; Italic: p<0,010.

Source: FAUI Survey and secondary data. BySPL Project.
THE POLITICS OF ENTERTAINMENT MACHINES: BETWEEN GROWTH AND PROGRESSIVE GOVERNING COALITIONS

This analysis shows how entertainment machine polices traverse both instrumental and planning strategies. It also shows that municipalities differ according to the importance they attribute to these strategies, and finally, that this difference depends on economic conditions and socio-political processes that resemble the classic growth and anti-growth models. From this it can be seen that different entertainment machine issues even in the same city can produce different governing processes and coalitions depending on whether strategic or planning strategies predominate.

In order to study these governing coalitions in more detail we conducted policy network analysis. This approach allows us to identify the most influential actors in networks of resource and information exchange for each policy or issue, normally using their coefficient of indegree centrality as the number of exchanges or contacts each actor receives (Gissendaner 2003). In this chapter two different issues are examined in four cities that are similar to each other (Sevilla, Valencia, Málaga, and Córdoba) using data from the “Local Governance and Policy Networks” Project. All are provincial capitals and administrative centers whose socio-economic base is centered on the service sector. They are “high level cultural systems” due to their abundant heritage and cultural amenities (Lazarretti 2008), and have made tourism one of their most important development strategies. Two are governed by left parties and two by right parties.

Altogether 8 networks are analyzed (2 different issues in 4 similar cities). One of the issues clearly represents the instrumental strategy: promoting tourism through heritage, large facilities, and cultural and sporting events. Another issue is revitalizing the historic but
impoverished center of each city. These initiatives aim to improve the living conditions of the original population, but also to attract new residents, to reactivate commercial activity, and to create social and cultural spaces and facilities (Equip d’Analisi Politica 1998; Martín el al. 1999; Blanco 2009). This initiative represents a mixed strategy: to attract economic activity and new inhabitants to depressed districts (instrumental strategy), and to improve living conditions of the original population in terms of housing and socio-cultural facilities (planning strategy), promoting their participation in civic life. These are common traits of this kind of public initiatives (Landry et al. 1996; Nakagawa 2010).

In each city a survey was conducted among representatives of organizations from different sectors of the local community that vary according to their resources and their positions towards each issue (see appendix for definition of actors). Civic groups show the highest level of opposition, though higher in the case of the historic center renewal than in the case of tourism, where the support is higher among all actors (Figure 2). The instrumental strategy appears to be a “consensual policy,” while the planning strategy generates greater controversy, as suggested by Peterson (1981) with regard to developmental and redistributive policies, respectively.

Table 3 shows the most influential (central) actor in the networks of these two issue areas. At least four are public institutions (municipal and regional government agencies) and, in particular, the mayor, who is a local leader in the community and its external representative to other administrations, a feature common to the “political mayor” model in Southern
FIGURE 16.2: Tourism and Urban Renewal Issues: Level of Opposition

Means across cities (0,100)


Europe in which the intergovernmental system favors municipal dependency with respect to other levels of government (Bäck, Heinelt and Magnier 2006). Specifically, as was to be expected, the local and regional government agencies with more centrality for each issue were those possessing competency for it (tourism and urban planning). But the department of culture is also a central actor in the tourism network showing the close link between culture and economic development (as an instrumental strategy). The civil actors with more centrality in each network are also different: the Business Confederation in the case of tourism; the Chamber of Commerce and neighborhood associations in the case of urban renewal. The differences are even clearer when only the three civic actors that are most important in each network are considered. Thus, each issue, on the basis of its own particular
content and objectives, establishes entry and centrality rules for civic actors depending on their resources, in the same way that the distribution of institutional capacities does with respect to municipal and regional agencies. Therefore, each strategy configures a specific “policy domain” (Burnstein 1991) inside the entertainment machine, with specific rules regarding which actors are important, and thus influential, in each case.

**TABLE 16.3: Tourism and Urban Renewal Issue Networks: Most Central Actors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Tourism network</strong></th>
<th><strong>Urban renewal network</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 most central actors</td>
<td>1 Local government: mayor</td>
<td>Neighborhood Associations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Local government: tourism department</td>
<td>Local government: Mayor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 Regional government: main representative in the city</td>
<td>Local government: urban planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 Regional government: culture department</td>
<td>Regional government: main representative in the city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 Business Confederation</td>
<td>Chamber Of Commerce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other most central among non-institutional actors</td>
<td>1 Chamber of Commerce</td>
<td>Business Confederation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Tourist business</td>
<td>Real state Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3 Professional associations (architecture)</td>
<td>Recreational, cultural Associations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To obtain a more complete picture of network structure, we now consider the centrality that each sector of the local political system accumulates (i.e. the sum of the centrality coefficients of their organizations). Although in both issues the municipal administration (the set of all its agencies) is the most important sector, there are clear differences with regard to other sectors. In the case of tourism these are intergovernmental agencies and the business world. Thus, although cultural tourism could theoretically differ from classical growth machine strategies, their politics are more or less the same: public authorities and business worlds converge. Instead of landowners and real state developers as in the classical growth machine, the central actors are the confederation of businesses, the Chamber of Commerce, and tourism businesses. In this case the entertainment machine presents itself as a “tourist machine” in which the main actors possess crucial resources and common preferences with regard to the “economic interest of the city” (Figure 3), showing a similar governing coalition that the classical growth machine and the urban regimes regarding land use regulation or local economic development initiatives.

In the case of urban renewal processes, the major difference is to be found in the centrality of political associations (Table 3). The reordering of residential use and public services provokes the mobilization of these actors (mainly, neighborhood associations), who show significant opposition to these initiatives as they could lead to the gentrification of their neighborhoods. These civic associations, like the classic urban social movements, make up an anti-growth movement in the face of these municipal initiatives. By contrast, this initiative is supported by the business sector and, in particular, by trade associations (shops, bars, leisure venues) because they see the possibility of attracting consumers (mainly, visitors); it is also
FIGURE 16.3: Tourism and Urban Renewal Issue Networks: Sectors’ Centrality

Means across cities


supported by real estate developers who see opportunities for creating a “loft living area” in the city center (Zukin 1982). What is involved here is a socio-political dynamic with two coalitions similar to other processes of urban renovation, highlighting the classic conflict between actors orientated to the use value of urban land (cultural, neighborhood, and urban movements) on the one hand, and those more focused on its exchange value (traders and real estate firms), on the other (Fox 2001; Fainstein 2001). The planning strategy, as urban renewal processes, therefore does not typically generate a consensual political community
among local political actors but rather classic urban conflicts between growth and anti-growth coalitions. For instance, the conflict between neighborhood associations and local government around the renewal project in the Cabanyal, a historical neighborhood in Valencia, or the neighborhood movements against the removal of poor and old inhabitants in the renewal process of San Luis-Alameda in the historical downtown of Sevilla during 2000-2006 (Díaz, 2010; VV.AA, 2006).

CONCLUSIONS: ON THE SOCIO-POLITICAL DIVERSITY OF ENTERTAINMENT MACHINES

The entertainment machine above all changes municipal agendas, stressing culture as a development tool. Our central question has been: does it also involve a change in the rules of the local political game? Our premise was that the entertainment machine agenda is very diverse, but above all, it cuts across the classic distinction between developmental and redistributive urban policies in the form of instrumental and planning strategies. Its socio-political dynamic can thus promote and accommodate political processes and governing coalitions characteristic of both these areas of public policy. Which one will depend on the weight of one of these two strategies in each municipal initiative or the cultural policy of each municipality as a whole.

Our analyses show that both strategies are present in the agenda of Spanish municipalities, even if the instrumental strategy predominates when the socio-economic and sociopolitical conditions that are favorable for it exist: economies of scale, and a certain degree of specialization in tourism and activism among business groups. Groups that articulate specific
demands that combine local authenticity, diversity, and experimentation (the young and creative class) by contrast promote the planning strategy emphasis on public spaces (like parks and recreational areas). Thus we find a socio-political dynamic similar to the classic growth machine when the strategy is instrumental (cultural tourism), and a cleavage between pro-growth and anti-growth coalitions when the planning strategy is implemented. The entertainment machine involves a paradigm change in the logic of urban growth in which creativity and opportunities for cultural consumption count for more than the mere attracting of businesses or intensification of land use. However, implementing its agenda leaves in place differences among political actors with regard to their interests, preferences, and resources, just as much as actors tend to privilege one strategy over the other or to establish different alliances with others for specific issues.

Not all the initiatives produced by the entertainment machine are (or are considered to be) “public goods” and give rise to a “consensual politics.” In the case of the instrumental initiative analyzed (tourism) we find such consensus, but not in the case of the more mixed or planning initiative (urban renewal). Thus, while the entertainment machine represents a radical change in the municipal agenda, its politics seems to be subject to the classical patterns of local socio-political processes and traditional urban struggles. These exist and vary depending on the predominance of instrumental strategies (aimed at economic development) or planning strategies (oriented to the use of culture as a redistributive policy). Though these results are clearly not generalizable beyond Spain, they suggest that the novelty of the entertainment policy resides in the fact that, due to its diverse agenda, it can include both processes and may therefore, taken as a whole, give rise to a greater degree of pluralism in governing coalitions where different coalitions regarding different cultural issues may co-exist.

REFERENCES
(accessed 10 january 2011).


APPENDIX: Main Sector and Actors in Network Analyses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pro-growth (1)</th>
<th>Socio-political (1)</th>
<th>Municipality: Local government</th>
<th>Supra-municipal associations</th>
<th>Political associations</th>
<th>Service associations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

(1) Two main unions (CCOO and UGT) and three main parties (PP, PSOE and IU).

ENDNOTES

1 This chapter was written in the context of The Cultural Dynamic of Cities project (grant SCO2008-04288, Spanish Research Framework). The author is grateful for the comments and suggestions of María Jesús Rodríguez and the editors, which have led to improvements on an earlier version of this text.

2 Data comes from a postal survey carried out in 2004 among municipalities with 10000 or more inhabitants in the framework of the “Bienestar y Sociedad Política Local” (BySPL) Project founded by the Spanish Research Framework (grant SEC2003-1934). The sample, of 245 mayors, is representative both for municipality size and governing party and has a sampling error of 5%.

3 This project was funded by the Andalusian Studies Centre (PRYO14/05-Fundación Centro de Estudios Andaluces. Junta de Andalucía).
CHAPTER 17
Planned and Spontaneous Arts Development: Notes from Portland

Samuel Shaw

One late-summer night in September 2009, Portland Mayor Sam Adams crashed a small, backyard send-off party for the local non-profit art organization Gallery Homeland. Homeland had recently been awarded a grant from the Regional Arts and Culture Council (RACC) to send a group of artists to Berlin for seven months as part of an artist-in-residency exchange between galleries in Portland, Williamsburg, and Berlin called East/West. The media savvy Adams caught up with Homeland director Paul Middendorf for a video interview about the project, which appeared on Adams’ website a few days later (Portland 2009a).

Sam: … And what are you going to do [in Berlin], Gallery Homeland?

Paul: … Basically what we’re going to be doing there is cross-pollinating, and basically together [with the Williamsburg gallery] we’re going to be putting our footprint of Brooklyn and Portland in these cities, and our first trial city is Berlin and we’ll be there for seven months, enough time that we can actually nurture relationships; we can build relationships; we can build solid bonds, for not just the visual arts, but for the creative economy and for all of us and for the future long after we leave.

Sam: So seven months, getting to know people, getting to know Berlin, which is one of the most dynamic cities right now, in the world. Um… what do you hope to get out of this?

Paul: … Ideally after the seven months, we’ll have really solid bonds with Berlin, with their government, with not only their artists, but with their institutions, their galleries, their musicians, a “foothold” if you will… having Portland more widely known as a destination for…”

377
Sam: [Interrupting]: I like that, because I think many of you who follow what I’m about, I like the fact that this is going to get Portlanders connected with Berlin and Germany, and Germans and Berliners connected with Portland… Thank you Paul [Shakes hands]… this has been a really innovative, really innovative; it’s never been done before! Really innovative approach to, uh…”

Paul: [Interrupting]: “Glad you guys were able to make it out and taking some time away to chat.”

Adams’ style of on-the-scene, investigative reporting exceeds the requirements of his elected position. But this mayor – “The Arts Mayor” – represents the figurehead of Portland’s arts and culture policy world and his pro-arts platform and public appearances have won him some popularity in that domain. A celebrated “creative city,” Portland policy makers encourage efforts to “have Portland more widely known,” especially on measures of culture and lifestyle, and supporting the local art scene is a strategy to that end. Middendorf himself, representing Portland’s contemporary art scene, also appears practiced in the language of the “creative economy for the future,” which he knows is about more than the visual art scene. “Creativity” in this sense is a discourse that exceeds the requirements of artistic production, but in the current arts-policy environment, nods to “creative” economics prove worthwhile in securing funding.

The opportunity to make connections with Berlin is no small coincidence either. When Adams refers to Berlin as “one of the most dynamic cities in the world,” he glosses the accepted wisdom within the art community that Berlin has in recent decades become a global center of artistic production, in large part because of its munificent government support of artists. Like Berlin, Portland has grown its population of artists in recent decades, but it largely remains a “studio city,” a relatively cheap place to live and work, perhaps “innovative” in its support for artists, but
far outside the robust art market that makes New York City the dominant center of the art world (Royce 2011). Although making connections with Berlin is apparently what Sam Adams is “all about,” it is ultimately Gallery Homeland’s (representing Portland’s contemporary art scene) impetus to actually be there.

Are “creative” cities creative for artists? This chapter focuses on one key but often-overlooked dynamic shaping urban arts and cultural politics: the interplay between the world of urban cultural policy makers and the local contemporary art scene. Using ethnographic observation and interviews with both artists and arts-policy makers, I demonstrate that these are two independent worlds, driven by autonomous logics of development, but that nevertheless pursue common strategies. As evidenced in the conversation between Adams and Middendorf, these two worlds can appear to work together. Indeed, Gallery Homeland needs city support to make the exchange project possible, and the city needs Homeland to represent Portland to the world as an “innovative” place among “the most dynamic cities.”

The analyses that follow show how and where artists and policy makers work alongside each other, but also where gaps and frictions occur in their efforts. Common strategies include a) networking, or “making connections” between artists in Portland and other art centers around the world and b) making place distinctions, or extending Portland’s “foothold,” securing the city’s reputation “as a widely known destination…” In addition, the conversation implies a third strategy c) making place, by which I refer to the building and development of art venues, supports, and infrastructure at the local level. I conclude that while policy makers and artists
mutually benefit each other, the development of Portland’s local art scene arises as much from “bottom-up” art scene activity as it does from “top-down” policy measures; it is both planned and spontaneous.

PORTLAND: THE “COMPELLING CASE.”

Sam Adams’ broadcast support of the arts – seen in the video personally publicizing artists’ efforts to establish his city’s position as a “widely known destination” relative to global arts centers, New York and Berlin – is probably unique as far as mayors go, but it is also reminiscent. In the 1980s a photo-print poster circulated widely that featured then-future-mayor Bud Clark “exposing his self to art”; his back to the camera, wearing rain hat and boots, opening his pea coat to a nude public art sculpture (Norman Taylor’s *Kvinneakt*) in downtown Portland. Clark was elected to office years later, and although the arts were not a part of his platform – that was just Bud being Bud – his success revealed a Portland public that was open to a leadership oriented to the arts (if not to public nudity). The “Arts Mayor” handle, however, refers to Sam Adams:¹ former City Hall Chief of Staff (1993-2004), then Arts-and-Culture-appointed Commissioner (2005-08), Adams was elected to the big seat in 2008 on a platform that shared the arts with locally popular issues of sustainable development and environmental responsibility.

Portland has accumulated a reputation in recent years as a site of progressive planning, especially among its local urban scholars (e.g. Heying 2010; Ozawa 2004). The Pacific Northwest city is recognized for its public transportation, urban growth boundary (which produces a relatively dense city for its population size), and its commitment to building and planning “green” (Abbott
2004). Meanwhile, Portland has captured the spotlight as a site for hip, cutting-edge, cultural production and enlightened urban living. Frequently named on “most desirable places to live” lists, and subject of its own New York Times’ *Portland Journal* section, the city is offered-up as a national leader in domains of bicycle-commuting, locally-oriented cuisine, micro-breweries, and barista science (e.g. Asimov 2007; Gross 2009; Yardley 2010). So distinctive in these domains, Portland lifestyle has even been the source of its own parody (i.e., *Portlandia*).

Portland has also been named a “compelling case study of urban creativity” by creative planning consultants (Bulick *et al.* 2003) as well as their critics (Peck 2005). Its “replication-friendly” development policies – particularly those related to its arts and culture ecology – have become a standard for cities striving to compete for highly educated “young creatives.” Even Austin, Texas, the vaunted “creative class” leader (Florida 2002) has recently hired Portland’s own Bill Bulick, the former Metropolitan Arts Commission and RACC chair, now of Creative Planning Inc., to develop their *Cultural Master Plan* (Bulick 2009).

It may seem obvious then that Portland has also become a viable alternative site for contemporary arts production in recent years, a development that fits nicely with planning prescriptions that often combine “Arts, Culture, and Creativity” (e.g., Bulick 2009) in a seemingly coherent package. Portland has indeed witnessed a high net in-migration of artists relative to other cities (Markusen & Schrock 2006). Perhaps more notable, local artists boast that Portland has been represented by at least one artist in each of the last five Whitney Biennials, a
feat of real local importance for a show that historically draws exclusively from the larger contemporary art centers, New York and Los Angeles.

**PORTLAND ARTS POLICY**

As Commissioner appointed to Arts and Culture, Sam Adams initiated a revamping of Portland’s arts policy in 2007. The previous arts policy document, *ArtsPlan 2000+*, although forward thinking as its title implied, was written in 1992, by Bill Bulick, then of the Metropolitan Arts Commission (MAC). *ArtsPlan 2000+* called for an overhaul of the public (“paper-heavy”) MAC in favor of a private, non-profit entity that could oversee the spending and distribution of arts funding for municipalities throughout the region. The Regional Arts and Culture Council (RACC) now channels funds from twenty-four municipal sources and other private givers; it awards grants to individual artists and other arts organizations, oversees all public art projects, and advocates for and distributes funds to schools.

Adams’ 2007 effort consisted of inviting a select group of local artists and arts organization representatives – dubbed the Creative Capacity Committee – to meet and advise on the production of a new policy document. The current document bears the imprimatur of those informants, listing the key strategies discussed above as formal policy goals, while also bearing the policy discourse that puts those strategies at the service of “creativity,” which in print reads equally rhetorical, elusive, and seductive. The new policy document, unveiled in 2009, is titled: *Act for Art: The Creative Action Plan for the Portland Metropolitan Region*. The *Act for Art* is part plan, part manifesto; made mostly of bullet points with full color charts and graphs; all
fitting onto twelve pages of newspaper, and generously distributed as such (Portland 2009b). The first bold-type headline reads, “In this region, creativity is a part of everything we do, everything we are” (“creativity” is highlighted in yellow). The text continues:

We wander in words and in old growth forests, immerse in lakes and symphonies. Bank walls are a canvas of mixed media, and children learn to crawl on art museum floors and stomp through puddles in homemade shoes. The arts are not a luxury here, but an integral part of our everyday lives.

The document goes on to show that Portland remains well behind the national average in per-capita arts spending, citing Seattle and Denver as dramatically outpacing Portland in that regard, thus revealing a competitive logic in “creative” policy-making. As Act for Art implies, Portland’s “creative” identity may be at risk if appropriate arts funding streams are not met.

EMPLACING CONTEMPORARY ART

Local art scenes, on the other hand, respond to more than local policy and city funding resources. Pierre Bourdieu (1993) argued that fields of cultural production, although embedded in economic and power relations, strive to maintain an autonomous logic of their own. Art critic Arthur Danto (1964) first used the term “Artworld” to describe the institutions and contexts that set art apart as autonomous from other endeavors: “to see something as art requires something the eye cannot descry – an atmosphere of artistic theory, a knowledge of the history of art: an artworld” (quoted in van Mannen 2009).
Seldom acknowledged by social scientists, however, is that this “atmosphere of art theory and knowledge,” is also rooted in particular time and place schemas. As Gieryn (2008) demonstrated, the New York School of abstract expressionism came to dominate the world of modern art in the 1940s, and with it the idea that a New York address and loft lifestyle (Zukin 1982) were necessary components of the artist’s vision. New York’s 8th and 10th Street galleries and hangouts became modern art’s “cenacles” (Wolfe 1975) or “truth spots.” In the field of contemporary art production, places themselves accumulate recognition; they become understood as the wellsprings from which legitimate artistic energy originates. As Gieryn notes “in art, place-based labels for circles of artists and their works help to establish value and secure reputations” (2008: 395).

Local art scenes are embedded in a global field of contemporary arts production in which cities themselves occupy positions relative to each other, and places can become the object of symbolic struggle. Contemporary artists working outside of the dominant centers of the art world suffer a relative place-based disadvantage (Pinheiro & Dowd 2009; Plattner 1993). And although it is a celebrated “creative” city, in the balance of the global art world, Portland is still an “off-center” city, and therefore the logics of artists’ career strategies extend beyond the local to global scales of artistic production.

**NETWORKING**

Omar migrated to Portland in 2007 after living in various cities around the world, including stints in Paris and New York. Omar is somewhat accomplished, though still in his early career, having
been shown in galleries and biennials internationally; however, Portland art dealers have been slow to embrace his work. Omar gives several explanations as to why not, including that in a city without a robust art market, dealers are less likely to take chances with experimental work, especially during a recession. Instead, Omar found steady income teaching at a local art college, an opportunity that he says came about through his ability to network with the right people: “Everywhere I go I seek out and meet artists and professors; I go to the art schools and introduce myself. You have to network in the art world.” And despite its slow market, Omar says that he moved to Portland because “I love it here… I love the city and the creative energy” (Interview).

Within months of arriving, Omar opened the Hippo Gallery in an old garage space in Portland’s Central Eastside Industrial District. The gallery is funded out of pocket (with the help of a few sales here and there), but the venue affords Omar the opportunity to “give back to the community,” as he puts it; it is an “alternative” space committed to curating experimental and unsalable work that other commercial galleries in Portland will not touch. More important, Omar’s niche makes him a central figure in the local art scene: “Because so little work actually sells in Portland, artists are free to experiment, and they come to my gallery” (Interview). As a curator with his own venue, Omar is able to exhibit local artists and invite guest curators that he knows from cities elsewhere. In exchange, he has been invited to curate Portland artists in exhibits in various places around the world.

An artist’s network connections can go a long way in establishing a career. On a most basic level, the right kind of collaborative networks can stimulate creativity and lead to artistic success (Uzzi and Spiro 2005). But artists’ networks are socially valuable beyond artistic output.
Connections to other artists (and their connections) can result in being offered an exhibition or receiving a review. Given the spatial divisions operating in the contemporary art field, it follows that network ties to other places, particularly to art centers like New York, are especially useful. It is partially for these reasons that Omar is a central figure in one local art scene: he is able to connect local artists to other places.

Contrast Omar’s position in the local art scene to the official arts policy. *Act for Art* recommends “investing in creative talent” by “creating opportunities for artists to network with other creatives, supporters, and consumers – locally, nationally, and globally” (Portland 2009b). One specific recommendation calls for RACC to “investigate the feasibility of a travel fund for local artists” (Portland 2009b). Thus, policy makers recognize the needs of artists to develop professional networks beyond Portland. In practice, however, this implementation has been modest.

RACC’s main contribution in the domain of networking has been a bi-monthly meet-and-greet called Art Spark. The event takes place at a new venue each time, and features short informational presentations from different arts organizations. The Art Spark website gives the following overview:

Now in its 3rd year, Art Spark is becoming the networking event for Artists and Art lovers of all backgrounds and varieties. People are making important professional connections and discovering more of what is happening in Portland’s creative community (ArtSpark).
While it is true that Ark Spark events attract all backgrounds and varieties, the benefits for the local contemporary art scene remain unclear. In my estimation, rarely do Art Sparks result in local artists making lasting, resourceful connections. Rather, Art Sparks appear to attract retired, hobby artists, assorted RACC volunteers, and other arts-policy figures, many of whom appear to be regulars that already know each other. Resourceful connections, like Omar, are typically not the type found at Art Spark. When artists themselves want to make connections, they are more likely to do so in spaces where they know more resourceful people will be, for example at a Hippo or Gallery Homeland opening. Indeed, the popularity of the event has evidently waned over time: what was once a monthly event now takes place bi-monthly.

Though well conceived, policy implementation in the domain of networking appears limited to locals, however reliable they are. Granted, RACC was able to fund Gallery Homeland’s effort to “make connections” and “build relationships” with Berlin, but the city itself lacks resources to send artists abroad on a regular basis. Moreover, local policy makers cannot develop global artistic networks on their own. If global artist networks matter for creative arts policy, then they do so because they matter for the careers of local artists, so local artists’ strategies, and practices that develop accordingly. In sum, it appears the city benefits from artists’ efforts to network with other cities (Berlin, etc.) as much as artists benefit from the funding to get there.

PLACE DISTINCTIONS

Markusen and Schrock (2006) found that between 1995 and 2000, Portland witnessed a high net
in-migration of artists. Portland was listed third, just behind Los Angeles and Phoenix, for cities having the highest ratio of artists moving in versus those moving out. This trend has continued through 2010, such that Portland’s visual artist population is now nearly double the national average.\(^3\) The city’s cost of living, although rising, remains relatively low (compared to neighbors Seattle and San Francisco) and its growing reputation as an alternative art city makes Portland a popular destination. That growing reputation, however, is the product of a symbolic struggle, strategically waged by both local artists and arts-policy makers. Indeed, the local contemporary art scene would like to “have Portland more widely known as a destination,” which apparently is what Sam Adams “is all about.”

Leon Kohler moved to Portland in 1999 and quickly became a prominent local curator and writer. When asked why Leon moved to Portland, he said, “I came here specifically to overhaul this city as a cultural center...” (Interview). He began writing about Portland’s art scene for various arts magazines before starting his own web-based arts journal, which focuses mostly on Portland artists but has an international reach. In his thinking, the website is more than an outlet for art criticism; it is a venue to establish Portland as a center for contemporary art in dialogue with other arts professionals around the world. Leon (Interview) understands such a strategy is often a matter of swaying opinions, which can be a particularly violent struggle, as the following exchange demonstrates:

I had it out with [a] former curator of the Whitney Biennial... And he was trying to say things, and I was like, “No your head’s up your ass, you don’t know what you’re talking about.” And I
was like, “Look, you’re Custer and I’m Crazy Horse.” That’s actually how I started it off. I said, “Look, I’m sure you’re a fine general and you know what you’re doing, but look, I know the territory and I’ve got more Indians than you do…” He was trying to say that “Portland’s a bunch of DIY kids in their basements drinking Pabst.” And I was like, “No you don’t understand, there are people here with degrees from Columbia…They’re not just a bunch of kids celebrating their own [sic] amateurity. There are consummate professionals here who you are belittling by not seeing this as a more multi-layered, multivalent scene.

Neil Arneson moved from Portland to New York City in the late 1980s, and back again in 2000. He got his MFA in the New York area and took up a job (one of several) at a high profile gallery as a preparator, painting walls, and hanging exhibits. Despite installing shows for some very famous American artists, Arneson realized that he did not have time for a studio practice:

I realized that if those guys were going to be my role models, that if I was going to be a happy old man, then I wouldn’t be able to stay in New York… New York is a rat race.

When asked why he chose to come back to Portland, Neil said, “There’s no other place in the world as nice as Portland… I mean, look at all this [Neil raised his arms gesturing toward his 1000 square foot studio filled with art supplies, random objects, and half-finished works, which he can maintain with a part-time job].” Neil also recommended that I talk to Leon about Portland’s art scene:

When the Portland art world got noticed,” said Neil, “Leon [was] one of the early champions, [and said things] like, “Portland’s a happening place!” But everyone [else] was like, “he’s so full of shit, what the fuck is he talking about?” But a lot of people started to kind of take his side. Or
they see it in print enough, and they hear it enough, that they just like started to believe it...And then at some point, there definitely IS something happening here. And I talked to my friends in New York or wherever, and they’re like, “Man I hear Portland’s hoppin,” you know… but people from there are definitely moving here, talking about how great it is. So there definitely is some truth to it.

Because fields of cultural production are arenas of symbolic struggle (Bourdieu 1993), and because place-based labels codify artistic value and reputations (Gieryn 2008), it follows that arts professionals might engage in symbolic struggles to define their city positively relative other places. Leon exhibits this strategy most clearly when defining Portland as a legitimate art city against those who could not otherwise imagine it. As Neil testified, “soon people began to take his side, and there became some truth to it.” As a writer and critic, Kohler is also able to make aesthetic distinctions, for example by defining and defending a unique Portland aesthetic that is tied to its unique natural landscape. Other artists make place distinctions by rallying against New York’s art world hegemony, or by defining Portland’s social scene as friendly, laid back, and cooperative. It matters that Portland is a “hot art city” (Interview, Leon) to artists, because such labels help to make artistic production meaningful and artistic careers recognizable.

Portland’s official arts policy, in line with place-distinguishing practices, is straightforward: “build the brand.” Branding and marketing strategies have been integral to urban development practices in the postindustrial era (Gotham 2002; Hartman 2002; Zukin 1995), and Portland’s increasingly positive reputation in recent years indicates that it has indeed been successful in this arena. But the brand link to official arts policy is particularly illuminating. By “building the brand,” Portland arts policy means to “establish the Portland metropolitan region as a center of
excellence for art and design, and promote this status broadly.” More specifically, *Act for Art* calls on arts organizations to “link to economic development strategies” and to “promote the region as a center for environmental sustainability” (Portland 2009b). Further, it calls on tourist agencies and organizations to promote Portland as a leading site of artistic production.

In the logics of both arts/creativity-planners and artistic professionals, distinctive places are ones that attract attention; they are places where artists (and other “creatives”) may locate, and they are places that color perceptions of creative value and reputations. The extent to which local artists perceive that they represent Portland’s brand, however, may not matter to their own place-distinguishing practices (although it appears to have helped Gallery Homeland secure funding). Rather, in this case, both worlds pursue the same objectives simultaneously.

**MAKING PLACE**

Finally, Omar, Paul, and Leon also represent what Markusen and Gadwa (2010) might call “creative placemakers.” Creative placemaking in their sense is a call to arts-planners, businesses, and philanthropists to “strategically shape the physical and social character of a neighborhood, town, city, or region around arts and cultural activities” (Markusen and Gadwa 2010: 3), by building a diverse ecology of arts venues and resources, so as to attract and sustain a vibrant local arts community, which again can be instrumental in securing economic development. But while their pitch is clearly situated within the creativity discourse and directed to arts-policy makers, I also use the term more generally to describe efforts by artists themselves to build a vibrant local ecology of contemporary art venues.
As the creativity paradigm appears to acknowledge, local art scenes depend on a diversity of institutions, organizations, and venues that can mobilize an array of artistic activity. Artists in Portland are adept at building institutions, organizations, and venues themselves. Venues such as art galleries, non-profit organizations, and web journals serve to advance the local arts ecology for everyone as well as advance their own personal careers. Commercial art galleries and non-profit venues not only provide exhibition spaces for producers and consumers, they also serve as places where art scenes gather, allowing other artists to recognize each other, and converse about common interests and problems. Vibrant art scenes also require outlets for critical writing, commentary, and dialogue. Venues (spaces and critical outlets) allow artists to network, and venue entrepreneurs stand to benefit from this synergy. For example, as Omar’s path demonstrates, not satisfied with the local “modern art” gallery scene, he developed his own “alternative” venue. From his gallery he is able to curate local artists, and bring artists from elsewhere, thereby forging inter-city connections.

For policy makers, creative placemaking involves channeling money into local venues. Since Adams took office in 2009, Portland City Hall hosts an annual address to the public called State of the Arts. The address consists of a series of testimonials and performances from local arts advocates and organizations before the five commissioners vote on the mayor’s annual city budget proposal (including the arts budget). The event in March of 2011 featured a long statement from the Creative Action Network (CAN), a non-profit lobbying group (initiated by Adams) that aims to pass a measure that would provide a permanent regional arts fund four times the size of the city’s current arts budget. Also on hand were an arts-business association, a planning/design group, and several arts/education programs.
Presenters and performers appealed to art’s ability to heal. Arts/business advocates – Urban Design Advisory Group and Pop Art Inc. – preached a familiar “economic impacts” discourse, suggesting that art, creativity, and innovation are keys to economic growth, and therefore to economic recovery. An arts/social-service agency that helps developmentally disabled adults make music performed a rendition of Neil Young’s *Heart of Gold,* and then testified that art makes life “meaningful” (while pointing to smiling disabled adults to advance their point). A RACC grantee that practices art therapy for drug addicts and their families testified that art heals addiction. Finally, RACC and CAN appointees appealed to the city’s very identity and ended the meeting by leading the audience in a song, “The Arts is Who We Are;” the words scrolling across a large power point slide as a bouncy ball keeps the place over the words. Remaining seated in his chair with Commissioners flanking him on both sides, Sam Adams acknowledged the effort: “I just want to underscore, this is a City Council priority and every single person [on the City Council]... has been stalwart in their support of the arts... I feel like we've only just begun to realize our potential...” Commissioners echoed: “This has been really enjoyable,” and “Thank you. Keep it up.

Here, CAN’s efforts to increase the arts budget respond to *Act for Art’s* primary goal to “Strengthen Our Cultural Infrastructure,” which is done by “improving public funding,” and “helping art spaces flourish.” Indeed, much of the proposed increase in public funding will go to making art spaces flourish, thus making the city a viable one for local artists’ careers, and a “creative place” in line with arts policy discourse.

Nevertheless, many in the Portland contemporary art community are skeptical of such policy efforts. If CAN’s arts-budget is passed, it will still be shepherded through RACC, which some
argue is hopelessly behind on issues of importance to the local art scene. For example, when I asked Leon to explain Sam Adams’ influence on the local art world, Leon laughed and said: “I don’t know if he understands. I’ve worked with him on a few things… but people are often more serious about things than he is. And that’s maybe a bone of contention that he champions sort of middling art.” When further asked to describe RACC, Leon further offered:

They’re maybe five or six years behind what’s really going on here. But the good news is that they used to be 15 years behind. They are making up for lost ground very quickly; it’s annoying to artists, and it’s annoying that support always boils down to really how inventive and resourceful you are personally.

Leon’s complaints are aimed not just at Portland’s lack of resources, but also the lack of “seriousness” and knowledge of what is going on the local art scene. Artists have to be personally resourceful in this environment, reasons Leon, not only because there is little money to go around, but also because the city does not understand which projects or venues are meaningful to the local art scene; they champion a “middling art” that for Leon is not interesting on the global scale of the contemporary art world.

CONCLUSION

While benefiting from arts and culture policy, the strategies evidenced by artists in Portland stem from logics engendered by a larger, global field of contemporary arts production. As such, artists are seen doing much of the work of positioning themselves and their city as one that can be
“widely known” as a legitimate site of arts production. Arts and culture policy makers, on the other hand, pander unabashedly to the logics of “creative” development, struggling to position Portland as a site of distinctive cultural lifestyles, a source of attraction to highly skilled, “creative” labor, and “sustainable” economic development.

To the extent that arts and cultural policy follows the art scene’s lead in making their trans-local strategies official policy material – networking, building institutions, and building the brand – the policy world can be seen as also embedded in the global field of cultural production. Conversely, to the extent that local artists’ careers benefit from the arts policy that in turn makes their ‘place’ in the art world a more recognizable one, the field of cultural production is also embedded in the “creative” policy discourse.

Nevertheless, this chapter shows that art scenes and arts policy makers pursue development strategies independently, sometimes in parallel, sometimes in cooperation, and sometimes with disagreement. As such, this chapter provides one case study that illuminates how artists actually benefit from urban arts policy. Perhaps the question we should ask is, in what ways do creative development strategies also benefit from their local art scenes?

REFERENCES


ENDNOTES

1 The “Arts Mayor” is how the current director of RACC referred Adams to me during an interview when I inquired about Portland’s mayoral involvement in the arts over the years since Bud Clark.

2 For critique of the creative development discourse, see Peck, 2005.

3 The location quotients for visual artists in Portland have changed from 1.29 in 2000 to 1.80 in 2010 (based on PUMS 5% and ACS 5% population estimates).
CHAPTER 18

Local Politics in the Creative City: The Case of Toronto

Daniel Silver

Toronto, like many cities worldwide, has significantly grown and changed in recent decades. But the transformation in Toronto has been especially sudden and dramatic. Its historic Victorian political culture, averse to public amusement and supportive of bourgeois virtues like thrift, family, and homogenous community, has been joined by new themes of individuality, public personal expression, and cultural diversity (Lemon 1984). Traditional self-conceptions like “Toronto the Good” and “Hogtown” now jostle and merge with “Toronto the Could,” “Creative City,” and “Visit Toronto, See the World.”

This chapter uses two case studies to explore how local politics have been affected by these changes. One highlights the politics at stake in cultural work and consumption. In the case of the West Queen West Triangle, a vibrant independent art scene, supported by city officials, politicians, and influential media figures and professionals, sought to resist and alter proposed condominium developments that threatened to turn one of the city’s core post-industrial employment districts into a “bedroom community for the suburbs.” The other highlights the politics of residence and community. In the case of the Wychwood Barns, neighbors clashed over whether to rehabilitate abandoned and dilapidated streetcar repair barns into artist live-work space, an environmental educational center, and a farmers market or to demolish it for a traditional grass and trees park.
Both controversies focused on the role of artists and cultural participation in work and communities, not as sideshows but as core elements of municipal policy. They led to significant rhetorical and ideological reframing of artists and self-expression more generally in Toronto’s political culture, reconstituting artists not as delinquents but as do-gooders, not as deviant hedonists but as useful labor and good neighbors. These cases thus offer students of urban politics and municipal cultural policy an excellent opportunity to better understand emerging political coalitions and tactics and how these vary in different city and neighborhood contexts.

TORONTO FROM HOGTOWN TO CREATIVE CITY

The scope and rapidity of Toronto’s recent transformations are profound, with economic, social, and political changes impacting its cultural life. Economically, especially since the early 1990s, manufacturing jobs have declined, service and finance have increased, and the post-industrial “creative occupations” from fine artists to graphic designers to technology and R&D have rapidly grown (City of Toronto, 2011). Trade (and competition) increasingly proceeds globally and on a North-South rather than East-West axis, leading civic and political leaders to promote the arts and culture as a carrot for attracting globe-trotting young and dynamic creative workers. Socially, waves of immigrants have settled in Toronto, bringing with them cultural and culinary traditions outside its traditional WASP establishment – first from Southern and Eastern Europe starting in the middle 1950s and 1960s (as well as counter-cultural Americans escaping the Viet Nam draft), then from Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean in steeply rising proportions and absolute numbers through the 1980s and 2000s (Bourne 2005). Concurrently, average household size has
been on the decline, as more persons are living alone, with roommates or partners, or in small nuclear families, often in dense clusters of single family dwellings or newly built downtown condominiums – they live less under the watchful eye of the extended family and are increasingly demanding public spaces of sociability outside the home, like restaurants, plazas, cafes, and music venues (Bourne 2004). Politically, in the late 1990s, the City of Toronto was amalgamated with four of its suburbs. Previously connected in an awkward two-tier Metro-City arrangement, the new “Mega-City” instantly became the 5th largest in North America, spurring initiatives to make Toronto a “world-class” city, with cultural offerings playing a key role; it also placed demands on city agencies and arts advocates to explain how the arts benefit the city as a whole, not only the downtown core (Isin 1999).

The most visible aspect of these cultural changes is what has come to be known as the “Cultural Renaissance” (Jenkins 2005). Most notably, starchitects Frank Gehry and Daniel Liebeskind produced strikingly modern and controversial new designs for two of Toronto’s most traditional cultural institutions, The Royal Ontario Museum and the Art Gallery of Ontario (Patterson 2009). But the “rise of culture” is broader and more deeply integrated into Torontonians’ daily experience than a few redesigned buildings. Figure 1 shows its breadth. Since as recently as 1999, Toronto has seen dramatic increases in all kinds of cultural and expressive organizations and amenities. Nearly all are growing at rates faster than total businesses are. Interior designers and dance companies have more than doubled in this period. Ernest Hemingway, who wrote a column for the Toronto Daily Star, once complained, “I hate to leave Paris for Toronto, the city of churches.” There are now in Toronto more holistic health centers, acupuncturists, yoga studios, and martial arts schools per postal code (7.13) than there are churches and religious organizations (5.11)².
FIGURE 18.1: Percentage Change in Various Types of Expressively Oriented Business in Toronto and Canada between 1999 and 2008

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Business Patterns.

NOTE: This figure shows percentage change in various types of expressively-oriented businesses in Toronto and Canada between 1999 and 2008. Whereas total businesses increased by about 25% in Toronto others like music publishing, record production, and performance arts organization increased by over 50%, while interior designers, musical theaters, and dance companies more than doubled.
One indicator of not only the breadth but also the depth of these changes is the extent to which arts activism has been integrated with local government. Crucial was the formation of the Toronto Arts Council (TAC) as an arms-length arts granting organization in 1974, taking decisions about arts grants out of the hands of politicians and putting them into artist juries. Toronto Artscape, founded in 1985, began owning, managing, and eventually developing properties that offer below-market rent for artists in order to preserve artist live-work space in the increasingly high rent urban core. The city’s Culture department grew in this period, eventually merging with the powerful Economic Development department and producing successive planning documents that charted an expanded role for culture in the city. Though TAC, Artscape, and Culture operate separately, their staffs move in similar social networks, share common ideals, and shift employment from one to the other relatively fluidly.

The cumulative result of these developments is a strong set of organizational bases for translating arts advocacy into action, recruiting new members, and wielding political influence. This is represented in the vocal “Artsvote” movement, which proclaims “I am an artist and I vote,” holds mayoral debates, and issues report cards about how arts-friendly candidates for city council are. They exercise classic pressure group tactics, targeting key districts where bloc voting by the rising number of people working in (or married to those who work in) the arts can make the difference in low turnout elections. And these organizational bases are only strengthened by the economic and social changes noted above so that the organized representatives of the arts and culture are able to speak with more clout, and political conflict revolves less about whether to deliver cultural goods but over which goods and how.
FROM STRUCTURAL CONTEXT TO POLITICAL ACTION SITUATION

Sociologists use the term “political opportunity structure” (Della Porta and Rucht 1999; McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996) to refer to the chances groups have of being taken seriously by influential political actors. In Toronto, as we have seen, this structure has been changing. Since the late 1960s, but especially since the mid-1990s, the political context has become more favorable to arts and cultural activists.

Opportunity structure, however, is only a vague path until somebody decides to walk down it, often growing and changing it on the way. This happens through creative political action, which in turn occurs when particular, often conflictual, situations provoke some people to do something against others. “Cultural Policy” is in large measure the outcome of such contestation, where the conflict revolves around arts and culture. The cases of the Wychwood Car Barns and of the West Queen West Triangle help us to see variants of this political process of cultural policy creation and transformation in action.

LOCAL CHARACTERISTICS SHAPE THE PROBLEMS TO WHICH CULTURAL POLICY RESPONDS

First, let us review the qualities of the two places relevant to their respective cultural policy debates. These shape the contours of the conflicts and the conditions of what would count as a resolution.
The Wychwood Barns are former Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) streetcar repair barns. They were built originally in the early 20th century nearby Wychwood Park, an artist colony from the 1890s that offered a garden suburban experience built on an Arts and Crafts aesthetic of the pristine natural landscape (Berland and Hanke 2002). By the mid-1990s, the barns were barely used, and had become a symbol of industrial-age rust in the midst of a dense, now-Midtown, residential community. Ownership was transferred from the TTC to the city, and the question of what to do with the property and the buildings became a hotly debated matter of public policy, in the neighborhood and beyond.

Three features of the community are relevant to the political controversy that would break out over the fate of the Barns. First, the area straddles the boundary between the pre-amalgamation cities of Toronto and North York. Upon amalgamation in 1998, multiple local political wards were combined, and two incumbent councilors were left vying for one position in the 2000 election. Amalgamation here was not simply a formal jurisdictional change; it immediately disrupted the day-to-day lives of local citizens by politicizing community decisions around loyalties to particular political leaders, who in turn became the symbolic focus of questions about what kind of community the newly created Ward would be. Thus, the victorious Joe Mihevc – a PhD in Theology and Social Ethics, able to casually quote Freud, Jane Jacobs, and recite the history of various parks movements – was eventually the subject of intense scorn and praise, with opponents chanting “Heil Mihevc” at community meetings and supporters referring to his “Zen-like calm” (Landsberg 2002). Local political leadership in this situation became a key variable in political dispute about cultural policy, as Mihevc would become perhaps the driving force behind the movement to transform the repair barns into a cultural community center, as well as the central target of opposition.
Second, not only was the political character of the local community in flux, its social character was as well. From 2001 to 2006, the percentage of the population in Statistics Canada reporting “multiple ethnic origins” went from 34 percent to 43 percent, compared to a citywide average in 2006 of 30 percent. The percent of “multiples” was highest in the census tract immediately nearby the Barns. With steeply rising housing values, new residents with young children, and development pressure, “who are we?” was naturally on the lips of many, while traditional residential and ethno-cultural bases of identity and community were in doubt or flux. “What kind of park do we want?” became a proxy for “what is the nature of our community?” Without any clear answer, these questions became political.

Third, though primarily a residential community, the area has many residents who work in the arts and a sizable base of arts organizations that serve its needs. Nine percent of the Ward’s population work in Arts, Culture, and Recreation, and 16 percent work in social science, government, and education – both well above the city average. About 35 percent of residents have degrees in humanities or social sciences, while by contrast about 12 percent have degrees in engineering or the technical trades. At the same time, fewer people work in manufacturing than in the average Toronto neighborhood while more and more work at home and walk to work. That is, there were many aesthetically sensitive people who were increasingly spending their time walking around, looking at shops and streetscapes. Thus, if “who are we?” was in the air, an arts-oriented, expressive urbanist industrial heritage transformation project was ideally situated as an attractive experiment in new forms of community that would stand in stark contrast to the quiet Arts and Craft colony of its past.
The West Queen West Triangle is a large area of former factories and warehouses in the Western part of the downtown core, just south of Queen Street, one of Toronto’s central and iconic commercial strips. Three features are especially salient for understanding the political dispute regarding the place of artists in urban cultural policy that erupted there in the mid-2000s.

First, drawn by cheap rents, proximity to the nearby Queen Street scene, and the “grit as glamour” (Lloyd 2006) provided by concentrations of ethnic minorities and marginal activities,³ many mostly young and single artists and cultural workers moved into the area in the late 1990s. Between 1996 and 2006 the area saw nearly a 5 point increase in the percentage of the population working in arts, culture, and recreation and an 8 point decline in the share of the population married with children (Statistics Canada data, compiled by author); it has about 9 times as many art galleries and twenty times as many tattoo parlors as the average Toronto postal code.⁴ The area thus became a focal point of artistic and creative work, with a strong orientation toward personal experimentation, youthful self-expression and discovery, and spontaneity. This influx led, second, to large-scale development. 1000 new private dwellings were built in Ward 18 between 2001 and 2006, more than were built in the previous 10 years. Thousands of new units are currently under construction. Rents were on the rise and the focus of the scene was shifting from cultural production to cultural consumption, as many artists started moving further west and north.

Third, the local art scene, though oriented toward individuality and experimentation, had strong organizational bases, influential ties, and members with a history of activism. The Gladstone Hotel was its crucial base of operations. A renovated dive reopened in 2005, the Gladstone is an arts-friendly hotel that offers artist-designed rooms and hosts exhibitions, shows, and
performances, mostly from the local independent scene. It is owned and operated by the Zeidler family. Eberhard Zeidler designed the Eaton Centre in the early 1970s, one of North America’s first major indoor downtown malls. His initial, eventually rejected, plans included an arts bazaar. His daughter, Margie, responsible for the redevelopment of a nearby industrial building into an arts and creative industry hub, bought the Gladstone, and her sister Christina, herself an accomplished artist, operates it. They have relatively deep pockets and big rolodexes. Thus, the WQW arts scene was not simply a coterie of alternative and experimental artists; they had connections, cash, organization, know-how, and memory of past conflicts to draw on. They had “buzz” and the ability to wield it to their advantage (Silver and Clark 2012). In this situation, it was thus civil society organizations and activist arts groups rather than local political leaders who became the most active political agents of cultural policy development.

CULTURAL POLICY BECOMES POLITICAL AROUND SPECIFIC ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

These two neighborhoods were in many ways tinderboxes for cultural policy controversies that would not only emerge but also be translated into effective action. What lit the fuse? In the Wychwood area, it was the question “what is a park?” Both Mihevc and his opponent Rob Davis campaigned for the Car Barns to become “100% Park,” which at the time meant something like “not commercial real estate development.” But when it came to specify what “100% park” is, the community split. Artscape had been attending community meetings, and together with Mihevc, began to formulate plans, somewhat outside the normal planning process, to adaptively
reuse rather than demolish some or all of the old buildings. They would house arts groups and farmers markets, community non-profits and community food centers. Local natural preservationist groups proposed returning the area to its original natural state. Some residents dubbed themselves “Neighbours for 100% Park” and started advocating for traditional grass, trees, playground, and sports fields. Others, many tapped by Mihevc, calling themselves “Friends of a New Park,” organized support for considering multiple uses in general and the Artscape proposals in particular. Any one of these alternatives might plausibly be considered a “park.” Opting for one or the other became the focal point for local politics in heated community meetings and elsewhere.

In the case of the WQW triangle, the energizing issue was how and whether artists should continue to live and work in the neighborhood and its scene. One city official actively involved in the case described the issue this way:

> We don’t want these high rise condos, we don’t want these wannabe hipsters, you know, the guys that are brokers on Bay Street (Canada’s Wall Street) who want part of this art scene in the evening and, you know what, they’re working so hard on Bay Street that they won’t have time for the scene in the evening.

(Interview with author)

Moreover, large buildings would replace fine-grained streetscapes defined by many small retail establishments, threatening to disrupt and deaden the walkability and density of experience many locals felt enlivened the scene. As a historically industrial area, the triangle had been zoned for employment; however, developers were pushing for rezoning as a primarily residential area.
Higher rents and new buildings with few viable workspaces (in contrast to the large warehouse lofts and studios) would push many artists to live and work elsewhere. Given the developers’ deep pocket books and experience with the planning process, any attempt to modify this course would necessarily involve some sort of political intervention. Largely at the initiative of Christina and Margie Zeidler, Active 18 (named after the local political ward, Ward 18) was formed to advocate for “good urban design” and integrate the special characteristics of the neighborhood – in particular its status as a center of cultural and creative work – into whatever it was becoming.

CULTURAL POLICY CONFLICTS ARE INFUSED BY CLASHING CULTURAL IMAGES

These technical issues of grass per acre or zoning regulations became infused with political passion. They did so in no small part because they embodied charged images about the role of arts and culture in cities and neighborhoods that are hard to reconcile.

The imagery in the case of the Wychwood Barns revolved around two highly emotional questions with no easy answer: how to live with the legacy of industrialism and how to define the nature of a local community. The Barns became the venue for debating both. Run down and boarded up, they were a symbol and reminder of dirty work and a noisy, mechanical intrusion on what could be and had been a pastoral scene. Turning them into a grass, trees, and children’s play area quite naturally presented to some a welcome end of that era, a way to kick the
manufacturing age into the dustbin of history. “Artists need space to work, I understand that,” said Amy McConnell, a leader of Neighbours for 100% Park, film producer, and Wychwood Park resident, “but one of the things that makes city life bearable to me is a park” (in Conlogue 2002). The Artscape proposal, supported by Mihevc and Friends of a New Park, proposed an alternative, treating the industrial past as part of a collective learning process. “The Green Barn will be the meeting place of culture and nature..., the community can explore nature while framed by the historical architecture and heritage of the TTC car barns” (Friends, website). Yes, humans had harmed nature, but we are now able to work with her rather than on her and to make work fulfilling rather than alienating – ideals that might, they proposed, be realized by hosting food education centers, farmers markets, and self-expressing post-industrial artists within an industrial heritage building, surrounded by photographs of street car mechanics.

The question of community was equally fraught with symbolic meaning. Neighbours for 100% Park had a vision of community defined primarily by residence; the park was for those who lived nearby, an extension of their backyards. They brought bags of lard to community meetings to graphically show all the fat their kids would fail to burn without ample space. Artists living and working in the park would bring non-residents and set up a division between the cultivated and the uncouth. The Artscape proposal would create an “exclusive space where artists can interface with thespians and activists. Neighbors may intrude if they dare” (Neighours, website). The result would be the “Habourfronting” of the neighborhood, that is, its transformation into a tourist destination infiltrated by outsiders and unknowns, less a space for diverse openness and more the replacement of one sensibility by another (Neighbors, website).
Friends of a New Park, by contrast, proposed a conception of community based not on privacy but on publicity and interaction. The Barns would create a “dynamic and flexible” space for a mobile community whose identity was in flux and could not be sure what “us” and “them” would mean. “A key aspect of any sustainable project is that it be adaptable and flexible to changing conditions” (Friends, website). Thus, disputes about technical policy questions were energized by value-laden questions concerning whether artists would be good neighbors or dangerous outsiders, whether industrialism was a bad memory to be forgotten or a developmental moment to be continually learned from. The official policies and practices that resulted record how these issues are resolved, or at least managed.

In the case of the WQW triangle, the technical issues surrounding zoning and setbacks were infused with charged symbols. Two themes were crucial: first, the relationship between planning and spontaneity, and second, the relationship between cultural work and cultural consumption. One of the allures of the area was its “organic” character. Nobody planned the neighborhood ahead of time as an artist colony; people simply started moving into warehouse spaces and making them studios. Galleries popped up, with no blueprint. Being a part of that flowering was part of the allure of the scene. The proposed developments, however, when they did include artist work-spaces, did so in a “creative mews.” These would become “a planned arts community,” that would necessarily be “a failure,” said one local artist. “Arts communities grow organically” (in Foad 2007). New glass and steel construction, that is, did not only suggest a new architectural aesthetic for the neighborhood; it was an affront to the scene’s characteristic orientation toward improvisation and spontaneity.
Equally energizing was the question of whether the new developments would tip the balance of the neighborhood toward cultural consumption rather than cultural production. The issue turns on what the local cultural scene was ostensibly for. To many local artists and creative workers, it fed into their work: for professional contacts, critical responses, collaborations, new ideas, and more. The developments threatened to change the scene into a consumer amenity, not unlike granite countertops. Their “contrived arts alleyway is the antithesis of creative industry. Rather than support artists making art, it promises the moneyed a stroll through a simulated artscape” (Foad 2007). The most potent symbol of this perceived threat was in the name of one of the new condominiums: The Bohemian Embassy. Referencing a local bar central to Toronto’s 1960s bohemian culture in the Yorkville neighborhood (a hangout for Joni Mitchell and others), this name, together with glossy photos of beautiful and decidedly un-bohemian people, evoked visceral disgust. These images of a work area turned into a funhouse club scene animated a political movement to keep a foothold for cultural employment in the area.

TACTICS AND RHETORIC: MOBILIZING RESOURCES AND RESOLVING CONTRADICTIONS

Blow-by-blow details of how these controversies unfolded are available elsewhere (Campbell 2011; Berland and Hanke 2002; Lorinc 2002). For present purposes, we can focus on what seems to have been crucial to the eventual policy outcomes from a political perspective. In the Wychwood case, Mihevc was able to use personal contacts with the city’s parks commissioner to get a crucial “seal of approval” for the project and build on a history of collaboration with social
housing agencies to win support for subsidized artist live-work space. Artscape billed itself as knowing how to “leverage” higher levels of government for innovative projects, and they delivered by winning grants. Reports from Culture Department officials explaining the cultural value of the buildings and the civic value of arts hubs offered the legitimacy of “impartial” evidence. Together, Artscape and Mihevc worked a largely inside game to give the project a kind of inevitability that infused the “dreams” of the Friends of the New Park with a sense of realistic possibility while making it seem like a “done deal” to opponents.

Equally important was the rhetorical battle, largely played out in local newspapers, on and off line. The main issue was trust: which group could most plausibly make the case that their proposal would deepen community cohesion and togetherness without creating exclusion and division. Here, Friends of a New Park were key. They gathered dozens of letters of support from local school principals. Their website included hundreds of names of local residents, their addresses proudly displayed. They publically argued that the arts could build local trust just as well as grass and trees: more activity would mean more “eyes on the street” and a safer environment. Far from bringing deviants and hedonists into the area, resident artists would provide theater classes, painting classes, and more. A sense of humor also helped. As Mihevc joked in our interview, opponents “didn’t want artists with their duct taped cars and they didn’t want artists because everyone knows artists smoke more dope than everybody. So my comment back was ‘yeah, but they share.’” By contrast, Neighbours for 100% Park were largely anonymous, rarely granted interviews, and mostly presented themselves as defending private space rather than building public space. Perhaps the most important media moment was when
one member was quoted as saying “she doesn't want anything new to be built nearby because guests at her friend's dinner party won't have any place to park” (Barber 2002). Neighbours for 100% Park were framed as fearful of change and outsiders, defending private turf and separable goods; Friends of a New Park were able to reverse the image of artists as outside and deviant elites and reframe them as upstanding neighbors.

The outcome of the WQW case also turned on both strategic and rhetorical political issues. Tactically, Active 18 could draw on a wealth of high-level professional and government contacts. They used these to put pressure on city staff to develop supportive reports and put their expanding position in City Hall to work. At the same time, Active 18 was able to use the special talents of their artist membership. They held alternative design charrettes with leading architects and designers encouraging attendees (and media members) to let their imaginations go wild. They issued a “Jane Jacobs Report Card,” drawing on her symbolic status in the city. They would make aesthetically sleek power point presentations designed to show that they were not simply a group of prima donna artists but could in fact out design the designers. Part of their strategy for building support, both from the public at large as well as from key professional and government groups, was to show that their aesthetic abilities were useful resources backed by expert knowledge. This implicitly suggested how much the city would stand to lose if these resources were dispersed, and how much it had to gain by effectively harnessing them for the public good.

Again, the public rhetorical case was vital. Here, Jane Farrow, a resident, former Canadian Broadcasting Company television reporter, member of Active 18’s inner circle, and savvy media
messenger, was the key figure. She presented a simple but powerful message: Active 18 was for “good design.” This message was in large measure an attempt to square the circle of spontaneity and planning, by advocating a kind of urban design and planning that would at the same time cultivate improvisational expression. As one Active 18 leader put it, “We know how this story [gentrification] often ends, but let’s try and change this story.” At the same time, Active 18 skillfully portrayed themselves not as NIMBYs but called themselves YIMBYs (Yes in My Backyard). They were for development, not against it; but, so they argued, Toronto needed a kind of development which would unleash its creative potential so that its growth in cultural employment could redound to “public benefit.” That is, their message sought to reframe arts clusters not as the “cultural contradiction of capitalism,” but as core pillars of the new economy. Artists could be useful labor, not only wild bohemians, and for the success of Toronto as a whole, it would be crucial to maintain an urban design in which this kind of work could flourish.

In both cases, then, rhetorical success involved some creative synthesis of seemingly contradictory themes. The revamped Wychwood Barns could be, somehow, both publically open to all and a basis for particular local solidarity; they could fuse both industrialism and environmental stewardship. The WQW triangle could be both planned and creative; it could grow rapidly while drawing new consumers and be home to affordable artist workspace and professional networks. Whether these syntheses are practically or even logically possible is not the point. Rather, from a political perspective, they show that policies that hold out the hope of uniting, or at least putting together in dialogue, seemingly divergent symbols may have especially heightened political resonance.
OUTCOMES: SUCCESS IS MORE THAN REALIZING SPECIFIC GOALS

What are the main outcomes of these rhetorics and strategies? Now called the Artscape Wychwood Barns, the TTC barns were rehabilitated according to Artscape’s plans, at a price tag of around 20 million Canadian dollars, with funds coming from a variety of sources such as development fees for nearby condominium proposals, provincial and federal grants for subsidized low-income housing (on the novel proposition that below-rent artist space could be eligible for such funds), foundation and private donations, loans backed by the city, not to mention tax exemptions. They now house a year round farmers’ market, a community food organization, several artists and arts groups, various music education programs, a children’s theater, and more.

In the WQW Triangle, the city’s Culture department, together with Active 18, brought the case before the Ontario Municipal Board (a provincial commission that decides local development disputes). They argued for “no net loss” of cultural employment space on the grounds that the neighborhood was one of the city’s – and country’s – most important creative industry clusters and that maintaining an interface between work, residence, and consumption was crucial to the economic vitality of these sorts of industries. The board rejected these claims, on the grounds that they were insufficiently supported by hard data and not yet integrated into the City’s official plan. Before the City and Active 18 won a rare appeal (pushed for by Mayor David Miller, among other elites), the City had already settled with developers on two of the three specific proposed developments. With the threat of appeal, and with Artscape emerging as a powerful
broker, the third was settled on terms more favorable to Active 18: 90 artist live-work spaces at below market rates (many rent to own), along with another 160 affordable units added to the city’s general pool of social housing. 56,000 square feet would be sold to Toronto Artscape, who would own and manage the space in perpetuity. Developers would fund the repurposing of a nearby and historically significant library as a performing arts hub. They would also contribute additional funds for community arts infrastructure projects, and after some further negotiations, new park space. Though not everything Active 18 wanted, these are fairly considerable concessions in a planning environment that was not set up to their benefit, and, compared to similar development issues in other cities, a fairly remarkable example of political intervention into the planning process in favor of maintaining cultural work districts in the face of rapid residential growth.

“Successful action” is more than meeting specific goals; it is also about creating an enriched platform for further action (Silver 2011). The most significant policy impacts of both cases may be at this level. Thus, one crucial outcome of the Wychwood Barns experience was that Artscape dramatically increased its own repertoire of skills as well as the confidence of others in its competence. Similarly, even though they did not get everything they wanted, Active 18 now exists, and this in itself is a significant result, as they are continuing players not only in their own neighborhood but actively training other groups city-wide looking to learn the ways of YIMBYism. At the same time, many city officials have accepted arts activist critiques that city planners were not properly prepared to deal with planning for arts industries and have undertaken new planning initiatives in response, building closer ties between the Culture Department and the
Planning Department, generating maps and inventories of cultural workers so as to have the hard data they need to make cases for designating cultural work districts, and implementing slow-downs on fast-developing areas (i.e. by placing moratoria on liquor and bar licenses for a fixed period) to facilitate sustainable integration of new businesses into existing scenes. “No net loss,” though rejected by the OMB, has become a de facto policy goal within the Culture and Economic Development Department. Generating new organizational capacity and integrating cultural policy more deeply into the planning process are two crucial outcomes of political action, each one pushing the history of Toronto’s cultural policy apparatus to potentially higher levels.8

GENERAL LESSONS

What general lessons can we learn from the Toronto case about the politics of urban cultural policy? First, connect global changes to local political culture. Many cities are dealing with changes similar to those in Toronto, such as post-industrialization and immigration. Local political culture, however, will often set the parameters of debate in a given city. In Toronto, this means that themes of productivity and upstanding local citizenship have been crucial; in a different political culture, different themes might matter more.

Second, pay attention to local political opportunity structures. In Toronto, over 40 years of economic, social, policy, and cultural changes opened a space for arts groups to wield political influence, feeding back into new policy tools. Similar groups in a different environment might not be so successful.
Third, and closely related to the second, highlight *organizational capacity*. Toronto’s rich network of arts-focused civil society organizations provides a powerful platform for turning grassroots cultural policy ideas into action. In places with fewer and less entrenched organizations, cultural policy may run in a more top-down manner.

Fourth, *look within cities*. In different neighborhood contexts, even within the same city, the salience of different political issues can vary highly. In the Wychwood Barns case, showing that arts and culture could contribute to residential community was central; in the WQW Triangle case, showing that arts and cultural groups could provide an economic base for a post-industrial economy was more important. Different political strategies work in different issue-areas and are adopted by the same organizations; rhetorics are flexible and can easily shift from cultural to economic to community justifications for cultural policy interventions.

Fifth, *stress leadership and creative action*. In both cases studied here, plans were not worked out ahead of time but creatively evolved in the course of action. Success meant not only providing new syntheses that combined deeply divisive themes in novel ways but also creating bases for new actions beyond these particular cases and problems.

**REFERENCES**


ENDNOTES

1 This research was supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.

2 These figures are based on yellow pages listings compiled by the author of over 1500 types of organizations, covering all of Canada at the street address level.

3 As one resident and activist told me, “There’s room for hookers and homeless and drug addicts in my neighborhood.”

4 These figures are again based on yellow pages data, for the M6J FSA. M6J has 27 art galleries, compared to 2.5 in the average Toronto FSA; 5 tattoo parlors compared to .5 in the average Toronto FSA.

5 A local artist turned this disgust into art, projecting onto a wall near the development an image of a woman dressed like the one in the advertisements, but vomiting.

6 As one Culture Department official told me, “These guys were totally articulate, they were totally plugged into everything and everyone at City Hall.”

7 Most notably, the area lacked a secondary plan, understaffing in the Planning and Legal department made it difficult to move quickly enough to impose many controls on the development process, and the City was often trying to create policy in the course of quasi-legal process before the OMB.

8 The election of fiscal conservative Rob Ford in 2010, suburban in policy and aesthetic orientation and strongly opposed by large segments of the arts community, promises to put the strength of this institutionalization to the test. So far, its depth is showing. One of Ford’s first official acts was to create a special arts advisor role, appoint the head of the National Ballet to the position, and pledge to make no cuts to city’s culture budget. A new culture plan passed unanimously. In response to proposed city-wide across the board budget cuts, the Toronto Arts Council has been coordinating major pushback, for instance coaching concerned citizens in how to make effective deputations at City Council meetings.