Göteborgs
Stad

The Value and Social Effects of Culture

Report 2020:1 (English version)

Preface

The Value and Social Effects of Culture is an investigative review of current knowledge which focuses on different concepts and arguments for the value and social effects of culture. The underlying aim is to demonstrate why it is worth investing public funds in 'culture', and more specifically why and in what ways the activities of the cultural administration are important and valuable. The report collects research- and evidence-based arguments and findings on the foundational values and effects of cultural activities. The report is a part of the revision of the cultural programme for the City of Gothenburg. It is also meant to be a resource for the communication of the activities of the cultural administration, for the continued development of indicators and key figures, as well as for other parts of cultural policy management and evaluation. The aim is to develop tools that can foster a better understanding of the values and social effects of culture, and to develop arguments and show evidence for the contributions of the cultural administration to the prioritized social aims of the City of Gothenburg.

Summary

This report maps different ways of approaching the question regarding the value and social effects of culture. One conclusion is that many of the socially-beneficial effects of culture appear outside of the field of cultural policy, and that they often become visible only over significant timespans. This makes it difficult to provide evidence for the instrumental value of individual cultural activities. In order to clarify the value and social effects of culture, culture is therefore viewed as an ecology. Just as in an ecology, different and sometimes contradictory aims and values coexist and interact to create the ecology. Something which might be seen as a consuming factor, could actually be an indispensable part of the ecological dynamics which, in turn, creates effects that the same actor might wish to gain from culture. Even if it is very difficult to map such relationships and connections, it is not impossible. Taken together, this report contains a broad and diverse collection of references to studies that trace the connections between cultural policy efforts, and social effects.

The instrumental values of culture do not contradict or refute the intrinsic value of culture. This report maintains that man is a creature of culture, and a creator of culture. Culture can be seen as a political tool to create health, well-being, equality, and security, while at the same time these things can be seen as preconditions that makes it possible for people to live well and engage in culture. Culture is a political aim, rather than a tool.

The value of culture can be instrumental, intrinsic, individual, as well as institutional. The word 'culture' can, in turn, have many different meanings. In order to clarify the different meanings of 'culture', this report presents the ontological, anthropological, esthetical, and hermeneutical facets of the concept of culture. An alternative approach would be to distinguish between different kinds of cultural activities. The Swedish Cultural Collaboration Model differentiates between theatre, dance, music, museums, cultural heritage, libraries, image and form, archives, film, and handicrafts. The report also discusses concepts like freedom of expression, arm's length distance, trust-based governance, and relevance.

It is difficult to give a clear summary of the value and social effects of culture. Instead this report offers a set of tools that can help different actors to clarify

their expectations and demands. It shows that a resilient cultural ecology is a prerequisite for an equal and sustainable city.

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1 The Different Roles for Culture

1.1 Introduction

In conversations on the value and effects of culture, there are two dominant and diverging perspectives. On the one hand, we find those who defend the intrinsic value of culture, while on the other there are those who stress culture as a factor for economic and social value. All too often these two positions are taken to be in opposition. In order to reconcile the common dichotomy of intrinsic and instrumental cultural values, this report adapts an ecological perspective on culture. It is thereby stressed that a milieu out of which cultural expressions can grow is made up of complex and intra-dependent networks of connections. This ecological perspective will be discussed further below.

Before we can decide if different cultural values can interact and reinforce each other, a number of clarifications about what is meant by culture and value must be made. We also need to investigate if and how these values can be supported by evidence.

1.2 Society and Culture

Society is often divided into spheres. The most common division is into social, economic, and political dimensions. To this triad, environment is increasingly added as a fourth dimension. The position of culture in these societal models differs. In some, culture is treated as part of the social dimension, which is then labeled a socio-cultural sphere. In other models, culture is a strand that runs through every dimension.[1] As in a positional paper from The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR) where cultural policy is declared to be "of great importance for development and growth in three dimensions – social, economic and environmental".[2]

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[1] Oscar Engdahl & Bengt Larsson, 2011. *Sociologiska perspektiv: grundläggande begrepp och teorier*, Lund: Studentlitteratur.

[2] *Positionspapper – Kultur i det hållbara samhället*, SKL, 2009, p. 3.

Already in the early 1950s, two US anthropologists listed 160 different social scientific definitions of the concept of culture.[3] In its broadest meaning, culture is the opposite of nature and can be described as "a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life."[4] This makes it very hard to delineate the scope of the concept of culture, while cultural policy, on the other hand, is perceived as a narrow administrative field tied primarily to different aesthetical cultural activities. The main purpose of Sweden's national cultural policy is to "support actions within the fields of the word, the stage, the image and the tone, as well as in cultural heritage".[5]

1.3   Cultural Policy Objectives

1.3.1   National Cultural Policy Objectives

It is possible to see the tension between the broad concept of culture and the narrower field of cultural policy on the national level, as well. The national cultural policy objective is considerably broader than the above quoted purpose with cultural policy.

> *Culture is to be a dynamic, challenging and independent force based on the freedom of expression. Everyone is to have the opportunity to participate in cultural life. Creativity, diversity and artistic quality are to be integral parts of society's development.[6]*

Since 2018 there has also been a national policy for designed living environment connected to cultural policy, with an objective that:

> *Architecture and design should contribute to a sustainable, gender-equal and less segregated society with carefully designed living environments, where everyone is given good opportunities to influence the development of our shared environment.[7]*

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[3] A. L. Kroeber, & Clyde Kluckhorn, 1952. *Culture: a critical review of concepts and definitions*, Papers of the Peabody Museum of American Archeology and Ethnology, Harvard University.

[4] Clifford Gertz, 1973. *The interpretation of Cultures*, New York: Basic Books, p. 89.

[5] *Tid för kultur*, Prop 2009/10:3, p. 12.

[6] *Tid för kultur*, Prop 2009/10:3, p. 26.

[7] *Politik för gestaltad livsmiljö*, Prop. 2017/18:110, p. 19.

1.3.2 Regional Guiding Principles

The culture strategy of Region Västra Götaland has five guiding principles:

> *Democratic openness, artistic quality, social relevance, economic potential, and regional profiling. Each of these five principles should contribute to providing the residents of Västra Götaland with the opportunity to take part in a cultural environment that matters to and affects them.*[8]

1.3.3 Cultural Policy Vision and Objectives of the City of Gothenburg

A cultural policy vision has been proposed in the Cultural Programme of the City of Gothenburg:[9]

> *Gothenburg in 2021 – a city without borders, built and created by people from around the world.*
>
> *The strength and weight of art and culture shape a city that attracts and seduces, a city where everybody wants to live and work.*
>
> *Forces are released through a multitude of cultures; segregation is crumbling away.*
>
> *Curiosity and openness foster trust, respect and understanding.*

This vision in made more tangible in the strategic cultural policy goals of the City:

> *Creating good, sustainable conditions for art and artists.*
>
> *Promoting participation, intercultural dialogue and people's desire and motivation to enjoy and practise art and culture.*
>
> *Creating an attractive living environment in the city.*

1.4 Cultural Policy at Three Political Levels

As the above quoted aims suggest, the national cultural policy has been implemented at all three existing political levels. Few other policy fields are organized in such a manner. The conditions for the allocation of grants for culture are regulated by the state in accordance with Regulation 2010: 2012.

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[8] *Kulturstrategi Västra Götaland – och regional kulturplan 2020–2023*, VGR, RS 2018-05559, p. 15.

[9] *Göteborgs Stads kulturprogram, version 2.0*, p. 10, 15.

The region, in collaboration with the municipalities and in consultation with the cultural sector and civil society, shall develop a plan for the distribution of state funds. This system is called the Cultural Collaboration Model.

1.5　Culture as a Democratic Value

In the quotes above, culture is ascribed substantial values, and is expected to have social effects that go far beyond the narrow cultural policy sphere. The government's official investigation (SOU) on democracy from 2014, highlighted the relationship between democratic governance and a free cultural life.

> *"It is […] through free conversation and culture that individuals can grow and society and democracy develop. In this way, art, literature, music, theater, and other cultural expressions are important parts of democracy. Through a free cultural life, thoughts, feelings, and opinions can be expressed that cannot be captured by the formal institutions of democracy. Culture plays a crucial role in challenging taken-for-granted norms and paths of thinking, in depicting different perspectives on society, stimulating democratic engagement, and cultivating a democratic social spirit."[10]*

A more enigmatic connection between democracy and culture is demonstrated by the fact that political issues which up to this point have mainly been formulated in economic and social terms are now increasingly perceived as 'cultural'. Even if this mainly concerns culture in terms of 'ways of living', cultural policy is becoming more implicated in this contemporary cultural framing of politics. Cultural definitions of citizens and the democratic community have become a political issue, which also gives cultural policy a stronger political edge.[11]

1.6　Culture in an Equal City

For the City of Gothenburg, the broader social effects of culture come to the fore in the long-term investment of decreasing the disparities in living conditions, becoming a so-called Equal City. This process is centered around four areas of focus.

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[10] SOU 2016:5, p. 75.

[11] Edgar Grande, Swen Hutter, Alena Kerscher & Regina Becker, 2016. *Politicising Europe: Integration and mass politics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Create a good start in life and good conditions throughout the school years.

Create the preconditions for employment.

Create healthy and sustainable environments and communities.

Create preconditions for participation, influence, and trust.

How do all these different aims and goals interact? How can the value and social effects of culture be made explicit, and how can the relative importance of culture in reaching these goals be assessed or measured? This report tries to find clear and trustworthy concepts and arguments that can show the value and social effects of culture, and more specifically, how the Cultural Administration contributes to making Gothenburg an Equal City.

2 Utility, Objectives and Effects

The previous chapter showed that the cultural policy goals present in Sweden are both wide and vague. This makes it difficult to operationalize them and measure them against indicators or impact goals. If monitoring and control is formed mainly in relation to what is quantifiable there is a substantial risk that these wide and important goals disappears from sight. There is thus a urgent need to develop other means of showing the value and social effects of culture that does not reduce the wide ambitions of cultural policy to measurable but narrow impact goals.

2.1 What to measure?

The cultural Administration should execute political decisions and prioritizations and offer citizens opportunities to enjoy culture. Citizens have a democratic right to know that the public administration is trustworthy and efficient. The activities must therefore be transparent and audited to show that public funds are being used in a proper way. However, the difference between such controls to make sure that resources are handled with care and used for the right purposes, and evaluations of the quality and social effects of these activities must be stressed. Indicators and key figures that measure efficiency do not necessarily say anything at all about the value of culture, even if it might seem probable that a larger number of visitors increases the chance that the cultural activity in question can have a more far-reaching impact on some participants.[12]

Nationally, as well as internationally, the cultural policy sector has difficulties with making actors outside of their own sphere appreciate the central role that culture plays for sustainable and healthy societies. Prevalent evaluation models are too narrow, although this should not lead us to conclude that it is impossible to find evidence for the value and effects of culture.

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[12] Jonna Bornemark, 2018. *Det omätbaras renässans: En uppgörelse med pedanternas världsherravälde*, Volante, Stockholm.

2.2 Effects

According to the Swedish National Financial Management Authority "*an effect is a change that occurs as a result of an action taken, that otherwise would not have occurred.*"[13] In order to show that they improve society, all public activities must be able to show that the actions they undertake lead to positive effects, and that they would not have occurred were it not for these activities. Another way to discuss positive effects is to refer to their utility. It might be helpful to distinguish between whether an action has effects, versus whether these effects are positive and create benefits. It might be easier to agree on the effects, but the question of what is positive and beneficial depends, in part, on ideological standpoints.

In the end, social benefits can be converted to lower costs for society. In order to discuss the social value of voluntary associations, the concepts of civil society, social economy, and the public good are used. Here, art and culture are seen as part of civil society, which is everything that is not "the state, the market, or individual households".[14]

According to such a model, society is the sum of its different components. Even if the aim is to promote the importance of civil society "the state" is still the foundational actor located at the center of society. This report develops an alternative scenario, an ecological view that makes it possible to engage with utility from a number of different perspectives. In order to make different kinds of benefit analyses we need to be able to show the social effects created by culture.

Before we can make different kinds of utility judgements, we must be able to demonstrate the social effects created by culture. We must also strive to have a documentation that is as open as possible, and refrain from attempting to separate the desired effects from the unwanted ones. Descriptions should be so clearly descriptive that different users and assessors are able to have differing views about their potential utility.[15]

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[13] Ekonomistyrningsverket, 2007. *Resultatindikatorer – en idéskrift.* ESV rapport 2007:32. Quted in Myndigheten för kulturanalys, 2012. *Att utveckla indikatorer för utvärdering av kulturpolitik: Redovisning av ett regeringsuppdrag*, Rapport 2012:2, p. 16.

[14] *Hur talar vi om för andra vilken nytta vi gör?: Föreningarnas metodguide*, Göteborgsregionens sociala ekonomi, no year.

[15] David Bloor, 1991. *Knowledge and Social Imagery*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

However, the values and social effects of culture are elusive and non-linear. It takes more than indicators and key figures to capture what culture means to the creation of an equal city, for example. In the end, judging which effects create benefits and which do not depends on ideological standpoints and political decisions.

3 Culture as an Ecology

Discussions on culture and ecology are most frequently found in the science of cultural ecology, which deals with humanity's cultural adaptation to social and physical environments.[16]

Contemporary discourse on culture as an ecology stems from a US-based definition of "the arts and cultural ecology as the complex interdependencies that shape the demand for and production of arts and cultural offerings".[17] Such a perspective on culture allows us to see crucial aspects that escape a traditional economics perspective.[18] In particular, the mutually-supporting interplay between public, private, commercial, and non-profit actors and operations.[19] The interdependence includes how cultural actors without any relation to policy aims create a sort of infrastructure that benefits the cultural sector as a whole. The concept of cultural ecology expresses a decentralized view on value creation and value itself.

The concept of cultural ecology can be made more robust by adding The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency's view that "any ecosystem, regardless of how one chooses to delineate it, affects or is affected by its environment. Within the system, the various organisms interact and are inter-dependent, as they both affect and are affected by the physical environment in which they live".[20] From an ecological perspective, a viable and sustainable society is the result of an intricate interplay of activities, actors, venues, institutions, infrastructures, traditions, and topographies.

3.1.1 Resilience

An increasingly common word used to describe viability and sustainability is resilience. Its core meaning is closely related to resistance and describes the

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[16] The perspective stems from Julian Steward, 1955. *Theory of Culture Change: The methodology of multilinear evolution*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press and Gregory Bateson, 1972. *Steps to an ecology of mind*, Chicago: Chicago University Press.

[17] John Kreidler & Moy Eng, 2005. *The Cultural dynamics map: Exploring the Arts Ecosystem in the United States*, http://www.culturaldynamicsgroup.org/

[18] Alexander Styhre, 2013. "The Economic Valuation and Commensuration of Cultural Resources: Financing and Monitoring the Swedish Culture Sector", *Valuation Studies* 1:1.

[19] John Holden, 2015. *The Ecology of Culture: A Report Commissioned by the Arts and Humanities Research Council's Cultural Value Project*, London: Arts & Humanities Research Council UK.

[20] Naturvårdsverket, 2012. *Sammanställd information om ekoystemstjänster*, NV-00841-12, p. 5. See also Swedish Environmental Protection Agency Report 6854, *Guide to valuing ecosystem services*, November 2018.

long-term ability of a system to handle change through continual development. Resilience is thus a more dynamic concept than sustainability, which is connected to the protection of a static order. The concept of resilience stresses that most systems have more than one sustainable, yet ever-evolving, form, and that they, within certain limits, can adapt to new circumstances.[21]

3.1.2 Emergence

The concept of emergence is defined as "the arising of novel and coherent structures, patterns and properties during the process of self-organization in complex systems"[22]. Phenomena like financial markets, snowflakes, language evolution, and anthills are all examples of emergence. New species and life forms are emergent in the sense that they cannot be predicted from prevailing conditions. From the study of how these forms of new phenomena and life forms emerge, it becomes clear that the whole is more than the sum of its parts. This explains why we cannot understand a living unity by dividing it into the parts from which it emerged. Evolution creates the conditions for a new and unpredictable emergence of novel diversity. We cannot know what will emerge; we do not even know where the unanticipated will emerge. This means that we cannot know where in an ecology emerging changes will create new openings for evolutionary breakthroughs.[23]

In the 20th century, physics, with its ideal of reducing all events to mathematical descriptions of cause and effect, served as a model for the development of social-scientific methods and ideals. Culture was also studied with the help of mathematical representations. Statistics and quantitative measures provide a great deal of knowledge and allow for predictability in the social sciences, and in politics, as well. However, these are always about abstract models that reach their explanatory power by reducing reality's myriad diversity to a limited number of data points. Such numerical representation is not only simplified, but also risk becoming static. Within the policy realm, the danger of striving to reach the measures on which you are evaluated is an additional stress. Statistical models of analysis tend to reinforce the abstractions

[21] C. Folke, S. R. Carpenter, B. Walker, M. Scheffer, T. Chapin & J. Rockström. 2010. "Resilience thinking: integrating resilience, adaptability and transformability". *Ecology and Society* 15(4), p. 20.

[22] Goldstein, Jeffrey, 1999. "Emergence as a Construct: History and Issues". Emergence. 1 (1): 49–72.

23 Stuart Kauffman, 2019. *A World Beyond Physics*. Oxford University Press.

that have made them possible in the first place, and thereby risk reducing real diversity in ways that can make the model misleading.[24]

3.2 How Can Cultural Policy Facilitate Emergence?

How can we facilitate and promote emergence? To start with, we must accept that, at a foundational level,we do not know what will happen where. Emergence also implies that systems are self-organizing. Evolution is about more than the natural selection of species. It also entails a dynamic self-organizing of systems. This is also true for cultural ecologies in a city, neighborhood, or a specific art form.

What this means for cultural policy is not self-evident. It could be used as an argument for an increase in general funding that does not interfere with the self-regulation of the system. As most efforts to grow only cash-crops disturb the slowly evolved ecological balance – and have had a devastating impact on the emerged ecological balance, as well as destroying the foundational living-conditions – an ecological cultural policy concept serves as a warning against simple or unidirectional initiatives.

Complexity and emergence challenge the possibilities to attribute a registered effect to specific actions. In governance, it reveals the difficulties in knowing exactly what possibilities a certain action will generate. This does not mean that the world is fundamentally unpredictable or arbitrary. There are a number of things that we know about how ecological systems become resilient and viable.

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[24] Ingemar Bolin & Morten Sager, 2011. *Evidensens många ansikten*, Arkiv förlag.

4 Evidence for the Social Effects of Culture

In recent years, many countries have tried to reformulate their measures of cultural value. Even if they still want to achieve social effects through cultural policy measures, there is a growing recognition of the intrinsic value of culture. This has led to the question of what 'culture' actually means, and how a cultural experience might be described. A key question is what role culture plays in terms of national identity, economic productivity, social health, and national well-being. Such discussion has been most prominent in Australia, Canada, New Zeeland, and the United Kingdom.[25]

Some of the more substantial evidence for the social effects of culture comes from research which shows that children who read and partake in cultural activities are more likely to engage in society later in life, and to experience drug addiction, criminality, unemployment, and other issues to a lesser degree, which can otherwise result in large costs for society.[26] Participation in culture also correlates with better perceived health and well-being. As the investigation on democracy, quoted above, stresses, culture is a vital part in the "cultivation of a democratic social spirit." Such societal effects occur over long periods of time and often far from the activities causing the effects, making it very difficult to show how they are connected, other than on a highly aggregated level.

Another important field of developments concerns the importance of culture in sustainable development. To achieve sustainable development, we need more than technical conversions and scientific knowledge. The conversion of a society requires a multilayered social change, a rethinking of our relations to nature, and a shift in the social relationship between producers and consumers. Cultural policy thus comes forth as a central tool in the implementation of urgent societal changes. [27] In this case, culture is used as a tool for other political aims.

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[25] Carol Scott, 2014. "Emerging paradigms: national approaches for measuring cultural value", *Cultural Trends*, 23:2, 79-81, Geoffrey Crossick & Patrycja Kaszynska, 2014. "Under construction: Towards a framework for cultural value", *Cultural Trends*, 23:2.

[26] SOU 2012:65, *Barriers and facilitators to pro-social behavior among young people: a review of existing evidence*, Arts council England. 2014, *The Value of arts and culture to people and society: an evidence review*, Department for education, UK, 2012.

[27] Lez Rayman-Bacchus & Ciprian N. Radavoi, 2019. "Advancing culture's role in sustainable development: social change through cultural policy", *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, Jordi

The Swedish Agency for Cultural Policy Analysis concludes that "cultural policy needs to cooperate with other policy areas to a greater extent than previously", even if their mandate still mainly concerns how the national cultural policy goals can be reached instead of analyzing whether culture should be a tool to reach the goals of other policy areas.[28]

4.1 The Value of Free Culture

It is often stressed that art and culture do not seek to have any effects. The primary purpose of culture is to enrich peoples' lives, creativity, imagination, and mental horizons. Many of the effects of culture occur within the individual. Man is a meaning-creating creature, and art and culture are aspects of life with the same intrinsic value as loving, being loved, experiencing trust, and security.[29]

It is not "the primary purpose of culture to break down social barriers or to enact change. Even if culture is able to contribute to and play a role in change."[30] The 2018 SOM-survey from Western Sweden shows that "higher levels of education goes hand in hand with a higher average estimation of meaning".[31]

Of course, politicians must be able to show that the decisions they make support the value and social effects of culture. They must also try to find out what changes their activities lead to. This is not simple in the least. Some of the value and social effects of culture can be measured, while others, and maybe more central values and effects, might even be lost if the focus is shifted to evaluating the measurable. To reach its aims, cultural policy must try to invest in the genuinely unpredictable. The largest and most important effects will arise in ways that we cannot predict. This means that they cannot even be articulated in advance, as they are instead the result of the emergence of culture.

Pascual, 2018. "Cultural Rights, local cultural policies and sustainable development: constructing a coherent narrative" *The Journal of Law, Social Justice and Global Development*, vol. 22.

[28] *Kulturanalys 2019*, Myndigheten för kulturanalys, p. 16.

[29] Gunilla Priebe & Morten Sager, 2014. "Konst och hälsa" i Ola Sigurdsson (red.), *Kultur och hälsa: ett vidgat perspektiv*, Göteborgs universitet, p. 79.

[30] Jennie Sievenbring, 2019. *Att öppna dörrar och bygga broar: Kulturens plats för en mer Jämlik Stad*, Segerstedtinstitutet Göteborgs Universitet för Kulturförvaltningen Göteborgs Stad. p. 3.

[31] Elias Mellander, 2019. "Det meningsfulla livet" i Anders Carlander, Patrik Öhberg och Elias Mellander (red.) *Ingen kommer undan kulturen: SOM-rapport 75*, Göteborg: SOM-institutet, p. 34.

No one could, for example, predict or subsequently invest in the emergence of hip-hop and its spread from a local phenomenon in New York to a dominant genre of music worldwide. Yet, the hope is that maintaining an openness towards the unpredictable allows novelty a space to grow. Exactly what will grow from the emergence is almost as difficult to predict, and the only way to support it is to invest in a sustainable policy allowing for a breadth of cultural expressions.

4.2 The Economic Impact of Culture

The Swedish Agency for Growth Policy Analysis says that culture has an economic impact in three dimensions. The first and most significant is through "the importance of culture for the relations, networks, and trust that ties the inhabitants in a region together".[32] The social effects of culture are, also from a narrow growth perspective, the most important, even if culture can also entice visitors and spawn export revenues. Another concrete element of culture's economic and social significance is that almost five percent of the Swedish workforce is employed in the broad cultural sector.[33] Culture is also promoted as a force for innovation and a source for the expansion of the creative industries.[34] There are demonstrable "connections between access to cultural activities and people's willingness to reconsider their opinions. This leads to a social environment supportive of open minds, innovation, and the exchange of ideas".[35]

Even if the direct links between public investment in culture and the rise of commercially successful enterprises are hard to trace, it is possible to calculate their size. The connections are ecological rather than linear.

[32] *Kulturnäringars betydelse i ekonomi på regional och nationell nivå*, Östersund: Tillväxanalys, Rapport 2010:10, p. 7. OECD lyfter allt oftare fram kulturens betydelse på ett liknande sätt.

[33] *Kulturnäringar i svensk statistik – förslag till avgränsning för framtida kartläggningar*, Tillväxtanalys, Dnr: 2009/094, citerad i Svensk scenkonst, 2010. *Kulturens värde och effekter*, p. 6.

[34] KEA European Affairs, 2006. *Economy of Culture in Europe.* Study prepared for the European Commission (Directorate-General for Education and Culture). Richard Florida, 2002. *The Rise of the Creative Class. Basic Books.* New York, Tom Fleming, 2015. *Cultural and creative spill-overs in Europe.* London: Creative Consulting, A.Allesandro, H. Bakhshi, , S. Mitchell & R. Smithies, 2013. *Publicly funded arts as an R&D lab for the creative industries: A survey of theatre careers in the UK.* London: Arts Council of England and Nesta. David Throsby (red), 2016. *Handbook of the economics of art and culture.* Amsterdam: Elsevier. Tillväxtanalys, 2008. *Kreativ tillväxt? En rapport om kreativa näringar i politik och statistik*, Dnr: 2008/007.

[35] Christer Gustavsson*, 2016. Vägvisning till kreativa kraftfält – ett forskningsprojekt*, VGR, p. 9.

The economic effects of a rich cultural life are relatively well-researched and will therefore not be further addressed in this report.[36]

4.3 Culture as Door Opener and Bridge Builder

A pilot study conducted by the Segerstedt Institute at The University of Gothenburg evaluated what the Cultural Administration contributes to an equal and socially sustainable city.[37] The report focused on if and how culture can promote democracy, equality, trust and safety, as well as how the Cultural Administration works with these themes. The report was based on analysis of policy documents and guidelines, as well as interviews focused on the role of culture in an equal city, how it provides spaces for interaction, participation, and influence. The aim has been to give an overview of the research conducted in this field, and to point out areas where further developments could take place.

The report underlines the importance of the open and inviting character of cultural activities that offer a safe space to meet for individuals who generally mistrust authorities. Culture can open doors and build bridges. This contribution is a central focus in all activities and every sector of the Cultural Administration of the City of Gothenburg. The report also states that an interest in local issues and an understanding of the local environment is necessary if the goal is to have influence over the city's development.

In order to fully grasp the possible effects of culture, the City of Gothenburg needs to have more knowledge about what entices the city's inhabitants to visit or actively engage in the activities of the Cultural Administration, as well as a deeper understanding as to why some do not participate. Is there a lack of inclusion or a lack of information? Is it because the cultural activities do not interest certain groups, or is it that they are located in certain venues, or is there a lack of trust? Obtaining an overview and getting information about the current situation could help in further adjusting the activities or the way to get stronger participation.

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[36] Arts council England, 2014. *The Value of arts and culture to people and society: an evidence review*, Sune K. Jensen, 2019. "Turister bruger 1 mia. kr på kultur og oplevelser" *DI analyse*, mars 2019, *The Economic and Social Contribution of National Museums Liverpool*, Report by Regeneris Consulting, 2017. See also the references in footnote 33.

[37] Jennie Sievenbring, 2019. *Att öppna dörrar och bygga broar: Kulturens plats för en mer Jämlik Stad*, Kulturförvaltningens rapportserie 2020:2.

The governing authorities in the city and the region also need a better understanding about the contribution of the Cultural Administration and its activities. It would be relevant to study the importance that culture has for its participants, in both quantitative and qualitative ways. Such information could serve as motivation for culture to play a more prominent role in the creation of a more equal city.

The Segerstedt report stresses that cultural institutions should not be responsible for equality and democracy, even if participation and equal opportunities can be strengthened via the actions and perspectives of culture. In contrast to most other public institutions, culture is open, permissive, and relatively without requirements. It has no disciplining or evaluative function.

The role that culture plays in creating an equal city can thus be understood as compensatory. The task is to offer non-mandatory experiences and voluntary participation in societal institutions.

4.4 Cultural Rights

The UNESCO constitution claims that war begins in the minds of men, and that this therefore is where peace must be constructed. This branch of UN activities starts from the premise that the minds of men are built by education, science, and culture. Already in 1970, UNESCO had established that cultural rights are human rights. It was stressed that "one of the principal functions of cultural interaction is to eradicate wars from the life of societies".[38] The right to knowledge is one of the most fundamental human rights, without which people cannot claim their own rights. To achieve knowledge the free minds of men must be cultivated through both science and creativity. According to UNESCO, an open and rich cultural life is essential for people to develop their own personality and human dignity. People who know their value are less prone to be swept up in warmongering or other destructive activities. Culture does not produce good people, but culture provides the material and space for reflection and conversation, which, in turn, makes it possible for people to see both society and themselves.

Since 2012, the UN's Human Rights Committee has had a special rapporteur on the field of cultural rights. These cultural rights mainly concern the right to

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[38] UNESCO, 1970. *Cultural rights as human rights*, p. 105.

practice your own cultural traditions and choices, rather than the right to institutional culture or art. This entails demands to give cultural diversity space and real participation in public cultural arenas. Cultural rights are a part of human rights.

4.4.1 Freedom of Expression

The first national cultural policy goal states that "culture is to be a dynamic, challenging, and independent force based on the freedom of expression." Freedom of expression is thus a fundamental basis of culture, and something that culture is often said to be both an expression and a defense of. Along with the Instrument of Government, the Act of Succession, and the Freedom of the Press Act, the Fundamental Law of the Freedom of Expression make up the Constitution of Sweden. The Freedom of the Press Act also stresses the importance of the free exchange of opinions and artistic creation. Together, the two laws are often described as protecting the freedom of opinion.

Apart from stressing that the purpose of the law is "to secure the free exchange of opinion, free and comprehensive information, and freedom of artistic creation," the law does not directly reference culture or art. Yet, one of the primary purposes and aims of cultural policy is to promote the freedom of opinion. The freedom of expression is extensive and as the European Court of Human Rights has decided, it includes the right to exaggerate and provoke.[39] In this case, an ecological perspective can be enlightening. From an ecological perspective, it is clear that many prominent cultural expressions are reactions to opinions and art forms that have been deemed both provocative and repulsive. A varied and diverse environment is more likely to create the conditions for the emergence of new and innovative phenomena. Monocultures are always vulnerable, while biotopes rich with species are more resilient.[40]

The freedom of expression is primarily focused on advancing an open society where all possible arguments can be expressed and tried. As UNESCO stresses, the purpose is to produce material that allows and encourages people to express

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[39] Monica Macovei, 2004. *Freedom of Expression: A guide to the implementation of Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights, Human rights handbook no 2*, Berlin: Council of Europe, p. 16.

[40] *UN Convention on biological diversity*, 1992.

themselves freely. The value of this cannot be explained as anything other than part of our basic human value.

4.4.2 Formation

The development of free thought, stressed by UNESCO, can also be called formation (translated from the German concept *Bildung*). Education as training can be said to focus on useful knowledge and skills, while education as formation concerns a more evasive flourishing of free thought. In her book *Själamorden i skolan* 1888 (*The Murder of Souls in School*) the Swedish author stated that "*Bildung* (education) is not what we have learned, but what remains when we have forgotten what we have learned".[41] Art and culture are the means to create *Bildung* (education), or: *Bildung* is the result of engaging with art and culture, which, in turn, is considered a basis for a good life and a good society. The beginning of the formative process can often be almost invisible. Even a passive awareness of the existence of culture offers the possibility of formation. There is a difference between sitting and waiting in a library and doing so in a bus terminal, for example.

Many regions, and some cities, have administrations for culture and formation. In regional administrations, they support both liberal adult education and libraries. Culture is also considered to have formative effects, and *Bildung* (education) is seen as vital to an active citizenship and a stable democracy.[42] The concept of liberal adult education (*folkbildning*) is ambiguous and open. It is about offering paths to formation (*bildning*), but it is also about forming a people (*folk*). What this group of people should be is an ideological question that has received different answers in different periods of time based on different ideologies.

Like culture, the value of formation is often deemed to be incompatible with utility. In 1906, Hans Larsson described in his book *Bildning och självstudier* (*Formation and Self-Education*) how "our age is haunted by the utility worm; a

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[41] Quoted in Bernt Gustavsson, 2013. "Nyttans och bildningens förändringar" in Bernt Gustavsson & Matilda Wiklund (red.) *Nyttan med folkbildningen: en studie av kapitalformer i folkbildande verksamhet*, Lund: Nordic Academic Press, p. 16.

[42] Martha C. Nussbaum, 2010. *Not for profit: why democracy needs the humanities*, Harvard: Harvard University Press.

worm that devours any fresh leaf that tries to unfold".[43] To escape this century-long opposition, this report focuses on effects rather than utility, which does not exclude the idea that the social effects of culture should be directed towards the creation of increased equality in society.

4.4.3 Social Critique

The main purpose to publicly fund culture is closer to social benefits, in practice, than it is to the individual and intrinsic value of culture. These seemingly contradictory values interact when it comes to "the most innovative aspects of culture", i.e. its ability to generate social critique and to challenge normative interpretations of society.[44] All systems need to be monitored and challenged in order to remain relevant and resilient. There should be no doubt that culture is limited or in any way guided by political sentiments, which is why transparency regarding how funding is determined and distributed is so vital.

These innovative aspects of culture are dependent on certain concrete abilities and skills, such as reading. The correlation between socio-economic differences and the reading skills of children and parents are well-established. This correlation is not determinant; reading for pleasure can have stronger effects on study results than the socio-economic status of the parents. Reading promotion is thus an effective tool for enhancing equality.[45] Public libraries are a necessary condition for a strong reading ecology, which, in turn, must also consist of other arenas for literature and language-based cultural expressions that can spark the desire to read for as many citizens as possible.

4.4.4 Reading Ability

Reading ability is closely related to the ability to critically assess sources. The Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) states that source criticism is a

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[43] Quoted in Bernt Gustavsson, 2013. "Nyttans och bildningens förändringar" i Bernt Gustavsson & Matilda Wiklund (red.) *Nyttan med folkbildningen: en studie av kapitalformer i folkbildande verksamhet*, Lund: Nordic Academic Press, p. 15.

[44] John O'Hagan, 2016. "Objectives of arts funding agencies often do not map well on to societal benefits", *Cultural Trends*, 25:4.

[45] SOU 2012:65: *Slutbetänkande av Litteraturutredningen*, OECD, 2010. *PISA 2009 Results: Overcoming Social Background. Equity in learning opportunities and outcomes*, Volume III, OECD, A. Sullivan and M. Brown, 2013. "Social inequalities in cognitive scores at age 16: The role of reading," Centre for Longitudinal Studies, Institution of Education, London. *Pilot för arbetet med mobiliseringsfrågorna: Underlag för Staden där vi läser för våra barn – en del av arbetet för Jämlikt Göteborg*, 2016.

fundamental part of civil protection. It is vital that citizens can identify propaganda, disinformation, fake news, and attempts to create polarization and fear among citizens. Archives, libraries, and museums are institutions that play a central role in the provision of accessible facts and correct information. "Being critical of sources is a way to protect democracy. [---] A democracy depends on citizens' ability to make well-informed decisions, and making such decisions is a necessity when evaluating sources", according to the MSB.[46]

The Swedish Museums Association has also emphasized that the ability to critically assess sources requires a high degree of "source trust." Society needs memory institutions and knowledge resources where citizens have access to trustworthy sources, so that they can form their own well-informed opinion.[47] The SOM-Institute concludes that "decision-makers who wants to promote equality in health should focus on interventions that promote inter-personal trust".[48] Within the cultural sector, this responsibility mainly falls on archives, libraries, and museums, which should support and develop media- and information literacy among citizens. During the period of 2018-2019 the Swedish Media Council had a special government assignment to collaborate with other governmental authorities, committees, schools, libraries, adult education, and civil society to strengthen media- and information literacy.[49]

4.5   Health and Well-Being

Numerous international studies show that participation in culture creates a climate of societal responsibility, and that it has therapeutic effects that create a sense of well-being while also decreasing mental illness.[50] The correlation

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[46] https://www.msb.se/sv/amnesomraden/msbs-arbete-vid-olyckor-kriser-och-krig/psykologiskt-forsvar/kallkritik-och-psykologiskt-forsvar/

[47] Klas Grinell, 2019. "Museer för samhällsskydd och källtillit", *UEForum* no 1. On source trust in Olof Sundin, 2018. "Den pedagogiska bibliotekarien: Från källkritik till källtillit" i J. Hansson, & P. Wisselgren (red.), *Bibliotekarier i teori och praktik: Utbildningsperspektiv på en unik profession* Lund: BTJ Förlag, p. 103-123.

[48] Björn Rönnerstrand, 2018. "Hälsa, socialt kapital och boende i väst – därför är tillit bäst" i Anders Carlander & Björn Rönnerstrand (red) *Hemma Väst*. Göteborgs universitet: SOM-institutet, p. 77.

[49] Ku2019/01659/MD, *Uppdrag till Statens medieråd att förstärka arbetet för ökad medie- och informationskunnighet.*

[50] Kulturrådet, *Nationell översyn kultur och hälsa: Samverkan och kunskapsutbyte mellan kultur- och hälsoområdet*, 2018. *Creative health: The Arts for health and wellbeing*, UK All-Party parliamentary group on arts, health and wellbeing, Inquiry Report, 2017, *Cultural participation and wellbeing: What do the data tell us?* Social Observatory of La Caixa, Dossier 04, 2018. Alison Phipps, University of Glasgow, UNESCO Chair in Refugee Integration through Languages and the Arts, *Research for CULT Committee – Why cultural work with refugees*, IP/B/CULT/IC/2017-104, European Parliament, 2017. Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). 2013. "The Cultural Value Project: exploring how we think about the value of arts and culture to individuals and society," Wiltshire, U.K.

between well-being and participation in culture is especially well-established with the elderly.[51]

A Finnish report shows how art and culture at the workplace can enhance both productivity and well-being. There are correlations between participation in culture and self-rated health and quality of life.[52] Even so, it is difficult to extract the particularly effective cultural arrangements and prove that precisely these created the exact effects. The eagerness to demonstrate the value and social effects of culture results in a constant risk of over-estimating the results.[53] The difficulty with demonstrating a connection between culture and well-being also makes such studies demanding and costly. This means that it is very difficult for an individual cultural administration to show such effects based on their own activities. Since such connections have been clearly demonstrated in many international studies, it is reasonable to assume that they are valid at least in established democracies.[54] The burden of proof should therefore lie on those who doubt the existence of such connections.

4.6   The Resources of Cultural Policy

Another dimension of the cultural ecology is made up of spaces where cultural effects can germinate and flourish. There must also be accessible and open spaces where citizens can freely discuss their cultural experiences. Prevalent models of evaluation focus on visitor numbers, leading many to focus on creating content and paying less attention to spaces and institutions for the reoccurring conversation about what our experiences mean to us.

Traditionally, local and national media have played a leading role in the cultural ecology that is being challenged by social media today. Study associations and voluntary associations were other vital parts of this ecology. To best be able to meet the changing circumstances for the public discourse, cultural policy must

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[51] *Creative health: The Arts for health and wellbeing*, UK All-Party parliamentary group on arts, health and wellbeing, Inquiry Report, 2017, p. 8. I the UK 76 % of elders say culture is an important factor for making them happy, 57 % says arts and culture helps them meet others, and 60% says culture helps them come outside of home.

[52] Heli Ansio, Pia Houni, Piia Seppälä & Jarno Turunen, 2017. *Art enhances well-being at work*, Helsingfors: ArtsEqual.

[53] David Throsby, 2003. "Determining the value of cultural goods: how much (or how little) does contingent valuation tell us?" *Journal of Cultural Economics*: Vol. 27. Janet Ruiz, 2004. *Literature Review of the Evidence Base for Culture, the Arts and Sport Policy*, Scottish Executive Education Department.

[54] Francois Matarasso, 1997. *Use or Ornament? The social impact of participation in the arts*, Comedia UK. *Social impacts and benefits of arts and culture: a literature review 2016*, Department of Canadian Heritage.

work in coordination with media policy.[55] The process of cultural formation needs physical spaces and curated formats where different groups from society can meet.[56] One effect of conducting quantitative evaluations is an increase in events and activities. We also need to develop support and formats where people can come together to process their experiences.

Culture contributes to the development of society in a number of ways; by creating attractive living conditions and neighbourhoods; by creating favourable conditions for innovation, manufacturing, and commerce, as well as by creating trust and social cohesion. All these aspirations can be interpreted as an instrumentalization of culture. In order to realize these instrumental values, cultural policy must also tend to the basic needs of the cultural ecology.

Despite the growing interest in the cultural contributions to other policy areas, its overall share of city expenditures has been decreasing since 1998, which is as far back as comparable numbers are available. In 2008, the cultural policy amounted to 2.4 % of municipal budgets, and in 2017 the share had decreased to 2.17 %.[57]

4.6.1 The Cultural Collaboration Model

The cultural collaboration model stipulates that the distribution of the 20% of the national cultural policy budget which is handled as part of the model should prioritize making the seven defined areas of culture accessible to citizens. The purpose of the collaboration model is to decentralize cultural policy power, even if the government still regulates the distribution of resources. In the 2015 evaluation of the cultural collaboration model compiled by the Cultural Affairs Parliamentary Committee, it was determined that the collaboration model had enhanced awareness of the national cultural policy goals, though it was unclear whether the model had increased the possibility to reach these goals. This increased commitment to culture was described as a positive effect. Culture is part of the political agenda. The plans of the regional cultural policy that were demanded in the collaboration model were regarded as factoring into the increase in cultural policy discussions. Despite these positive tendencies, the Cultural Affairs Committee failed to see that the collaboration model had

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[55] David Karlsson, 2010. *En kulturutredning: pengar, konst och politik*, Glänta Hardcore, p. 242-243.

[56] Judith Butler, 2011. ”Bodies in Alliance and the Politics of the Street”, *Transversal*, no. 10.

[57] *Kulturanalys 2019*, Myndigheten för Kulturanalys, p. 34.

strengthened the cultural sector .[58] As is often the case, it seemed to be easier to get people to talk about the value and social effects of culture, than to actually invest in realizing them.

4.7 Negative Effects of Culture?

It is not obvious that the effects of culture are entirely positive. Cohesion can often be created through separations and exclusions, by creating boundaries and encircling those who belong. Cultural policy is fundamentally national and the contributions of culture are often measured in relation to national interests. There is a conflict between using culture as a bridge versus using it as a watershed.[59] The social effects of culture have been used to legitimize everything from colonialism and totalitarian oppression, to the funding of independent arts.[60] It is therefore always vital to analyze the groups in society who will benefit the most, as well as who suffer from the effects.

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[58] *Är samverkan modellen? En uppföljning och utvärdering av Kultursamverkansmodellen*, Kulturutskottets uppföljnings- och utvärderingsgrupp, 015/16:RFR4, 2016.

[59] Jesper Bengtsson, 2018. *Brobyggare eller vattendelare: En rapport om kulturen och ojämlikheten*, Jämlikhetsutredningen 14, Stockholm: Landsorganisationen i Sverige.

[60] Eleonora Belfiore & Oliver Bennett, 2007. "Rethinking the social impacts of the arts*", International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 13:2.

5 Definitions of Culture

Culture, as we have made evident in the previous text, is one of the most complicated words we have. It is impossible to define it in a way that covers its vast areas of meaning. Still we must try to narrow down the meanings that are most relevant to cultural policy. What kind of culture does the cultural administration administer? In the City of Gothenburg, culture is often mentioned in the definite singular form. This gives the impression of something well-defined. But what?

5.1 The Four Facets of the Concept of Culture

It is possible to distinguish four main meanings of the word culture. These are the ontological, anthropological, aesthetical, and hermeneutical facets of the concept of culture.[61] Often it can be helpful to clarify these different facets. Misunderstandings can sometimes arise when different groups vary the way they use concepts of culture, often without being aware of it.

5.1.1 Ontological Meaning

The ontological meaning of the word culture is the oldest. Ontology deals with *what exists*, and the ontological concept of culture distinguishes that which exists as a result of human activity (culture) from that which exists independent of human causation (nature). Such a division of the world into two spheres is still common. Culture is seen as almost synonymous with society or civilization. The Latin word *cultura*, meaning tillage and cultivation, is relevant here. Culture is the process and result of how humans have formed the world.

5.1.2 Anthropological Meaning

The anthropological concept of culture grew out of the ontological meaning of culture. Humanity became attached to the idea of civilization, and culture came to denote local differences in how different humans formed their parts of the world. In nationalism, culture became connected to race and language. The anthropological concept of culture can also denote social groups and the ways we humans live our lives. Today, this facet is often called ethnicity.

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[61] Johan Fornäs, 2012. *Kultur*, Liber.

5.1.3 Aesthetic Meaning

Out of the two previous concepts of culture emerged notions about the importance of artistic expression to the formation of culture. The aesthetic concept of culture was born from this. Refined literature, art, music, and theatre were seen as indispensable to the formation of cultivated people. An array of cultural institutions, cultural journalism, magazines, the cultural sector, and cultural policy emerged from this concept of culture. Ever since the Swedish cultural policy was established in 1974, the criteria for aesthetic quality have been debated. What art forms possess aesthetic qualities? How can quality and taste be explained and defended? Is it a coincidence that good taste has been synonymous with the taste of cultured men, and often excluded the preferences of women, the working class, and other ethnic groups? Are aesthetical expressions universal or particular? in an anthropological meaning culture specific? These are important questions in cultural policy.

5.1.4 Hermeneutical Meaning

An escape from the division between the aesthetic and anthropological concepts of culture can be found by examining human efforts to create meaning. The hermeneutical concept of culture defines culture as the human practice of meaning-making, which allows us to connect the other three concepts of culture with each other. Viewed from this perspective, everything that we need and do to create meaning can be considered culture, and therefore part of a cultural ecology.

5.2 Cultural Value

The value of culture is not synonymous with "cultural value". The concept of cultural value plays an important role in the Swedish Planning and Building Act. Here, as well as in the Environmental Code, cultural value is described as a part of heritage and seen as within the public interest. According to established protocols, heritage aspects are often considered in the early phases of city planning processes, while the social and aesthetic aspects of architectural quality, cultural life, and art do not have a natural place in the process. The concept of cultural value has been closely linked to constructed environments, but not broadened to include architecture, form, design, art, and cultural heritage in public spaces (termed Designed Living Environment).

5.3 The Seven Cultural Fields of the Cultural Collaboration Model

The Cultural Collaboration Model distributes funding to seven designated cultural fields:

1. professional theatre, dance, and music,

2. museums and heritage,

3. libraries and the promotion of reading and literature,

4. professional arts and design,

5. regional archives,

6. film,

7. the promotion of handicrafts.[62]

This is another way to operationalize the concept of culture and show its breadth. At the same time as these fields are part the broader cultural ecology, they are also connected to different areas of democratic society and its institutions. Archives, libraries, and museums can be described as memory institutions related to the heritage field. The last decade has seen a strong development of research in which heritage is viewed more as a process of commemoration and selection than an the administration and preservation of memorials and historical remains.[63] Art and design-museums are also part of the professional arts and design field, and design museums are involved in the promotion of handicrafts, as well. In the Cultural Collaboration Model, libraries are connected with promoting reading and literature rather than heritage. We can demarcate an array of different fields within the broader ecology where specific cultural activities can have differing, and even competing, values and social effects. Focusing the discourse of the value and social effects of culture on the broad and vague term culture might lead to us misunderstanding each other more often than necessary.

There is not one correct definition of culture. Rather, the meaning of culture depends on the specific context it is used in. Misunderstandings can often arise

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[62] SFS (2010:2012).

[63] Rodney Harrison, 2013. *Heritage: Critical approaches*, London: Routledge.

because of our different and varied connotations to the shared word 'culture' in our minds.

6 Cultural Analysis

Even if cultural policy has historically been built around the aesthetic concept of culture, this demarcation is not as clear as one might imagine. In order to discuss the value of culture, we must first decide which culture we are talking about. Then again, the cultural policy goals are so broad that they can only be evaluated if all dimensions of the cultural ecology are taken into consideration. The resilience and systemic services of the cultural ecology cannot be evaluated through a model that subdivides general aims into outcomes and indicators for each individual activity, ultimately assessing goal fulfilment as a sum of these.

The Swedish Agency for Cultural Policy Analysis produces detailed statistics over cultural habits, expenditure on culture, the working conditions of artists, et al. The statistics that they base their analysis on have significantly less to say about the value of culture outside the field of cultural policy. The agency defines cultural policy as the "distribution of art and culture aimed at reaching as many different groups as possible in as many parts of the country as possible in order to awaken their interest in experiencing and creating different forms of art and culture". Roughly speaking, the aim of distributing culture is to distribute culture.

It is difficult to evaluate the achievements of cultural policy. In many ways, the former Swedish cultural policy had a clearer idea of how culture should affect society. According to the cultural policy goals from 1974, culture should "counteract the negative effects of commercialism".[64] Now, the hazier goal is to infuse societal development with "creativity and artistic quality". This entails much more than giving all citizens access to culture. In order to assess whether culture is dynamic, challenging, and independent, and whether society is characterized by creativity, diversity, and artistic quality we need to have a clear and shared understanding of such a society. We also need to comprehend how such a society differs from one in which culture does not have this role. How

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[64] David Karlsson, 2010. *En kulturutredning*, Glänta hardcore 1.

can we precisely describe what artistic quality contributes to society? Is all creativity (equally) good?

With the current organization of cultural policy, direct connections to other political themes are lacking. The societal goals are vague. This might be one explanation as to why so few outside of the field of cultural policy seem to be engaged in it. To change this, the cultural sector needs to show its relevance to other policy areas. The UK has tried to give an economic rationale for such a relevance. There are concrete examples that can be taken from this effort. At the same time, the cultural sector must hold on to the fundamental and broad meaning of culture expressed in the national cultural policy goals.

Most actions have effects, which can, in turn, be studied and analyzed. An economical perspective analyzes economic effects, an aesthetical perspective analyzes aesthetic effects, and a societal perspective analyzes social effects. Every actor in the cultural ecology has its own purpose and value. A resilient ecosystem balances competing interests and can accommodate parasites as well as predators. Protection against a decreased diversity of interests and actors is what is necessary.

The effects that different actors' actions have on the ecology cannot be followed linearly. They become entangled in different places and on different levels. Each such entanglement of interests and actions can be viewed as an interpretation, where the means to reaching a goal is adapted to the specific situation and the needs, conditions, and abilities of the specific actors.[65] In order to visualize this, we need an analytical vocabulary which can incorporate the local expertise and perspective of different actors. Many actors in the ecology have neither programs, established methods, nor business plans. Assessing their actions by ticking off indicators or analyzing program compliance gives misleading results. A dialogical evaluation must instead acknowledge local expertise and specific skill sets in order to see the entangled effects of individual actions.[66]

An ecological center does not rely on a natural focal point. Cultural life in Sweden, like in most welfare states, is dominated by public cultural policy and administration. Most resources come from public funds. Publicly-funded culture

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[65] Barbara Czarniawska, 2015. *En teori om organisering*, chapter 7, 2nd edition, Lund: Studentlitteratur.

[66] Stefan Johansson, 2019. *Social impact: Praktikrapport*, Kulturförvaltningen, Göteborgs stad.

is always a result of political decisions and thus an effect of political control. Politics formulate the goals, distribute the funds, and required effects, but according to the arm's length principle, it cannot control the activities which have been chosen to reach the goals.

A constructive conversation about the social benefits of culture depends on a careful use of the terms. For instance, describing effects does not necessarily mean that the changes described can be measured or quantified. The immeasurability of a phenomenon does not mean that it is impossible to understand its utility or worth.

7 The Different Values of Culture

In order to capture the social significance of culture, it is also important to talk about the value of culture. The City of Gothenburg's Cultural Programme states that its art policy should "maintain the integrity, independence and inherent value of art". This might appear to contradict all efforts to speak about the social effects of culture. To avoid debating whether or not art has inherent (intrinsic) or instrumental values, we need to postulate that many human activities have several and sometimes contradictory, yet interacting, values.

We can distinguish among (at least) intrinsic, individual, instrumental, and institutional values of art and culture.[67] This might seem like an abundance of complicated terms, but in order to understand how different kinds of values can interact with each other, they are indispensable.

7.1 Intrinsic Values

Intrinsic value is synonymous with inherent value. One way to decide whether a phenomenon has been ascribed intrinsic value is by conducting a thought experiment about an initially empty universe. Would we like to add culture to it? If the answer is yes, then culture has been ascribed intrinsic value. This definition of intrinsic value has come under heavy criticism for neglecting to mention the fundamentally relational character of man. Such abstract and seemingly objective intrinsic values are dependent on an all-too-static understanding of the world. Phenomena are always valued by humans, which makes it impossible to express any intrinsic values independent of what is currently valued by society, people, politics, and the social world that our discourse encompasses.[68] Within cultural policy, one seldom finds any definition of what is meant by the often-stated intrinsic value of culture.

When it is claimed that art has intrinsic value this often implies that its value cannot be translated into any other value. This, in turn, means that artistic

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[67] Jerry C Y Liu, 2016. "The Ecology of culture and values: Implications for cultural policy and governance" *encateScholar*, 6, http://blogs.encatc.org/encatcscholar/?p=1592

[68] Michael J. Zimmerman, & Ben Bradley, 2019. "Intrinsic vs. Extrinsic Value", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2019 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (red.), <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2019/entries/value-intrinsic-extrinsic/>.

practice needs no goal outside of itself in order to be valuable. Any attempt to measure the value of culture means trying to instrumentalize the ineffable; an attempt to make calculations about things like relations, love, compassion, and empathy. Artists should be free to make art for the sake of making art. By allowing this to occur, society will produce good and relevant art.

Combining this attitude with a stipulation that art should be accessible to everyone is a challenge. People might be willing to finance things that they have no wish to take part in, as long as they are not deemed bad or seen as expressions of partisan views or propaganda. The arm's length principle was developed as a means to ensure that culture is not controlled by political concerns. It is also vital that there is some publicly-funded culture available to everyone, even without expecting everyone to take part in everything.

A similar argument for the intrinsic value of art states that the very first traces of human activity show that we have always decorated our tools and dwellings, danced, sung, and told stories. Humans are fundamentally cultural beings. Cultural expression is an inevitable part of human life.[69] Culture is existential play. Everyone has a need and right to play, experiment, and be challenged. Trying to measure the benefits of creativity and artistic experience is as impossible as measuring the value of love.

Arguments for the integrity and independence of art often claim that the positive social effects of art are not used as an instrument to create such effects. When art is used as a tool for social or political aims, it risks becoming univocal and propagandistic. Individual artists are often inspired by both aesthetic and political motivations.[70]

7.2   Individual Values

Individual values are values that are recognized or articulated by an individual. Many people express that art and culture bring meaning to their lives. It is impossible to argue that the music, art, or culture that an individual finds valuable is objectively valuable. That which one person finds basic, clumsy, or stupid, another might find fantastic or life altering. Anything that an individual

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[69] Adam Rutherford, 2018. *The Book of Humans: The Story of How We Became Us*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson.

[70] Igor Golomstock, 2011. *Totalitarian art*, Harry N. Abrams Press. Maria Alina Asavei, 2018. *Aesthetics, Disinterestedness, and Effectiveness in Political Art*, Lexington Books.

finds valuable has individual value. We can ask them to describe it or even measure the pleasure and well-being they get from it, but we cannot argue against its individual value on the grounds of another value category.

7.3 Instrumental Values

Seeking instrumental values simply entails using culture as a means to some other end, for example health, economic gain, or prestige. No other value is really relevant to the instrumental utility of culture. If the established goals are met, then culture has proven its worth.

Culture has different values for different people, as well as for the different roles people play such as, for example, property owner, citizen, parent, patient, or cultural consumer. Some of these values can be measured and even given a price tag. Others can only be described. The distinction between different categories of value might help us to talk more precisely about the effects of political decisions. What has changed based on how we allocate our resources, and what has this led to or hindered?

Viewing culture as an ecology requires us to talk about values, aesthetics, ideals, memories, and feelings as a complement to interests, economic values, markets, and planning processes.[71] Culture is not only a collection of activities, it is an aspect of life. Culture is a perspective and a language.

7.4 Institutional Values

The instrumental value of being a democratic arena, community, and source for reflection can also be described as having institutional value. Institutions can, in turn, be defined as forms and norms that structure human action and create common patterns of behavior. The organizations that manage these common forms and norms can also be called institutions. Social progress has consisted of the increased institutionalization of, for example, monetary economy, formal education, nation states, political parties, and parliamentary governance with different ministries, such as a Ministry for Cultural Affairs.[72]

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[71] Jerry C Y Liu, 2016. "The Ecology of culture and values: Implications for cultural policy and governance" *encateScholar*, 6, http://blogs.encatc.org/encatcscholar/?p=1592

[72] Peter L. Berger & Thomas Luckmann, 1966. *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*, Anchor Books.

Culture creates, reflects, and challenges societal patterns of behavior, by among other things, organized institutions like cultural centers, theatres, museums, concert halls, and libraries. The institutional value of culture lies in offering a form and place for community and conversations to occur about society and life.

8   Political Governance

8.1   The Arm's Length Principle

The Arm's Length Principle has been called the constitution of cultural policy. After WWII, when public cultural policy became institutionalized as a separate policy domain, the Arm's Length Principle was an important defense mechanism for maintaining the autonomy of the arts. The main idea is that cultural funding should be determined by experts who act without influence from the political bodies that decide on the general direction and amount of funding, and independent of the artists who receive the funds. Even if the principle originates from national arts funding, and has its strongest stance in arts policy, it has also been used as a general principle in support of the separation of powers. Politics should not meddle in cultural content. In the Swedish Museums Act (2017:563, §5) it is stipulated that "the principals of museums must ensure that the museum has a controlling influence over the content of its operations."

A classical typology from the 1980s differentiated four ways that the Arm's Length Principle could be articulated and executed by governments: 1) The facilitator 2) The patron 3) The architect and 4) The engineer. The model that relies most on the arm's length principle is the patron, who according to the British model, has an independent arts council that distributes the cultural funds allotted by the government based on artistic criteria. In the architect model the administrators in the cultural policy bureaucracy have a more active role in managing cultural funding. The patron model relies on private capitalism and is prevalent in the US, while the communist states of the Eastern bloc preferred the state-controlled engineer model.[73]

As the ideal has been interpreted in various ways in different countries and situations, it is difficult to talk about *the* arm's length principle. Most countries, like Sweden, have political ministries of cultural affairs, and regional and municipal cultural policy committees, as well as more independent arts councils with working groups and reference groups composed of professional artists. Nordic cultural policy is usually described as corporatist in that many interest

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[73] H.H Chartrand & C. McCaughey, 1989. "The Arm's Length Principle and the Arts: An International Perspective – Past, Present and Future" i M. C. Cummings & J.M. D. Schuster (red.) *Who's to Pay for the Arts? The International Search for Models of Arts Support*, ACA Books.

groups are involved in the public decision-making process. In such a model, the border between interest group organizations and public institutions risks becoming vague and easily blurred. The autonomy of art, irrespective of the arm's length principle, is in reality always relative and open to (political) debate.[74] This is another sign that it is impossible to neatly separate different cultural values, or to avoid intercommunion or conflicts between them.

8.2 Trust-Based Governance

As the pendulum currently seems to be swinging towards trust-based governance, administrations need to prepare themselves to contribute to collegial- and dialogue-based audits and evaluations. The 'trust reform' aims to emphasize "intrinsic motivation and professional norms and knowledge, and combines a clear responsibility for meeting overarching goals with flexibility on how to meet them".[75] A further ambition is that control will be better coordinated between policy areas, and that it will be both long-term and knowledge-based. The emphasis on operational professionalism is highly compatible with the arm's length principle. It is true that the value and social effects of culture often become apparent in domains far from the cultural institutions and operations that are being focused on, which is something that should be easier to register in the new model of trust-based governance. At the same time, it might be difficult to fully grasp the overall ecology when management has become decentralized.[76]

8.3 Relevance

A publicly-funded cultural administration must prove that it is legitimate and relevant. Legitimacy depends on transparency, clarity, and the rule of law, and can be ensured through conducting procedures and follow-ups. Relevance is in the hands of the receivers, the citizens. When determining whether or not the cultural administration is relevant, citizens and other relevant stakeholders must

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[74] Per Mangset, 2013. *En armlengdes avstand eller statens forlengede arm? Om armlengdesprinsippet i norsk og internasjonal kulturpolitikk*, TF-rapport 314, Telemarkforsking.

[75] SOU 2019:6 *En långsiktig, samordnad och dialogbaserad styrning av högskolan*, p. 30.

[76] SOU 2019:43 *Med tillit följer bättre resultat – tillitsbaserad styrning och ledning i staten*.

be consulted. Relevance is dependent on participation and democratic inclusion. This is the topic of other reports.[77]

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