

Arts and Culture in Urban/Regional Planning:
A Review and Research Agenda

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Abstract

Most city cultural planning exercises do not have clear and measurable goals, and most planners understand neither the causal relationships involved nor institutional and design alternatives. As a result, US creative city policies exhibit extremes: from one staff person in cultural affairs to 90 or more, from permanent dedicated taxes to no reliable funding streams, from downtown-dominated investment to dispersed cultural centers. In guiding urban cultural development, researchers should examine and clarify the impacts, risks, and opportunity costs of various strategies, and the investments and revenue and expenditure patterns associated with each, so that communities and governments avoid squandering “creative city” opportunities. This paper reviews the state of knowledge about arts and culture as an urban or regional development tool, exploring norms, reviewing evidence for causal relationships, and analyzing stakeholders, bureaucratic fragmentation and citizen participation in cultural planning. Two strategies—designated cultural districts and tourist-targeted cultural investments—illustrate how better research would inform implementation.

KEYWORDS: cultural planning, arts planning, cultural policy, arts policy, creative city, arts impact, gentrification, cultural districts, tourism

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I. Introduction

Since the creative city and cultural economy buzz first emerged in Europe in the mid-1980s, states, cities, and small towns have turned to cultural planning and programming as a broad strategy for economic and community development, including neighborhood, community, and downtown revitalization. By the mid-2000 decade, this interest became a crescendo, with many communities commissioning cultural plans, designating and targeting incentives to cultural districts, building and expanding cultural capacity, and designing new arts-specific revenue sources to pay for these.

Yet knowledge about what works at various urban and regional scales is sorely lacking. Failure to specify goals, reliance on fuzzy theories, underdeveloped public participation, and unwillingness to require and evaluate performance outcomes make it difficult for decision makers to proceed with confidence. Without access to studies that clarify the impacts, risks, and opportunity costs of various strategies, investments, and revenue and expenditure patterns, communities and governments are in danger of squandering opportunities to guide cultural development. Worse, many risk being saddled with unimplemented plans and budgets mortgaged far into the future to pay for under-utilized capacity. Some efforts are simply disguised real estate revaluation efforts (Kunzman 2004) that cause displacement and undermine more spatially decentralized cultural vitality.

In this paper, we review the state of knowledge about arts and culture as urban/regional development and outline potential research that would substantially aid planners and other decision makers in crafting strategy and allocating resources. We begin by addressing the often implicit norms that condition cultural policy making, followed by a review of what is known about the causal relationship between arts and cultural activity and economic development.

We then lay out a framework for understanding the practice of cultural planning at the local level. We discuss the baffling array of public sector institutional structures charged with cultural planning at the local level in the United States, followed by a review of the political economy of cultural planning stakeholders. We call for research to examine how alternative approaches to developing and implementing local cultural plans and policies influence outcomes, such as the degree of participation by a different stakeholders and alternative public sector institutional and funding structures.

Finally, we examine two widely employed strategic choices in depth: 1) designated cultural districts anchored by large performing and visual arts spaces versus dispersed “natural” cultural districts with smaller-scale nonprofit, commercial, and community cultural venues, and 2) tourist-targeted versus local-serving cultural investments. For each, we flag untested claims and assumptions in need of further research.

In these discussions, the emphasis is on state-of-the-art research findings and unsettled questions. We rely on published research, our own cultural policy case studies of Los Angeles, San Francisco, Minneapolis/St. Paul, and some smaller jurisdictions, and extensive interviews and discussions with city cultural planners and policymakers across the United States and abroad. The paper is not a comprehensive review of the literature, particularly of the many case studies that help us understand the richness of cultural planning and challenges in specific places. The focus is, instead, on articulating the common hypotheses driving creative city initiatives and how these might be tested using existing data, comparative case cases, and new methods.

II. Cultural Planning Norms and Goals

As in other planning realms, cultural planners, who include for our purpose all policymakers and professionals engaged in the fostering of arts and cultural activity, base their strategies and prescriptions on one or more implicit norms that are linked to goals, stated or unstated. These norms reflect community values, and since communities are diverse and encompass conflicting interests, such values may be multiple and disparate. Most cultural planning efforts to date fail to clearly state their underlying norms and related goals in ways that can be monitored, thereby handicapping researchers in their efforts to evaluate cultural planning initiatives (Evans 2005). Given these acknowledged limitations, we examine what norms and goals are evident in the relevant literature.

In the pioneering literature about the role of culture and the creative city (Bianchini, Fisher, Montgomery and Worpole 1988; Landry 2003; Landry, Bianchini, Ebert, Gnad and Kunzman 1996; Mt. Auburn Associates 2000; Perloff 1985; Perloff and the Urban Innovation Group 1979; Port Authority of New York and New Jersey and the Cultural Assistance Center 1983), at least three sets of norms/goals can be distinguished (Garcia 2004): economic impacts, regenerative impacts (on the surrounding neighborhood or region), and cultural impacts. The seminal European literature focused more on the regenerative effect of investments in older industrial cities (Evans 2005). Early work on the United States prioritized the economic role of an arts and cultural sector in a regional economy in terms of its impact on jobs, output, and public sector revenue, although a number of studies addressed localized, chiefly downtown revitalization.

Few writers in the cultural city/cultural region literature have unpacked cultural planning norms and goals. These have been best articulated by social scientists and humanities scholars working on non-spatial cultural policy, such as the powerful claims made for the importance of

cultural sensitivity and artistic capacity (Nussbaum 2001). Rejecting the notion that economic calculus should dominate decision making, the World Bank (1999) and scholars working on the developing world (e.g., Yudice 2007) articulate how culture investments confirm identity for specific groups of people, build social cohesion by bridging across cultures, provide avenues for social and political critique, foster self-esteem in individuals in communities, counteract fear and insecurity, and offer pleasure, beauty, and food for the soul. A path-breaking effort to develop indicators capturing these dimensions has recently been published by Jackson, Kabwasa-Green, and Herranz (2006).

Cutting across these pro-growth, revitalization and right brain norms are the more familiar norms of efficiency and equity. Efficiency norms remain under explored to date, reflecting the poor performance of economic development planning in general (Bartik and Bingham 1997). The cultural city literature is surprisingly devoid of cost-benefit evaluation or acknowledgement of opportunity costs of alternatives. Yet cultural planning options must be weighed against each other and against other pressing public sector needs.

Many people engaged in cultural planning invoke equity norms as they stress the importance of equal access of all people to cultural opportunities. Cultural practices are often specific to groups distinguished by place of origin, age, gender, ethnicity, race, and religion, placing a severe and confusing onus on cultural planners to take into account these differences within their constituencies.

All city and regional cultural planning initiatives should begin with an explicit statement of the several norms that form their rationale and related goals. Not only are transparent norms and goals good governance practice; they enable researchers to more effectively evaluate the success of an initiative. A city's cultural districts proposal, for instance, should articulate the

expected economic, neighborhood, and cultural goals in terms of job creation, property valuation and occupancy rates, small business revenues, visual character of the neighborhood, and enhancement in cultural experiences and values of multiple constituencies, as well as possible negative effects on other groups and neighborhoods. The equity norm demands that the city be explicit about who will benefit from its proposals and how any groups harmed will be compensated (as are property owners whose land is seized by eminent domain). The efficiency norm requires that any proposal be judged by the balance of its benefits over its costs and by the alternative uses of public funds and staff time to be devoted to it.

Researchers should unpack, critique, and evaluate outcomes according to norms and goals. To date, despite past calls for such guidelines (Lim 1993), very few cultural planning research efforts attempt to understand these norms or to develop measures that will gauge their performance. For instance, economic impact (in terms of jobs, output, and revenues) studies of various arts and cultural investments (e.g., Americans for the Arts 2007) are plagued with unwarranted assumptions and inference problems. These include: 1) not adequately demonstrating that the arts are an export base industry; 2) treating all spending as new spending, as opposed to factoring out expenditures that would otherwise have been made elsewhere in the local economy; 3) not acknowledging that non-profit arts expenditures are directly subsidized by the public sector through both capital and operations support; and, 4) failing to count the foregone tax revenues that non-profit status confers (Stewart 2008; Sterngold 2004; Seaman 2000). Even the best of the cultural impact studies, such as Beyers, Bonds, Wenz and Sommers (2004) and Beyers and GMA Research Corporation (2006) studies of Seattle industries and cultural centers, do not pose equity or efficiency questions explicitly.

III. The Causal Role of Arts and Culture in Economic Development

In the United States, the art and cultural sector's presumed ability to stimulate economic development, at both regional and neighborhood scales, is one of the most frequently invoked rationales for cultural planning. The argument for arts and cultural activity as urban and rural economic development broadens a strategy that has been around since at least the 1960s, with the flowering of public arts funding in the United States (the National Endowment for the Arts, State Arts Boards, Regional Arts Councils, City Cultural Affairs Departments, and expanding philanthropic arts programs). In that same period, huge new center city arts facilities investments, like New York's Lincoln Center, were built by blending cultural with urban renewal funds (Kreidler 1996). They were meant to both expand cultural offerings and "revitalize" their immediate environs. Lincoln Center, for instance, razed the neighborhood that was the subject of *West Side Story*.

In subsequent decades, additional causal claims have been made for the economic efficacy of investments in arts and cultural activity: that cultural industries help diversify the economic base of deindustrializing or highly specialized cities and regions (e.g., Pratt 1997); that cultural workers, with high rates of self-employment and considerable human capital, earn income from directly exporting products and services and improve the productivity of non-cultural industries locally (e.g., Markusen and King 2003; Markusen and Schrock 2006); and that the presence of cultural offerings and artists attracts other firms and high human capital residents (e.g., Florida 2002a; 2002b). The causal claim that arts and cultural physical investments help revitalize neighborhoods or districts (e.g., Bianchini, Fisher, Montgomery and Worple 1988; Landry, Bianchini, Ebert, Ghad and Kunzman 1996) is now joined with arguments that artists and other bohemians play similar roles (Lloyd 2002, 2005; Lloyd and Clark 2001).

In this section, we examine the kinds of evidence that have been used to test these claims and how they reflect not only theory, but also underlying normative positions. We call attention to existing deficiencies in past research efforts and offer insights as to how these approaches might be strengthened through new techniques and/or areas of investigation. Research strategies vary by the scale and size of city/community studied.

Researchers and advocacy bodies have used arts and cultural economic impact assessments to support the claim that the arts and cultural sector is an important contributor of jobs, output and public sector revenues in a regional economy. Economic impact assessments total up the money invested in and spent by arts facilities (e.g., Beyers and GMA Research Corporation 2006) or specific cultural industries (e.g., Beyers, Bonds, Wenzl and Sommers 2004 on music in Seattle or Saas 2006 on film incentives) and compute the resulting jobs, tax revenues, and total expenditures, using multipliers. As causal exercises, these studies generally overestimate the extent to which the initial investment or incentive induces external (or export base) income for the region rather than reflecting the other motivations of consumers (or filmmakers) for the reasons given above. Beyers and GMA Research Corporation (2006) are particularly careful to ensure, through on-site interviews, that visitors are coming from outside the county expressly to visit the Seattle Center. But other studies, like the Audience Research & Analysis (2006) study of the newly redone New York Museum of Modern Art, make inaccurate assumptions, such as that all New Jersey visitors are “out-of-towners.” Arts impact studies also fail to consider whether induced arts and cultural spending is simply displaced from other sectors in the regional economy (the substitution effect), a point made forcefully by Noll and Zimbalist (1997) in their analogous work on sports facilities. Claims for the economic impact of tax incentives and subsidies for film production are critiqued by Christopherson and Rightor (2008).

In addition to researchers applying more due diligence regarding the substitution effect and establishing the extent to which a given arts/cultural investment induces external income, attention to other norms, namely efficiency and equity, would greatly strengthen this research. Impact studies do not include cost/benefit analysis of outcomes nor opportunity cost assessments of alternative public investments that would address efficiency concerns, and they generally do not inquire into the equity consequences. One researcher argues that “the attention to the high-cost and high-profile culture-led regeneration projects is in inverse proportion to the strength and quality of evidence of their regenerative effects” (Evans 2005, 960). Independent scrutiny of arts and cultural sector contributions could address these inadequacies in extant studies.

Equity concerns could be addressed by independently conducted (rather than self-administered and promotional) arts and cultural participation studies that use surveys to determine the age, race/ethnicity, and income characteristics of people who enjoy access to specific arts and cultures spaces, facilities, and programming. Regional participation studies (which are largely limited to attendance at non-profit arts and cultural venues) reveal that people with higher educational attainment (and thus presumably higher incomes) are more frequently engaged (Schuster 2000). Using broader notions of participation and venues, Stern (2005) found more diverse engagement in Philadelphia, though not centered on large public and non-profit arts investments. Participation studies, as the work of Schuster and Stern shows, can be conducted at any spatial scale.

Derivative causal theories in which researchers posit that that some cities or regions have added jobs more rapidly over time as a result of robust cultural industries (Pratt 1997) or because they host larger concentrations of cultural industries (e.g., Currid 2006) or occupations (Markusen and Schrock 2006) remain under tested. In general, the comparative mezzo-

economic techniques these researchers employ are descriptive exercises or correlations that do not build or test causal models of the contribution of culture to development.

For instance, Scott's (2005) work on the media industry and Hollywood and Currid's (2007) work on fashion, art, and music in New York City are rich descriptions of hyper-concentrated cultural industries, including how they work on the ground. While they use location quotients (a comparative technique) to show the overrepresentation of these industries in their respective cities/regions, they do not show that these industries account for an estimated share of job growth or property revaluation, nor do they explore what would have happened in the absence of each. Similarly, Markusen and Schrock's (2006) use of location quotients and recent net artist migration rates to reveal cultural specialization among large U.S. metros does not explain aggregate performance. All such uses of location quotients risk making fallacy of composition inferences. For instance, the Chicago metro hosts only average numbers of artists in its workforce compared with very high shares for New York, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. This may simply reflect its still robust blue-collar industrial workforce, a group that has been decimated in the other large artist-rich metros.

To strengthen these explorations, researchers could use methods with more robust explanatory power, such as developing and testing multivariate regression models. Concentrations of artists or cultural industries at the local level and their distributions across cities and regions could be modeled as the outcomes of complex longitudinal decision-making processes, including differential public investments and spending, firm location and expansion decisions, and artist and cultural workers' migration decisions. In a simple example, Florida (2002a) has tested the contention that cultural activity attracts other firms and high-income (i.e., desirable) workers with cross-sectional correlations across metros, but Glaeser (2004) and

Markusen (2006) raise interpretative issues regarding the direction of causality and missing variables.

Better data is becoming available for testing multivariate models and probing equity outcomes, both from secondary sources. The U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS) is a rich source for industrial and occupational modeling linked to worker characteristics. Like its predecessor, the Census of Population 5-Percent Public Use Microdata Sample, the 1-percent annual ACS uniquely captures employment at the place of residence (rather than by workplace, as business data sources do). It allows researchers to link individual and household data by cultural occupation (e.g., visual artist, musician, writer, designer) and industry (e.g., advertising, film/TV/media, publishing, performing arts) with socio-economic data on income, age, race, immigrant status, migration patterns, home ownership and so on. American Community Survey and Census "long form" data offer broader coverage of arts and cultural work than do establishment-based sources, including self-employed and unemployed workers, important because of high rates of cultural self-employment (Markusen, Schrock, and Cameron 2004).

None of the aforementioned studies probe the impact of public cultural policies. Quasi-experimental methods offer ways to test whether places with cultural investments have fared better than places without. While these have been skillfully used for smaller, more rural towns and regions, they are more difficult to apply to large complex cities (Isserman and Beaumont 1989). Causal models encompassing a multiplicity of developmental forces (e.g., overall industrial structure, transportation access, cost of living, University-based research activity, higher educational access) have probed the comparative role of high tech activity in metro growth (e.g., Markusen, Hall, and Glasmeier 1986). Similar research efforts honing in on

cultural policy and investments would enhance our understanding of their effectiveness. The causal models and suggested data sources just discussed are mainly useful for gauging explanatory power at the metro or regional, rather than neighborhood or district, scale.

At the neighborhood level, the presence or introduction of a particular cultural facility or an influx of cultural workers or consumers can be modeled and tested for impacts on surrounding property values, retail businesses, building vacancy rates, jobs, and income. In a study accounting for other factors in local growth and requiring original data collection from city sources, Sheppard (2006) found that MASS MoCA, a large new arts center developed in an old textile mill in North Adams, Massachusetts, increased nearby property values by about 20%, evidence of positive neighborhood level wealth-creating effects. The study does not, however, reveal the beneficiaries of associated real estate appreciation or information on those who may have been displaced or priced out of their homes in the process.

Teasing out the impacts of a particular cultural intervention in a dynamic neighborhood poses formidable challenges. Yet, in her treatment of artist live-work spaces, Gadwa (2009) illustrates how researchers can track neighborhood change on a range of economic (as well as social and physical) indicators, including new business formation and residential vacancy rates, to test whether these spaces for artists play a role in economic regeneration at the neighborhood scale. Elements of this methodological framework, which combines extensive fieldwork, hedonic property valuation, fiscal (tax) impact analysis, and comparative neighborhood versus parent area trend lines on multiple indicators, could be successfully adapted to assess the impact of other physical cultural interventions or of small scale interventions in general (new housing, sports facilities, convention centers, etc.).

Empirical research on economic development impacts is perhaps most advanced and insightful where there is contention, as in the gentrification debate. Using Manhattan as a case study, Zukin (1982) argued in a seminal book that arts activity and artists are often used as a vanguard for gentrification by developers. In a powerful critique suggesting that this is not the case in cities with lower generalized real estate pressure, Stern and Seifert (1998) identified ninety-four Philadelphia census block groups that underwent economic revitalization (defined by poverty decline and population gain during the 1980s) and asked: 1) whether the revitalization of these neighborhoods was related to the presence of arts organizations, and 2) whether displacement had occurred in the process. They found that neighborhoods with more arts organizations and participation were more likely to experience revitalization and did so without clear evidence of racial or ethnic displacement. They also posit that cultural investments, compared with other neighborhood revitalization tools, excel at nurturing both bonding and bridging social capital. Such findings suggest that growth and equity goals of cultural investments are not inherently in opposition. Researchers could enhance these findings by exploring the external validity of Stern and Seifert's findings by extending their analysis to other areas with differing real estate pressures and in different eras, as in the present real estate bust.

In sum, causal theories of the relationships between cultural facilities, industries and workers and area economic development remain crude and under-tested. In particular, conventional economic impact studies could be strengthened by stricter criteria for determining the extent to which a given arts/cultural investment induces external income, increased scrutiny with regards to the substitution effect, and attention to efficiency and equity concerns through cost-benefit analyses and participation studies. To test the role played by cultural industries and occupations in the rate of regional job creation, researchers could develop more sophisticated

causal models and test them with multivariate analysis. They can use quasi-experimental models to test the impact of cultural investments and control for other developmental forces, especially in smaller towns. At the neighborhood level, mixed qualitative and quantitative methods can be used to track changes in a range of economic indicators and provide compelling causal evidence for the role the cultural intervention played. Because posited claims for the fruits of cultural policy are currently so vociferous, the need for further research is quite pressing.

IV. The Roles of City Cultural Structure and External Stakeholders

Cultural planning strategies are heavily shaped by evolved city bureaucratic structures and programs and by diverse external constituencies. Responsibilities for cultural affairs and investments are fragmented across multiple local public sector agencies and vary considerably among American cities, even among those of similar scale. In this section we present a framework for understanding how cultural planning currently operates at the local level, examining variations in public sector cultural capacity and implementation, as well as in the range and differing interests and power of stakeholders. States also conduct cultural policy through a multiplicity of agencies, but generally they do not engage in cultural planning to the extent that cities do, so we confine our discussion to the latter. We identify research opportunities that scholars could pursue to illuminate which types of structures, strategies, and political coalitions improve the prospects for achieving cultural planning goals and how scale affects the challenges in doing so.

Local Public Sector Institutional and Funding Structures

The institutional structures and funding streams that local governments employ in cultural planning vary greatly. Cities have powerful tools for shaping the cultural economy—

land use and redevelopment planning, ownership of substantial parcels of land and buildings for redevelopment, infrastructure provision, and financial resources such as dedicated taxes and various community and economic development funds. Most city governments, even some very small towns, conduct variants of cultural planning and policy, offering researchers an opportunity to critically compare alternative institutional and funding structures.

Currently, responsibility for cultural affairs in most U.S. city governments is spread among a baffling array of agencies that have evolved over many decades and, since cities are creatures of state government, vary dramatically from place to place. Some cities (e.g., Los Angeles and San Francisco) have citywide arts funds supported by dedicated taxes that support publicly-owned arts facilities (museums, performing arts centers) and grants programs for artists and arts organizations. Some have special cultural tax districts that raise funds from property, sales or cigarette taxes for specific facilities, areas within the city or whole countries. Most have public arts programming, including commissioned public art and support for cultural events. Some support community cultural centers and have subsidized artists' centers, live/work buildings, and performing arts venues through land and vacant building turnovers, loan funds, and parking ramp and streetscape investments. Some have commissioned and adopted cultural plans or included cultural components in their master planning exercises.

In most cities, responsibility for cultural planning is fragmented among major agencies such as cultural affairs, city planning, and economic development, with public works, public safety, and independent park, library, and education boards also involved. Many larger cities (New York, Chicago, Los Angeles) have cultural affairs departments staffed by people with expertise in arts and culture. In other cities, like Minneapolis, formal cultural affairs capacity is limited to one or a few staffers in economic development agencies running public arts

programming on very small budgets. Cultural affairs departments and offices have suffered resource losses in recent decades as taxpayer revolts and higher priority for public safety, downtown redevelopment, and business recruitment have squeezed their shares of the public purse. Responding to a survey by Grodach and Loukaitou-Sideris (2007), many cities report having subsumed cultural planning under economic development functions.

Many of the regulatory tools that enable or hamper the creation of artistic space in cities are lodged in city planning departments and run by people with city planning degrees, a training that may or may not include expertise in urban design or cultural policy. Artists' centers and live/work buildings, permits for art fairs and festivals, and urban redevelopment plans that include cultural space and facilities must be compatible with current land use and zoning ordinances or receive variances. In some cities—Minneapolis would be an example—it is very difficult to build artists' live/work buildings because of strict zoning laws that do not permit the mixing of commercial and residential use (Johnson 2006). In most cities, cultural policy has little standing or interface with city planning departments and their management of land use and visioning of the city's physical future.

Economic development departments (and often separate economic development authorities) are the most powerful of the city's bureaus affecting the creation of cultural space. As the manager of land and buildings that the city owns, a city's economic development agency makes decisions on re-use and redevelopment and has at its disposal considerable funds for building rehabilitation, brownfield clean-up, enterprise zone initiatives, commercial corridors, workforce development, and other federal and state economic development pass-through funds. Like city planning departments, they operate on a parcel-by-parcel basis—district-wide planning is unusual despite the existence of comprehensive plans and designated cultural districts. Most

economic development agencies are pro-development and work very closely with private landowners, developers, and real estate interests. In many cities, larger arts and cultural institutions have garnered the lion's share of city commitments of land, parking garages, and support for state cultural bonding, though in San Francisco, neighborhood arts and cultural centers receive a larger share than in most other cities.

Other local agencies play roles as well. Many cities run cultural programs through departments of parks and recreation and school districts. Public works departments may be responsible for cultural facilities and build the parking ramps that often subsidize them. Public safety departments are responsible for parade permitting and public space usage rules. A recent San Francisco Arts Task Force (2006) report lays out the complex web of city/county agencies involved in support for the arts, shows how funding streams work their way through this web, and makes challenging suggestions for reconfiguring and consolidating arts funding.

Scale affects the range of public cultural practice. Very large cities like New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago have widely disparate cultural affairs departments with large staff (on the order of 50 to 90 employees), sizeable budgets, and responsibility for publicly owned large arts venues. In smaller cities, cultural initiatives are often public/private/community partnerships that are easier to forge and sustain. Even in very small towns, city councils and local government agencies have transcended traditional turfs and training to foster arts-driven downtown revitalization—examples include New York Mills, Minnesota (Markusen and Johnson 2006); Lanesboro, Minnesota (Borrup 2006a); and other Minnesota communities (Cuesta, Gillespie, and Lillis 2005; Metropolitan Regional Arts Council 2006). In tiny New York Mills, for instance, the city council paid for the renovation of an old two-story Victorian storefront on main street, donated for \$1 by its owner, into the New York Mills Regional Cultural Center; on an ongoing

basis, the Council pays half the salary of the director of the nonprofit Center because she also serves as the town's tourism director.

Policymakers should be able to consult comparative research on the institutional and revenue structures shaping cultural planning at the local and state level. Yet the mish-mash of structures and spending tools currently relied on for cultural planning makes it very difficult to generalize across places or to determine which cities are relatively successful and why.

However, researchers could theorize and test the causal impact of public arts and cultural support on economic and cultural outcomes, such as the relative presence and net in-migration rates of artists (and artists of color to gauge equity) and of cultural industry employment, arts participation rates, and measures of cultural vitality (Jackson, Kabwasa-Green and Herranz 2006). Hypothesized causal factors could include variations in the size of cultural affairs offices/departments; whether cultural affairs are placed within other departments, such as planning or economic development, or are stand-alone agencies; consolidation or fragmentation of cultural functions within agencies; the size of dedicated tax revenues (vs. general funds); and the degree of citizen participation in arts and cultural planning (through hearings, neighborhood organizations, and arts commissions). Longitudinal comparative studies that captured changes in these causal structures over time would be especially welcome. Comparative research of this sort is emerging on institutional determinants of developing countries' economic trajectories, where the context is arguably much more challenging. Comparative research could help answer questions of the following type: Did the failure, as part of a fractious mayoral contest, of an ambitious bid to remake Minneapolis' role in arts and cultural affairs in the 1990s result in the observed outmigration of artists in the latter part of that decade (Bye and Herman 1993; Markusen and Schrock 2006)?

Such a research agenda should also attempt to match outcomes to intentions. An exemplar in this regard is a Rand qualitative study (McCarthy, Ondaatje, and Novak 2007) that compared, for eleven different mid-sized cities, public and private support mechanisms for nonprofit arts organizations to larger cultural planning objectives.

Stakeholders

The arts and cultural sphere is balkanized into competing commercial, nonprofit, and community segments, and often there is little solidarity within each group. Although artists crossover these sectoral divides all the time (Markusen, Gilmore, Johnson, Levi and Martinez 2006), the organizations at the helm of each sector rarely work together on common problems or policy agendas (Ivey 1999; Arthurs, Hodson and Lavine 1999; Pankratz 1999). In addition, the built environment industry is actively engaged in using arts and culture to make money and nurture civic pride. Elected officials may champion or ignore cultural planning. Citizens can be expected to participate in cultural planning initiatives in direct proportion to the extent that it feeds a personal or community passion, as in the case for arts aficionados or ethnic cultural groups, or may directly impact them, such as residents and business owners in close proximity to a proposed cultural investment initiative. Because the goals and motivations of each constituency differ widely, they often have competing stakes in cultural planning. Research on the ways in which the politics and interests of external stakeholders shape urban cultural initiatives, programs, and plans would improve planning and policy decision-making.

The commercial sector encompasses for-profit firms in industries whose product in large part consists of texts and symbols (Hesmondhalgh 2002), including, in conservative definitions, architecture, design, media, advertising, publishing, recording and movie, TV, and radio

(Markusen, Wassall, DeNatale and Cohen 2008). The commercial cultural sector also encompasses art markets (galleries, art fairs, on-line websites), for-profit performing arts spaces (theaters, music clubs, restaurants), and artists who sell their work on commission, directly to the public, or on the web. In most regions, cultural industry members have not banded together around public policy or planning issues. Driven by bottom-line concerns (Vogel 2007), sector leaders are preoccupied with key regulatory issues such as intellectual property rights protection and telecommunications access that are national rather than state/local issues (Ivey 2005). With rare exceptions, such as film industry bids for incentives, managers in these sectors are disinterested in city cultural policy, though individuals made wealthy through cultural firms' success may contribute to and lobby the city for support for their favorite (usually large, elite) cultural organizations. While geographers and sociologists have produced excellent studies of the urban distribution and impact of particular cultural industries, they have not reflected on whether and how commercial sector leaders and activists engage actively with public sector urban planning strategies (e.g., Lloyd and Clark 2001; Lloyd 2002, 2005; Power 2002; Power and Scott 2004, Rantisi 2004, Rothfield, Coursel, Lee, Silver and Norris 2007).

In contrast to cultural firms, cultural nonprofits have a huge stake in city and state cultural planning. Most museums, orchestra halls, opera houses, artists' centers, theaters, and community arts facilities function as nonprofits (Gray and Heilbrun 2000; Heilbrun and Gray 1993, Wyszomirski 1999), as are some artists' studio and live/work buildings and many artist service organizations, including unions and professional associations. They lobby for state/local arts and cultural budgets, new sources of revenues, and bonding bills for cultural facilities, with the largest institutions dominating the character of this advocacy effort. Yet outside of the flagship organizations, this dominant constituency for cultural policy, including small non-profits

and universities (Dempster 2004; Perry and Wiewel 2005), understands little about the intersection with urban development and planning, focusing on funding advocacy rather than engaging in the creative city debate and its arcane contests over land use, development, and cultural districts.

In the community (sometimes called informal, unincorporated, or participatory) sector, cultural activities are organized by actors operating outside formal for-profit or nonprofit status. Community cultural activity includes festivals organized by ethnic or affinity groups, gatherings for artistic sharing and performance in people's homes or parks, and community networks of bartered artistic services, lessons, or products. Pioneering studies of community-based artists celebrate this sector, the legitimacy of its art forms, its ability to bridge across class and culture, its changing character, its service to communities and individuals, and its functioning as an R&D arena for the non-profit arts sector (Alvarez 2005; Jackson, Herranz, and Kabwasa-Green 2003; Peters and Cherbo 1998; Peterson 1996; Wali, Severson, and Longoni 2002; Wali, Contractor, Green, Mason, Severson, McClure and Ostergaard 2006; Walker, Jackson, and Rosenstein 2003). Community cultural groups may confront money problems, personality conflicts, delays, and managerial deficits that render them fragile and difficult to sustain. By and large, these groups are too busy to be engaged in city or regional cultural policy and are excluded from most advocacy organizing efforts.

Additionally, the local built environment industry—developers, the construction industry, real estate brokers, banks, newspapers, and others whose livelihoods depend on the making and maintenance of urban spatial form—constitutes a coalition with an active interest in cultural space development. In many cases, their interests (especially those of developers) dominate

cultural planning, facilitated by the dealing-making work mode of city redevelopment authorities, as well as the absence of broad and more democratic cultural coalitions.

Finally, the changing character of city councils and mayoralities may bring cultural policy to the fore or ignore it, so that arts and cultural policy may abruptly be conducted quite differently from prior regimes. Long-time city arts watchers have concluded that progress on strategic city cultural planning requires an advocate at the top—a mayor or a city council member who sees arts and culture as an important urban economic and community development domain. So, for instance, St. Louis' pioneering 1971 cultural tax district was the brainchild of civic leader Howard Baer (Bassity 2008). Los Angeles would not have its dedicated arts share of the hospitality tax had then Councilman Joel Wachs not followed through on the Perloff and the Urban Innovation Group (1979) study. Portland's arts infrastructure commitments evolved over twenty-five years and were steered by Council members Mike Lindberg and Sam Adams sequentially.

Citizen and stakeholder participation in cultural planning occurs along a spectrum. Some cities—Minneapolis, for instance—have citizen-based arts and cultural commissions that are toothless and on which the largest arts institutions refuse to participate, since they have professional lobbyists and backdoor ways of reaching politicians and city staffers. Smaller arts organizations directors and individual artists cycle through the commission and leave feeling it is a waste of time. However, city cultural affairs officers, planning directors, and elected officials can play a powerful role in designing participatory mechanisms that ensure that diverse constituencies are included in resource allocation. For instance, the public sector can encourage communication and joint planning among the three cultural sectors by using its regulatory tools and resources to this end. Some cities, Seattle in particular, have been successful in breaking

down the walls between the commercial and nonprofit sector. Within city government, Seattle's Mayor's Office of Film and Music supports a full menu of film and music offerings that embrace nonprofit, commercial, and community events and actors. At the regional level, the New England Council has built a New England Creative Economy coalition across private and nonprofit sector lines since 1998 (Markusen, Wassall, DeNatale and Cohen 2008; Mt. Auburn Associates 2000).

Much research remains to be done on constituents' roles in cultural planning and how the outcomes reflect their interests and access. Good studies of the politics of urban economic development in general are sadly few in number. Exceptions are Wolman and Spitzley's (1996) overview and Dewar's (1998) insightful study of a Minnesota state business incentives program. The more developed body of work on urban tourism may offer good methodologies and models (Fainstein and Gladstone 1999; Ioannides 2006), yet here, too, comparative causal analysis is thin.

However, it would be possible to do a set of qualitative (though time-consuming) comparative case studies that address questions such as the following. Do cultural plans dominated by particular stakeholder configurations influence outcomes? Do inclusive participatory cultural planning processes ensure more equitable and spatially decentralized public cultural capacity and benefits? Is a championing elected official a prerequisite for success, or have grassroots cultural planning initiatives been successful without such leadership? Can coalitions be built bridging cultural interests with other causes, such as occurred in the successful 2008 Minnesota constitutional amendment that joined clean water, wildlife, and culture/legacy constituencies to win a half percent dedicated sales tax?

V. Urban/Regional Cultural Strategies

Beyond evaluating outcomes in relation to norms and goals, vetting established causal economic theories and probing how stakeholder participation and institutional/funding structures influence outcomes, researchers can greatly assist cultural planners and jurisdictions interested in pursuing creative city initiatives by evaluating the efficacy of specific cultural strategies. In this section, we explore two urban cultural strategies—cultural districts and cultural tourism—exploring the goals, logic, and evidence on outcomes, pointing out the poverty of good research. Other research frontiers include evaluations of targeted incentives for firms in cultural industries, support for individual artists and related cultural workers, public operating or project support for arts organizations, capital support for (and sometimes public ownership and operation of) arts and cultural facilities, and changes in planning regulations, such as zoning, low income housing, rent control, and historic preservation, that bear on the potential for cultural activity.

Cultural Districts vs. Decentralized Mosaics

Should cities and states designate and develop cultural districts where cultural activities are clustered together? Or should they encourage a decentralized mosaic of cultural activities throughout neighborhoods and among a series of small towns in a region? A cultural district is defined as “a well-recognized, labeled, mixed-use area of a city in which a high concentration of cultural facilities serves as the anchor of attraction” (Frost-Kumpf 1998, 10). Cultural districts often center around large arts institutions and may range from labeled usage in planning and promotional documents to legal designations in zoning ordinances. They often materialize in creative city agendas without analysis of associated resource use or consequences (Brooks and Kushner 2001; Evans 2005; Frost-Kumpf 1998). Downtown development interests and urban

arts coalitions often jump on the cultural district bandwagon (Whitt 1987). The rationales for such districts, when stated, include the assertion that concentration will enable capture of economies of scale and will attract more tourists from outside the region (efficiency and growth goals) and will revitalize deteriorating central districts, arresting further decline.

Examples of historic U.S. cultural districts include San Francisco's Civic Center, New York's Lincoln Center, and the Seattle Center. The first of these dates from the City Beautiful era, while Lincoln Center was a major urban renewal project, and Seattle's Center is the legacy of its 1962 World Fair. In each case, large performing arts spaces are co-located in a single destination district, detached from the fabric of neighborhoods and residences. Both audience members and performers must travel by car or public transportation to attend and mount performances. Complementary experiences, including dining or shopping, are either internalized in the cultural facilities themselves or require a separate travel destination.

The arguments for designated cultural districts have been questioned on multiple grounds. The labeling and imposing of cultural districts suggests that other neighborhoods are not culturally interesting or vibrant and may simply redirect investments within the city. Jacobs (1961) disparaged large-scale urban renewal, celebrating the multiplicity of distinctive cultural neighborhoods using Manhattan as a case study. Borrup (2006b) critiqued the bias towards concentrated districts, illustrating the potential for smaller scale, dispersed cultural development with U.S. case studies. Stern and Seifert (2007, 2; 1998) have theorized "natural" cultural districts evolve "organically as a result of individual agents' decisions—creators and participants, producers and consumers—to locate near one another," and suggest that minimal clustering and dispersion maybe preferable on equity grounds. These researchers emphasize the quality of life and equity goals of cultural policy; they do not address the efficiency and growth

ambitions. Although a new decentralized cultural venue might prompt the emergence of several others nearby—a theater, for instance, might encourage the creation of cafes and bookstore, it is unclear whether these clusters merely redistribute economic capacity across the region or add net increments to local spending and cultural jobs.

City planners and leaders would benefit from empirical research on concentrated versus dispersed investments of cultural capital. Currently, the literature on cultural districts remains descriptive, based on case studies and not evaluative (e.g., Galligan 2008). Decentralized artistic districts in Chicago (Wali, Severson, and Longoni 2002; Wali, Contractor, Green, Mason, Severson, McClure and Ostergaard 2006) and Silicon Valley reveal expanded participation in the arts (Alvarez 2005; Moriarity 2004). Stern and Seifert's (1998) Philadelphia case studies show that new cultural capacity can stabilize and revitalize neighborhoods without displacing lower income and long-time residents while increasing diversity in participation. None of the many case studies compare outcomes with what might have happened (or has happened elsewhere) when resources have been spatially concentrated.

Adequate research for policymaking and planning would evaluate before and after outcomes across a large number of cases and cities and incorporate other non-cultural interventions in the model. To definitely detect results within a city or metro, longitudinal analysis must track waning as well as waxing cultural nodes, comparing public investments and accounting for other contributing factors in each. To guide city planners and decision-makers on cultural versus other public investments, and which appear to be superior cultural interventions, researchers should engage in comparative research across a large number of cities (or metros), not a small undertaking.

Cultural Tourism

Should cities and states invest in cultural tourism initiatives to attract visitors from outside of the region? Or should public cultural investments be targeted at citizens and residents? Currently, many larger cities and states are branding themselves as cultural destinations, not only in marketing but with large new investments in flagship institutions, often designed by world-class architects (Evans 2003; Grodach 2007; Hammett and Shoval 2003). They aim at well-heeled visitors who will fly in to attend their new mega-theaters, opera houses, and museums, stay at hotels, and spend considerable amounts on restaurant meals. If the expected patronage does not materialize, nonprofit arts organizations may have to shrink operations (quite a few regional symphonies have disbanded in the past decade), and city governments must pay off bonds for facilities that don't generate the expected revenues. An expensive strategy, the case for cultural tourism relies on durable export base theory, which claims that only production sold outside the region will generate net revenues and growth.

How reasonable is it to expect that cultural institutions will be supported and patronized by outsiders? The best arts impact studies have generated hard data on the characteristics of attendees to large cultural institutions or centers. In separate studies on Los Angeles County (KPMG Peat Marwick 1994), Seattle's King County (Beyers and GMA Research Corporation 2006), and New York City (Audience Research & Analysis 2006), researchers determined how many attendees came from outside the county or city, how many came expressly to attend the particular public event or venue, and how much each party spent on average during its visit. The share of cultural tourists in each study ranges in the 10-20% range. Even these are overestimates, because in the Seattle and New York cases, attendees from surrounding counties were considered to be out-of-town visitors. Though the researchers found that out-of-town tourists spend about

twice as much as local residents when visiting a cultural destination, overwhelming numbers of visits are made by local residents or by visitors who came to the city for other reasons (conventions, family) and were as likely to stay with family and friends as at a hotel. Thus local and regional residents may be more important as cultural policy targets than visitors.

The case for targeting local consumers is based on the hypotheses and insights from qualitative studies that challenge export base theory. By providing local cultural capacity, a city or region can capture a larger share of existing residents' discretionary income that might otherwise be spent on imports or leisure and entertainment elsewhere. It may also contribute to the development of new product or service lines that begin to be exported, and it may attract new residents for whom the quality of life is more important than the location of their jobs and businesses (Markusen 2007, Markusen and Schrock 2009). A strategy of developing a distinctive artistic expertise marketed to locals and the surrounding region may also attract more tourists in the longer run. These competing hypotheses deserve testing. Comparative studies of outcomes across a large set of cities (that vary in the degree to which they target tourists) would help cultural planners make good decisions.

VI. Elements of a Cultural Planning Research Agenda

The creative city buzz has jolted cities and smaller towns into competing on the cultural front. The “Cool Cities” initiative in Michigan, for instance, with state money attached, sent towns of all sizes scrambling to stylize themselves as such (Peck 2005). Despite this interest and momentum, cultural planners are functioning without the benefit of evidence of what approaches work and at what urban and regional scales. We see four areas of inquiry as crucial opportunities for researchers to strengthen understanding of cultural planning theory and practice.

First, researchers should unpack, critique, and evaluate cultural planning outcomes according to implicit and explicit norms and goals. For example, do plans for cultural districts acknowledge equity concerns? Is the cultural initiative an efficient investment or are public dollars better spent on an alternative cultural strategy, or an initiative completely outside of the creative city realm?

Second, researchers should also vet the most frequently employed rationale for cultural initiatives—the theorized causal link to economic development. Those conducting economic impact studies should acknowledge and estimate the substitution effect and document the extent of leakages from the local economy from a given arts/cultural investment. Past comparative descriptions and correlation exercises could be strengthened at the regional level with more sophisticated multivariate models, in smaller towns with quasi-experimental models, and at the neighborhood level with mixed quantitative and qualitative methods.

Third, researchers should look beyond developing metrics to gauge whether or not a cultural plan has generated anticipated outcomes, to ask how the process influences the product. For instance, can we generalize that varying degrees of different stakeholder involvement

translates into different types of cultural investments? Which local institutional and funding structures are most effective and at what geographic scales?

Lastly, what are the merits and weaknesses of specific alternative cultural strategies? We presented theoretical arguments suggesting that minimal clustering and dispersion may be a sounder strategy than concentrated cultural districts on both equity and efficiency grounds, but these hypotheses deserve rigorous testing. Past research indicates the cultural tourism strategies are likely to provide only modest, if any, economic development benefits and only for the very largest cities and some highly specialized medium-sized cities. Other cultural planning tools, ranging from targeted incentives for firms in cultural industries to planning regulations, such as zoning, low income housing, rent control, and historic preservation, represent other important research frontiers.

Cultural planners and civic leaders are urgently in need of the answers to the research questions identified in this paper. Without this knowledge, many are operating on the basis of “if we build it, they will come” mentalities. Decision makers often favor ephemeral tourists over their own residents as patrons, over-invest in large-scale arts facilities that may become expensive white elephants in the longer run, focus on particular districts (and the real estate interests that have a stake in them) rather than the mosaic of offerings that already exist, and fail to build decision-making frameworks where artists, smaller scale arts organizations, and a multiplicity of distinctive cultural communities can participate in cultural planning. At its worst, cultural planning at the state and local level becomes captive of particular real estate interests, cultural industries, and cultural elites, and thus fruitful ground for consultants who promise great plans that often turn out to be window-dressing. In Europe and developing countries, consultants working globally (Evans 2001) as external catalysts on cultural strategies reinforce spatial

divides and social exclusion (Evans and Foord 2003). These arguments are themselves subject to the test of rigorous research. We hope this call for a broad and interdisciplinary research agenda will contribute to better knowledge and practice.

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