

The Challenges of Valuing Culture in Australia, and the Role of Symbiosis in Understanding Cultural Interactions

Clare Melissa Reddan

ORCID 0000-0002-5924-0303

Submitted in total fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

April 2019

School of Culture and Communications

The University of Melbourne

Abstract

My research examines the conditions and narratives that surround cultural value, particularly within the fields of cultural diplomacy, cultural policy and the arts. These conditions and narratives are situated within the context of knowledge or innovation-based societies where, over the past two decades, a rise in cultural value discourse has occurred. Knowledge-based societies also feature post-industrial economies and, therefore, in this thesis, the tendency to value culture in terms of economics is of particular significance. In Australia, this is evident across various municipal levels, from local councils to the federal government. Through a series of case studies encompassing the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the City of Melbourne and a federal policy proposal for a *National Programme for Excellence in the Arts*, I argue a common approach to the valuation of culture is evident, and is one that is rooted in instrumentalisation—or what Yúdice characterises as expediency, where ‘culture-as-resource’ is a means to an end.¹ However, this narrow scope limits the possibility to understand more about the different types of value that culture (such as the arts) can have, particularly when it comes to aesthetic exploration of new knowledges, global networks and relationships.

To explore alternative considerations of what value culture can offer to both societies and people alike, I consider European theatre collective Rimini Protokoll’s ability to display the culture of nations in their touring performance of *100% City*. Here, another

¹ Yúdice, George, (2003) *The Expediency of Culture: Uses of Culture in the Global Era*, Duke University Press, Durham, p. 29.

realisation of the value of culture is discernible. In political terms, this is cultural value that resides outside the typical state-to-public facilitation of public diplomacy and rests on a people-to-people mode of communication. As a result, I argue that the current, utilitarian vocabulary surrounding the value of culture should be expanded and developed further to reflect its operation today in the age of global networks and relationships. Such an expansion incorporates a symbiotic consideration of the interactions that occur over the course of cultural relationships and counterbalances the over-reliance on economic and political factors and evaluations. My proposal serves to further refine understandings of 'the cultural' within the discourse of cultural value. To do so, I draw upon the biological understanding of relationships, referred to as symbiosis, to study how cultural value is understood amongst the private and public sector actors across three key dimensions: the economic, the political and the social. As a result, I propose cultural symbiosis as a conceptual metaphor that assists in the articulation of the more complex and multifaceted relations that cultural activity can generate. This conceptualisation provides the basis for an approach that better articulates the relations of cultural activity and one that extends the neoliberal vocabulary currently used to describe culture and the discourse of cultural value.

Declaration

I certify that:

- i. this thesis comprises of only my original work towards the Doctorate of Philosophy;
- ii. due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used;
- iii. this thesis is fewer than 100 000 words in length, exclusive of tables, maps, bibliographies and appendices.

Signed:

Clare Reddan

Date: 30 April 2019

Preface

The author was the recipient of funding from an Australian Postgraduate Award/Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship.

Acknowledgments

This thesis evolved with the assistance of many people. The academic support of Associate Professor Paul Rae, Dr Guy Morrow, Dr Natalia Grincheva and Professor Peter Eckersall was greatly appreciated, as was the valuable input from Dr Christiaan De Beukelaer, and Dr Bronwyn Reddan.

I also wish to extend thanks to Deakin University and the research team headed by Dr Amanda Coles where I worked alongside talented researchers on a public diplomacy project.

I drew inspiration from a variety of professional associations, so many thanks to my colleagues from the Melbourne Theatre Company, Dennis Bilic, Dr Stephanie Convery and Paul Cos. The opportunity to bounce ideas off subject matter experts in their respective fields allowed a variety of perspectives to enrich my research as a whole.

I am extremely fortunate to have family and friends who championed my research with their patience and love. Thank you to Denis, James and Ethan de Reland, whose energy and support keep me going, as well as to Diana and Luke Reddan, whose unconditional care is invaluable. Special thanks, also, to Gabrielle Grigg, Dr Jongkil Jay Jeong, Caley Otter and Cassandra Chambers.

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Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACDGP	Australian Cultural Diplomacy Grants Program
AICC	Australian International Cultural Council
CCI	(Australian Research Council) Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries and Innovation
CDN	Cultural Development Network (Australia)
CoM	City of Melbourne (Council)
DCA	Department of Communications and the Arts (Australian Government)
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australian Government)
DIIS	Department of Industry, Innovation and Science (Australian Government)
FM	Future Melbourne
ICV	International Cultural Visits (DFAT program)
IR	Integrated Reporting (Framework)
ICAEW	The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
NISA	National Innovation and Science Agenda

NPEA	National Programme for Excellence in the Arts
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PBS	Portfolio Budget Statements
QUT	Queensland University of Technology

Chapter 1 — Introduction: The Instrumentalisation of Australian Cultural Value in the Age of the Knowledge Economy

Value is a relation, permitting things to be conjoined that would otherwise be radically distinct. The value relation is a triangle whose corners are an object, a subject and a measure of equivalence.

– Meyrick, Phiddian & Barnett¹

Narratives of value are subjective and highly contentious. One person's opinion of what something is worth might not be shared by another. Much of the scholarly and governmental discussion surrounding public and national value focuses on the ability to identify, evaluate, and thus measure, the effects of policy in terms of outcomes and deliverables. This research considers how recent Australian cultural policy and practice has been affected by this focus on outputs, despite a general awareness amongst key stakeholders and leaders (and the general public) that intangible value also shapes understandings of what culture offers to people and nations. In doing so, it conducts an examination into the discourse of cultural value.

Relying on the narrowness of a utilitarian approach in terms of culture skews the definition of value. Yet, discussions surrounding the value of culture become complicated when different types of languages and sets of criteria are used to describe

¹ Meyrick, Julian, Phiddian, Robert & Barnett, Tully, (2018) *What Matters? Talking Value in Australian Culture*, Monash University Publishing, Clayton, p. 26.

a 'shared' phenomenon. It is this complication that is explored throughout this thesis alongside the questions of who is describing value, on what terms, and how the interactions or relationships between cultural stakeholders are crucial sources of value and central to questions of cultural value today.

As a key term in this research, cultural value varies across definitions, but is specific to the cultural sphere and focuses on how to best articulate the importance (or the value) of culture. While cultural value has much in common with economics, and concepts of valuation and evaluation as they share concerns of understanding how public goods benefit society, as David Throsby notes, 'cultural value is a multiple and shifting thing which cannot be comprehended within a single domain.'² This is partly because culture is multifaceted and conceptions of value in a cultural context exceed the traditionally quantifiable and/or economics-based conception of value as a measure of benefit in terms of units of currency.³ Cultural theorists have conceptualised cultural value in many ways, such as John Holden's value triangle of intrinsic, institutional and instrumental value, or Throsby's disaggregation of cultural value into characteristics including aesthetic value, spiritual value, social value, historical value, symbolic value and

² Throsby, David, (2001) *Economics and Culture* [electronic resource], Cambridge University Press, <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=sso&db=cat00006a&AN=melb.b5482155&site=eds-live&scope=site> [accessed: 05 February 2020], p. 28.

³ Quantitative-based conceptions of value referred to in this thesis and their history - as informed by the works of key cultural value scholars - are discussed in further detail in chapter two. However, my attention to quantitative approaches and quantitative measurement with regard to the value of culture follows Mulcahy's consideration of cultural utilitarianism where the trend towards quantitative measurement of culture is congruent with instrumentalism.

See Redden, Guy, (2015) 'Culture, Value and Commensuration: The knowledge politics of indicators,' in MacDowall, Lachlan, Badham, Marnie, Blomkamp, Emma & Dunphy, Kim, (eds.), *Making Culture Count: The Politics of Cultural Measurement*, Springer, London, p. 28, and Mulcahy, Kevin V., (2006) 'Cultural policy: definitions and theoretical approaches,' *Journal of Arts Management, Law, and Society*, Vol. 35, no. 4, p. 326.

authenticity value.⁴ Crossick and Kaszynska posit that because value has an ability to affect change and will be experienced differently, cultural value must entail and examine ‘the effects that culture has on those who experience it and the difference it makes to individuals and society.’⁵

Scholars such as Ben Walmsley critique the influence of neo-liberal perceptions of cultural value and instrumentalist approaches to evaluating the impact of the arts, arguing it has led to a crisis in the wider social understanding of cultural value. Instead of being influenced by market values, he advocates for ‘a neo-institutionalist, creative management approach to articulating and evaluating artistic value ...[which approaches] ... value in a creative, intrinsic and reflexive way, and to articulate this value in artists’ and audiences’ terms.’⁶ So, while cultural policy may have a preoccupation on output-focused evaluation, there is growing academic and applied interest from scholars and public policymakers alike to investigate how best to measure the outcomes of cultural activities and understand their value in contemporary societies beyond outcomes and deliverables. This has also meant that cultural value discourse has developed substantially over the past two decades, and the politics of culture today, combined with new iterations and types of cultural activities, mean that new relationships are produced

⁴ Holden, John, (2006) *Cultural Value and the Crisis of Legitimacy*, Demos, London, <http://www.demos.co.uk/files/Culturalvalueweb.pdf> [accessed 05 Feb 2020] p. 15 and Throsby, (2001) *Economics and Culture*, pp. 28–29.

⁵ Crossick, Geoffrey & Kaszynska, Patrycja, (2014) ‘Under Construction: towards a framework for cultural value,’ *Cultural Trends*, Vol. 23, no. 2, p. 124.

⁶ Walmsley, Ben, (2013) ‘Whose value is it anyway? A neo-institutionalist approach to articulating and evaluating artistic value,’ *Journal of Arts & Communities*, Vol. 4, no. 3, Dec, p. 211.

and the terrain where they occur evolves. These new configurations and their symbiotic interplay underpins this thesis.

Furthermore, in response to the myriad applications surrounding cultural value, this thesis considers how culture is valued in Australia, how this value is described, and who articulates this value on behalf of others. As I examine in the following chapters, there are various types of value that are pursued, from an economics-based conception of cultural value that seeks to describe our world in quantitative terms, the use of investment-orientated vocabulary, intangible and intrinsic value that is beyond measurement, or value in terms of social impact and change.

However, as Crossick and Kaszynska note, it is important that the different disciplinary perspectives of cultural value are not conceptualised as existing in parallel as, in reality, they collide and intermingle.⁷ Therefore, as Throsby's comments above highlight, there are challenges in conceptualising cultural value as a homogenous discourse, primarily due to the tensions between the articulation of value via an economical or outputs-based rhetoric, the subjectivity of value and culture, and the way that societies and governments approach policies and decision-making overall. I will explore this tension, through examining how bureaucracies rely on a range of methods and modes of *evaluation* in order to make evidence-based decisions concerning public investments that concern culture, cultural infrastructure and cultural policymaking. The value of

⁷ Crossick & Kaszynska, *Under Construction: towards a framework for cultural value*, p. 122.

culture, therefore, is subjected to a number of considerations when the importance of programs, activities and cultural initiatives are *defined* by their measurable outcomes and demonstrable impacts. This approach to decision-making and public value emphasises utility and privileges public participation, even though the value of culture is broader than measurables alone.

The development of cultural value theories and debates surrounding this term, as well the history of the term cultural value, are considered in greater detail in chapter two. However, in this thesis, cultural value is examined not with the intent of settling any debates surrounding definitional conjecture, but with regards to relationships and how to better reconcile value in terms of political, economic and social relations. It does this by drawing upon a series of Australian case studies to explore different, but related, dimensions of value relevant to culture.

Defining Culture

Before I provide an outline of the thesis, a clarification of some key definitions is necessary to better situate the varying conceptions of value and cultural value discourse. Firstly, determining what is meant by the term 'culture' is important because its definition fluctuates depending on the context in which it is used. An anthropological understanding of culture conceives it as a cognitive concept that refers to language, symbols, art, morals, customs, actions and events that form 'a complex whole...acquired

by man as a member of society.’⁸ Sociologists, such as Howard Becker, focus on the common experiences in people’s thinking, understanding and feeling to define culture ‘as the shared ways of a human social group,’ which make social worlds an object of enquiry.⁹ As one would expect, cultural studies specifically considers categories of culture, such as Raymond Williams’ distinction between culture as the ideal, the documentary and the social. Williams’ social definition of culture is particularly interesting as it refers to ‘a description of a particular way of life, which expresses certain meanings and values not only in art and learning but also in institutions and ordinary behaviour.’¹⁰

Yet the association of culture with ordinary behaviour is at odds with Matthew Arnold’s articulation of culture as ‘not as having its origin in curiosity, but as having its origin in the love of perfection; it is a *study of perfection*.’¹¹ According to the above definitions, culture may be both ordinary, involving the everyday and everyone, yet specific, and concerned with perfection, beneficent character and standards of wisdom and beauty. Toby Miller addresses this apparent schism between definitions of culture in the description of cultural fields of enquiry, stating that in cultural studies these meanings

⁸ Tylor, Edward, B., (1889) *Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Art, and Custom, Volume 1*, (3rd edition), Henry Holt and Company, New York, p. 1.

⁹ Becker, Howard S., (1986) ‘Culture: A Sociological View,’ *Doing Things Together: Selected Papers*, Northwestern University Press, Evanston IL, pp 11–24.

¹⁰ Raymond Williams’ definition of culture extends to three general categories. The *social* (outlined above), the *ideal*, ‘in which culture is a state or process of human perfection, in terms of absolute or universal values,’ and the *documentary*, in which, ‘culture is the body of intellectual and imaginative work [in which] human thought and experience are variously recorded.’ Williams, Raymond, (1961) *The Long Revolution*, Chatto & Windus, London, p. 57.

¹¹ Arnold specifies that culture’s link to perfection is characterised by ‘the moral and social passion for doing good,’ and therefore culture is an aid to ‘endless growth in wisdom and beauty,’ where humanity seeks to find its ‘ideal.’ Arnold, Matthew, (1875) *Culture and Anarchy: An Essay in Political and Social Criticism*, Smith, Elder & Company, London, pp. 7–12.

‘merge.’ He notes that, when understanding culture, ‘in order to understand how art works, you need to understand everyday life, and in order to understand everyday life, you have to understand how art works.’¹²

In postmodern literature, Gayatri Spivak’s postcolonial work concerning international politics reminds us that culture may also be a location where different explanations will collide and that this location does not offer a universal, essential truth nor complete methodological framework when navigating world politics.¹³ Similarly, Homi Bhabha’s cultural theory positions culture as an enactive site which has the ability to open a ‘third space’ where cultures meet, are re-read and re-historicised through processes of negotiation and hybridity (with each other).¹⁴ In these understandings, culture (and identity) are characterised as ongoing processes rather than existing a priori. In other contexts, such as foreign affairs policymaking, culture is value when it is conflated with the ability to link with strategic political concepts such as soft power, which is widely understood through Joseph Nye’s definition as ‘the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payment.’¹⁵ In the soft power paradigm, culture is understood primarily through its utility as a likely source of ‘attraction.’ Cultural soft

¹² Miller states that ‘by ‘culture’ most of us in the field would mean two things. First, what’s often thought of as an aesthetic inheritance or an aesthetic heritage, namely the world of arts. Second there is an understanding of culture which is more ethnographic, perhaps more anthropological. And for Miller in cultural studies understandings of ‘culture’ often merge.

Miller, Toby, (2016) ‘Toby Miller on Cultural Studies,’ in Edmonds, David & Warburton, Nigel (eds.), *Big Ideas in Social Science*, London: Sage, p. 12.

¹³ Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty, (2012) *An Aesthetic Education in the Era of Globalization*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge and Massachusetts, p. 122. Note: This perspective is from a constructivist school of theory that is an ‘alternative’ viewpoint in International Relations scholarship.

¹⁴ Bhabha, Homi K., (1994) *The Location of Culture*, Routledge, London and New York, p. 55.

¹⁵ Nye, Joseph Jr., (2004) *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, Public Affairs: Perseus Book Group, USA, p. x.

power, therefore, can be strategically deployed on behalf of nations to service public diplomacy needs in a contemporary global climate.

Whether articulating culture as an aspect of life, auxiliary tool or an inherent process, acknowledging these perspectives highlights how the status and definition of culture is not unanimous across various scholars or applications. Julian Meyrick et al. usefully summarise the problem with defining culture when they note that it 'is a word that carries meanings of all kinds ... culture is everywhere, not because everything is culture, but because the word itself is used in a seemingly limitless range of situations to cover an unruly tribe of ideas and instances.'¹⁶ Rather than conclusively defining culture itself, this thesis approaches culture through Paquett and Beauregard's delineation of intersections that distinguish between the registers of the aesthetic, the anthropological, and the arts and heritage. Paquett and Beauregard describe these three cultural registers as occurring within the context of artistic output, a way of life and a subject of enquiry. In the aesthetic register, culture is understood in the *context of artistic output* and is used to qualify or mark 'differences and similarities in taste and status within social groups.'¹⁷ In the anthropological register, culture is articulated *as a way of life* grounded 'by language, religion, custom, time and space.'¹⁸ In arts and heritage, culture is a *subject of enquiry as both art and heritage*, especially within

¹⁶ Meyrick et al. argue that the pervasiveness of culture is due to the range of contexts in which it is used such as Culture as Thing, Culture as Category and how culture is used as a metaphor. They state that culture is, 'simultaneously everywhere and somewhere. It is found in particular objects and activities, and also in everything human beings encounter on a daily basis.' Meyrick et al., (2018) *What Matters? Talking Value in Australian Culture*, pp. 3–11.

¹⁷ See Paquett, Jonathon & Beauregard, Devin, (2018) 'Cultural Policy in Political Science Research,' in Durrer, Victoria, Miller, Toby & O'Brien, Dave, (eds.) *The Routledge Handbook of Global Cultural Policy*, Routledge, New York, pp. 21–22.

¹⁸ Ibid.

political philosophy from the works of Plato through to Jacques Rancière.¹⁹ Many of the cases I discuss in later chapters concern the *connections* between artistic output (which resides in an aesthetic register) and culture as a subject of enquiry (which resides in a register of arts and heritage). This usage, therefore, echoes culture's ability to be either a product, activity or content (as is commonly adopted in understandings of the cultural economy or cultural diplomacy), but is also a connective theme that social responses, relationships and dialogue might have in common. This understanding, thus, positions culture as inhabiting a dynamic, or even interstitial space that straddles a number of disciplinary boundaries. Cultural value frames this research, yet I challenge its conceptualisation to better understand the contributions that culture makes across disciplinary boundaries.

Following this understanding of culture, in this thesis, the term 'cultural value' refers to the wider discourse of cultural value surrounding the ways in which culture is articulated and justified in the public realm, traditionally within an epistemological context that treats culture as 'object.' The public realm which I primarily focus on is the Australian public sector that is directly involved in cultural policy, and includes attention to a range of government entities from Federal to municipal levels, as well as government agencies such as the Australia Council for the Arts. From this context, the particular Australian case studies I have elected to focus on are representative of where culture is currently officially 'curated' and where value is *overtly* pursued.²⁰ These include the domains of

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ These case studies are introduced in detail later in this chapter.

cultural policy, cultural diplomacy and soft power. These domains are also important because the curation of culture in these areas has taken on heightened significance over the past decade or so, due to the more strategic approach to culture informed by the rapid and dispersed exchange of information, ideas and content in the knowledge economy that brought knowledge, and culture, to the centre of production, consumption and, consequently, power.²¹

Culture and the Knowledge-based Economy: the Political, Economic and Social Contexts of Cultural Value

Associated with new-growth economics, the term knowledge-based economy refers to the advanced practice of production evident in major world economies and the corresponding revolution of how information is used.²² The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines the knowledge-based economy as 'economies which are directly based on the production, distribution and use of knowledge and information.'²³ Roberto Unger outlines the evolving use of technology

²¹ Attributed to the work of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the knowledge economy is also referred to as the global knowledge-based economy or the knowledge-based economy. Powell and Snellman, however, state that the historical origins of the broader label of the knowledge economy date back to the 1960s with the focus on science-based industries and how they contributed to social and economic change. See: OECD, (1996) *The Knowledge-based Economy*, (Discussion Paper), Science, Technology and Industry Outlook, Paris.

²² New-growth theories in economics emphasise the role of knowledge in economic development, the state as a facilitator of conditions and infrastructure to maximise the potential of human capital and human capital accumulation through an emphasis on people's cognitive skills. Knowledge-based economic systems, therefore, can be understood through a new-growth theory framework because of the focus on knowledge and the people who produce knowledge. Gera, Surendra et al., (1998) *The Emerging Global Knowledge-based Economy Trends and Forces*, pp. 1–2.

²³ 'The Knowledge-based Economy,' *OECD*, <https://www.oecd.org/sti/sci-tech/1913021.pdf> [accessed 01 May 18], p. 7. Stingl also highlights the utilitarian nature of the knowledge-based economy is his sociological characterisation of it as a '...device, tool or technique that can be used to benefit economic production and market exchange.' See Stingl, Alexander, (2013) 'Knowledge-based Economy,' *Research Starters: Sociology* (Online Edition), EBSCOhost [accessed 01 May 18].

and the power of those who control the flow and production of information (entrepreneurial and technological elites) when he describes the shift in the knowledge economy from primary emphasis on one sector—manufacturing—to that of many sectors,

[t]he knowledge economy is confined but it is no longer restricted to any particular sector of production. It does not even have a privileged association with industry, by contrast to services or agriculture, as mechanized manufacturing and industrial mass production did. It appears in every sector -- in knowledge-intensive services and precision, scientific industry as well as in high-technology industry.²⁴

The pervasiveness of knowledge is transformative to industrial economies as the knowledge economy focuses on intangible, human capital. For Australia, the role of government in the knowledge economy concerns what it can do to leverage these economic conditions and create circumstances under which innovation and skills of its citizens are developed and commoditised. Therefore, in the context of a knowledge-based economy, research into the pursuit of public value and how institutions leverage the value of culture for political, economic and social gain in Australia must consider how the knowledge of culture (and its value) operates *across* sectors, rather than be confined to the examination of arts and culture as a discrete industry.²⁵ As a result, if knowledge is indeed non-linear as the knowledge economy proposes and we are in the era of a knowledge economy, an examination into cultural value today might also be

²⁴ Unger, Roberto Mangabeira, (2019) *The Knowledge Economy*, Verso, London and New York, p. 6.

²⁵ Public value is explored further in chapter two.

similarly wide-ranging in terms of its disciplinary perspective.²⁶ Therefore, the case studies introduced in this chapter shortly, although seemingly disparate, form the basis of an examination into how the value of culture might permeate across social and political contexts and beyond its traditional, economics-based articulation. The thesis therefore, will incorporate analyses involving political, economic and social contexts (which I refer to as dimensions). Oliver and Walmsley's discussion concerning the public value of the arts is critical to my thesis's interdisciplinary foundation, which notes that

...value is emergent, not fixed and given; but as a dialectic of practice and its productions (the spaces of social relations), it is always under negotiation and in-the-making, and contingent on the multiple experiences and expressions of inter-subjectivity.²⁷

²⁶ The notion that knowledge and information is multi-directional (as opposed to being linear) is a common theme in conceptions of the knowledge economy. Central to this premise is the concept of global flows which feature in much of the literature surrounding globalisation. Appadurai popularised the concept of global flows in 1990 in his work concerning the global cultural economy. See Appadurai, Arjun, (1990) 'Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy,' *Theory, Culture & Society*, Vol. 7, no. 2/3, Jun pp. 295–310.

Global bodies such as the OECD would later adopt the language of flows to refer to how information flows in and out across domestic and cross-border contexts. See OECD, (2004) *Global Knowledge Flows and Economic Development*, OECD Publication Services, Paris.

More recently, the global flow of data has taken on heightened significance making the status of knowledge even more irregular, as more complex relationships form due to a broader range of participants in the 'web of flows.' See Manyika, James, et al., (2016) 'Digital Globalisation: the new era of global flows,' McKinsey Global Institute, Feb, <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/digital-mckinsey/our-insights/digital-globalization-the-new-era-of-global-flows> [accessed 05 May 2018].

As a result, the conception of knowledge is reliant on applications and inputs across industries meaning that knowledge 'bases' are distributed amongst agents, institutions and knowledge fields. If knowledge is now distributed and flowing differently, logically, our knowledge of the value of culture also requires a range of disciplinary perspectives to more holistically understand the varying ways in which value can occur.

²⁷ Oliver, James & Walmsley, Ben, (2011) 'Assessing the Value of the Arts,' in Walmsley, Ben (ed.), *Key Issues in the Arts and Entertainment Industry*, Goodfellow Publishers Ltd, Oxford, p. 88.

Echoing the knowledge economy presence across multiple sectors and Oliver and Walmsley's dialectic-based consideration of value, my proposition of political, economic and social dimensions of analysis are also useful because each dimension offers different conceptual disciplinary perspectives on the question of value, which arise from cultural diplomacy (political), cultural economics (economic) and participatory arts practice (social). These perspectives, which are examined throughout each case study, provide the context with which to compare varying examples of how culture is valued in Australia today and how the value of culture is being developed, evaluated and used. This structure also allows for the comparative discussion of diverse stakeholders who contribute to the varying types of value with which culture is associated and the nature of these relationships. Comparing these perspectives and relationships in the later chapters of the thesis assist to answer the thesis's core research questions, which ask: how is the value of culture articulated and pursued by stakeholders in Australia today and how can the value of these connections (or relationships) between these stakeholders that occur over the course of cultural activity be better understood?

Approaching the Value of Culture in Australia: a Brief Introduction

There are several recent examples in Australia concerning how the value of culture has been emphasised in public contexts. In 2012, the Department of Defence referenced the arts, culture, creativity and power in its *Australia in the Asian Century* white paper and, in the same year, a comprehensive review was conducted of Australia Council for the

Arts by Gabrielle Trainor and James Angus.²⁸ In 2013, Australia released its second-ever National Cultural Policy (the first was released almost 20 years ago) and, also in 2013, the Australia Council Act was amended.²⁹ As a further signal of the expanding national interest surrounding culture, the then federal Minister for the Arts, George Brandis, announced in 2015 an unorthodox arts funding overhaul. This policy proposal featured a dedicated funding stream for cultural diplomacy activity. Although the *National Programme for Excellence in the Arts* (NPEA) was ultimately revised to make way for a grant program, Catalyst, that was discontinued in 2017, the Arts Ministry sought change with regard to how the arts were then funded in Australia and to increase the gains from the cultural ‘output’ of the arts.³⁰ These gains were to be pursued on the basis that the value of culture would be directly accountable to standards of excellence and linked to notions of soft power (via cultural diplomacy) and even corporate interests (through arts grants co-investment within an endowment program).³¹ Then, in 2017, the Department

²⁸ The white paper makes direct reference to how, ‘The arts, culture and creativity can broaden and strengthen Australia’s relationships in Asia, both formally and informally. Australia’s cultural strengths—as home to the world’s oldest living culture, and as a country that welcomes diversity—underpin values of respect, understanding and inclusion that help to connect people, business, institutions and governments,’ ‘Australia in the Asian Century White Paper,’ *Australian Government Department of Defence*,

http://www.defence.gov.au/whitepaper/2013/docs/australia_in_the_asian_century_white_paper.pdf [accessed 25 Mar 2018], p. 8.

The Australia Council review made a series of recommendations to the Australia Council to align its practices with 21st century ideals of excellence, innovation and responsiveness. See Trainor, Gabrielle & James, Angus, (2012) *Review of the Australia Council*, Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport, Canberra <http://nla.gov.au/nla.arc-134088> [accessed 25 Mar 2018]. This review is discussed in further detail in chapter five.

²⁹ Note: the 2013 Australia Council Act would come into force on 24 Jun 2014, with further amendments in 2014 and 2016. See *Australia Council Act 2013*, <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2016C00380> [accessed 11 Apr 2020].

³⁰ Westwood, Matthew, (2017), ‘Last arts grants as Catalyst winds up,’ *The Weekend Australian*, 03 Nov, <https://www.theaustralian.com.au/arts/last-arts-grants-as-catalyst-winds-up/news-story/dbf6187c76a933d8907f130ddf6b68a7> [accessed 25 Mar 2018].

³¹ My discussion of a message of change that the NPEA projected refers to change in terms of a departure from the way that arts funding was traditionally administered by the Australia Council. In its place, under the NPEA, there was a focus on excellence, more aligned to the aesthetic standards of ‘good’ as articulated in Arnold’s definition of culture. This focus on excellence, as Gilfillan and Morrow note, represents a pendulum swing ‘back towards the fundamental elitism of arts funding, and the retro rhetoric of

of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) commissioned an independent evaluation of its public diplomacy programming ahead of a forthcoming public diplomacy strategy to supersede the 2014–16 version.³² In November 2017, DFAT’s Foreign Policy White Paper highlighted Australia’s commitment to ‘[d]evelop[ing] a stronger “nation brand” to market our commercial, educational and cultural credentials in a competitive global market.’³³ In 2018, DFAT also announced a soft power review, with public submissions accepted until October 2018.³⁴ These examples demonstrate that, at a political and policy level in Australia, there are several departments that have recently or are currently examining the value of culture in terms of reform. Despite the variety in these reforms, they share a common motivation: an agenda that promotes the use of culture in a targeted manner to pursue specific outcomes that have specific political, economic or social agendas. But what does an outcomes-based cultural agenda look like in Australia today? To answer this question, I will briefly examine an applied example of cultural diplomacy to orientate the wider discussion of the research of this thesis.

excellence and nation that is used to justify this elitism.’ Gilfillan, Emily & Morrow, Guy, (2018) ‘Sustaining Artistic Practices Post George Brandis’s Controversial Australia Council Arts Funding Changes: cultural policy and visual artists’ careers in Australia,’ *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, Vol. 24, no. 2, p. 187–188.

³² ‘2016–17 Annual Report,’ DFAT, <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/corporate/annual-reports/Pages/department-of-foreign-affairs-and-trade-annual-report-2016-17.aspx> [accessed 04 Feb 2018], p. 89. Aside from the Public Diplomacy Strategy, further foreign policy that directly encompasses cultural assets is DFAT’s digital media strategy for 2016–2018, introduced above. Oversight of this strategy rests with the Public Diplomacy, Communications and Scholarship Division; however, it is articulated by DFAT as a whole-of-department agenda to assist ‘the department and others to communicate the Australian story more broadly.’ See ‘Digital Media Strategy 2016–2018,’ DFAT, pp. 1–3 and 16.

³³ The Foreign Policy White Paper considers marketing and the theme of nation-branding specifically within the context of soft power. ‘2017 Foreign Policy White Paper,’ DFAT, <https://www.fpwhitepaper.gov.au/> [accessed 04 Feb 2018]. Becoming a ‘stronger nation brand’ was touted by the Foreign Minister as one of the paper’s areas of focus. See (2017) ‘Opportunity, Security, Strength: The 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper,’ *Minister for Foreign Affairs*, Joint Media Release: 23 November, https://foreignminister.gov.au/releases/Pages/2017/jb_mr_171123.aspx [accessed 25 Mar 18].

³⁴ The scope of the review was to ‘...explore options for the Government to maximise [Australia’s] soft power, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region.’ See ‘Soft Power Review,’ DFAT, <https://dfat.gov.au/people-to-people/soft-power-review/Pages/soft-power-review.aspx> [accessed 11 Oct 2018].

Cultural diplomacy is a primary example of a key area that seeks to manage culture, whether it be cultural products, events and activities, content or relationships, and an area of growing interest in Australian foreign affairs. The exposition of cultural diplomacy also provides a relevant introduction to a history of complications and challenges in various cultural arenas, and many of these challenges are encountered by scholars today in the comparatively recent study surrounding cultural value discourse. This is because they both share an emphasis on outcomes and instrumentalised benefit and in terms of their design and evaluation, and they both seek to manage cultural environments.

Politics and Culture: The Utility of Value in Australian Cultural Diplomacy

To understand more about how the targeted use of culture and the narrowed definition of value operate, Australian cultural diplomacy is an important case study as it offers an introduction to the wider complexities that characterise cultural value discourse today. For example, the complications of a variety of sets of criteria in cultural diplomacy mean that culture's responsibility is 'stretched' to account for many outcomes yet, in terms of process, *how* these outcomes are achieved (and thus provide value) is less well defined. Australian cultural diplomacy, therefore, can assist in an analysis of the conceptual challenges within cultural value discourse, where culture, too, is beholden to a range of agendas and outcomes. If, in an Australian bureaucratic context, culture is predominately used to pursue specific outcomes, knowing how best to 'manage' culture would logically provide the most value in terms of state interests.

However, managing culture to pursue specific outcomes in a cultural diplomacy context relies on the state's ability to craft cultural activities, assets and initiatives to facilitate communication between domestic and international audiences that is of strategic benefit to the state. While communication may occur as a result of cultural diplomacy activity, the messages being received or communicated amongst stakeholders might not be aligned with the strategic objectives of the state, or only provide benefits many years into the future, making the value of cultural activities a complex calculation. While maximising the value of Australian cultural diplomacy is highly desirable to Australia as a means to support its broader policy objectives, value, as I discuss below, remains ill-defined, despite its connection to its wider foreign agenda.

To explore how culture is valued and pursued in cultural diplomacy, it is important to identifying the rationale of cultural diplomacy to further orientate this discussion. Cultural diplomacy is traditionally coordinated by states and consists of the 'exchange of ideas, information, art, and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding.'³⁵ In Australia, cultural diplomacy operates under the auspices of public diplomacy and is articulated as improving the nation's reputation by creating new networks and relationships.³⁶ This primarily occurs within the cultural industries and through exchange programs like the New Colombo Plan

³⁵ Cummings, Milton, (2003) *Cultural Diplomacy and the United States Government: A Survey*, Center for Arts and Culture, Washington D.C., p. 1.

³⁶ Cultural diplomacy is articulated by DFAT as an approach to pursue public diplomacy goals and objectives. 'Public Diplomacy Strategy 2014–2016,' DFAT, <http://dfat.gov.au/people-to-people/public-diplomacy/Pages/public-diplomacy-strategy.aspx> [accessed 04 Feb 2018], p. 5.

scholarship program.³⁷ However, culture's shifting ground means there is a need for contemporary understandings of cultural relationships that consider the creation and reconfiguration of spaces and frameworks that support where and how (cultural) initiatives operate today.

Furthermore, the value of cultural diplomacy within government agendas and portfolios varies across the globe. The result of this is that as a strategy, or even concept, there is disagreement regarding the definition and function of cultural diplomacy which leads to vague and even negative connotations surrounding its usage. Zamorano's comprehensive overview of the literature in this field notes that 'the definition of cultural diplomacy is almost as varied as the number of countries that claim to use it,'³⁸ while Arndt asserts it is 'ill-understood because it is complex, proliferant and multi-tasked.'³⁹

Despite the challenges in understanding what cultural diplomacy is, it is generally understood to have the potential to be *valuable* due to its ability to showcase a nation's

³⁷ The New Colombo Plan is a signature initiative of the Australian Government which aims to lift knowledge of the Indo Pacific in Australia by supporting Australian undergraduates to study and undertake internships in the region. It has an emphasis on creating a network of alumni across the globe. See, 'New Colombo Plan,' *DFAT*, <http://dfat.gov.au/people-to-people/new-colombo-plan/pages/new-colombo-plan.aspx> [accessed 09 Jan 2018].

³⁸ Zamorano's comprehensive overview of the literature in this field notes that 'the definition of cultural diplomacy is almost as varied as the number of countries that claim to use it.' Zamorano, Mariano Martín, (2016) 'Reframing Cultural Diplomacy: The Instrumentalization of Culture under the Soft Power Theory,' *Culture Unbound*, Vol. 8, no. 2, p. 169.

³⁹ Arndt, Richard, (2011) *The First Resort of Kings: American Cultural Diplomacy in the Twentieth Century*, Potomac Books, Washington D.C., p. xii.

assets, build networks and function as a pathway to exercise power.⁴⁰ Furthermore, the practice of cultural diplomacy is widespread, with the overwhelming majority of nations in the world subsidising initiatives that exert cultural influence.⁴¹ The problem of value within cultural diplomacy is partly due to the way in which positivist International Relations conceptualises culture as a foreign policy tool, which typically isolates or compartmentalises it in order to insert it into the domain of diplomacy and international affairs. Baylis notes that for International Relations practitioners and scholars '[d]eciding what culture is and isolating its influence is the key problem.'⁴² In an IR context, culture is instrumentalised, and although it may be promoted, it may also be downplayed or relegated within political processes.

Conceptually, the value or use of culture is positioned as auxiliary or as an alternative approach in mainstream International Relations, where 'as an analytic tool [of international politics, it] can be problematic... because [cultures] are too complex and dynamic.'⁴³ This attention to the conceptualisation of culture as dynamic and occupying an oscillating space highlights the difficulty of attempting to contain it within specific (literal and definitional) boundaries. With regards to the political domain, this

⁴⁰ See Zamorano, (2016) *Reframing Cultural Diplomacy*, p. 167 and Bound, Kirsten, Briggs, Rachel, Holden, John & Jones, Samuel, (2007) *Cultural diplomacy – culture is a central component of international relations. It's time to unlock its full potential*, DEMOS, London.

⁴¹ Indices such as the Soft Power 30, compiled by Portland, provide an annual ranking of soft power across the globe. It describes its index as 'the world's most comprehensive comparative assessment of global soft power.' In this index, culture is one of the key sources of soft power and a sub-category under which Portland assesses a nation's soft power assets. 'The Soft Power 30: A Global Ranking of Soft Power,' Portland, <https://softpower30.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/The-Soft-Power-30-Report-2017-Web-1.pdf> [accessed 18 Apr 2018], pp. 10 and 38.

⁴² Baylis, John, Smith, Steve, & Owens, Patricia, (eds.) (2008) *The Globalisation of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations*, 4th Edition, Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York, p. 420.

⁴³ Ibid.

perspective not only positions culture as heterogeneous but frames both its instability and oscillation as potentially risky and often undesirable due to the element of unpredictability. This volatility means that there is risk, or at the very least uncertainty, in the way that culture is controlled, monitored and valued as a tool of International Relations scholars and policymakers. Yúdice notes that the characteristic of instrumentalisation provides an epistemic framework that understands culture as an expedient or resource that can be mobilized for many purposes and requires management.⁴⁴ This is a key feature of many policy-based approaches to cultural value in Australia, such as Australia's Public Diplomacy Strategy, where expediency is not only expressed through the lens of soft power (in a political application) but, in terms of culture and politics more broadly, requires those deploying culture to articulate demonstrable outcomes to justify it as a source of value (to the public).⁴⁵

The manifestation of cultural value and challenge of obtaining ideal cultural outcomes using the best methods is not unique to Australian cultural diplomacy. Culture also has the ability to contribute to the achievement of specific economic and social outcomes and goals (of the government or agencies). Therefore, the role of politics is considered in this thesis, as well as an examination of the economic and social considerations of cultural value which are also areas that are topics of debate amongst policy practitioners and scholars. Examining cultural value through these three broad dimensions (although they cannot truly be thought of as independent) assists us in identifying narratives of

⁴⁴ Yúdice, (2003) *The Expediency of Culture*, pp. 1–4.

⁴⁵ See, 'Public Diplomacy Strategy 20142016,' *DFAT*. Note, this remains the latest policy as of July 2020.

value, such as the optimistic and normative belief in the good of culture (good for the nation, good for the economy, good for people) that is shared across them. In cultural policy, while there are varying perceptions of what the ideal cultural agency consists of, or what it should primarily emphasise (as demonstrated in the case of the NPEA in chapter five), there is also a strong emphasis upon cultural utility which politicises culture in terms of its instrumentality and ability to achieve gains for a government and (assumedly) for its people. A further provocation to the concept of value is also evident in the social dimension of culture, where the arts-based paradigm of participatory art or socially engaged practice conceives engagement as a source of cultural worth. The social value of culture may be described in terms that are just as utilitarian as the economic and political perspectives concerning cultural value, but serves a different purpose: to learn, explore or engage specific individuals and communities through artistic content.

On the surface, these political, policy and arts-based dimensions share a general goal of 'improvement.' However, culture and cultural value function differently within these discursive registers. Therefore, in the chapters to follow, this thesis considers in-depth examples of how cultural value operates across these political, economic and social dimensions. I envisage that tracking value across these contexts will result in multifaceted outcomes and relationships that regularly evolve, particularly when applied to the examples of cultural diplomacy, policy and arts practice. How I track this value throughout the chapters to follow is described next, as I outline the structure and methods of this thesis.

The public use of culture as a means to generate value (of various forms) is not a new phenomenon.⁴⁶ In a political sense, the negotiation and projection of particular imagery pertaining to certain countries, populations or even civic ideals, dates to ancient Greek and Roman times.⁴⁷ In modern usage, the political negotiation of national imagery continues in public diplomacy, which is the exercise of communicating directly and indirectly with public audiences that is ingrained in the diplomatic fabric of the state today.⁴⁸ In an economic sense, culture is positioned as a valuable asset to communities and individuals through the promotion of the creative industries, which are themselves associated with a raft of public benefits from employment, urban and regional regeneration, tourism and the production and consumption of cultural goods. However, when comprehending 'culture' as a strategic aim via structured activities in terms of cultural policy generally, or within a more specific application of cultural diplomacy, it becomes a more complex exercise. This is partly due to the aforementioned narrow and imprecise status of culture in disciplines that directly engage with public value and culture, like International Relations and economics, which are outcomes-focused.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Schneider points to 1785 when statesman, Thomas Jefferson 'recognised the potential for cultural expression to shape international opinion about the fledgling republic.' Schneider, Cynthia P., (2006) 'Cultural Diplomacy: Hard to define, but you'd know it if you saw it,' *Brown Journal of World Affairs*, Vol. 13, no. 1, Fall/Winter, p. 191.

⁴⁷ Byrne, Caitlin, (2016) 'Public diplomacy,' in Smith, Steve, Hadfield, Amelia & Dunne, Tim (eds.), *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*, (3rd ed.) Oxford University Press, Oxford, p. 170.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ The link between public value as a responsibility of public management originally conceived by Mark Moore in 1995 as the imperative of governments to conceive the value it creates for its citizens, and its relationship to the cultural sector and cultural policy, is discussed in further detail in chapter two.

This complexity is also evident in (cultural) content-focused disciplines, such as cultural studies, where the aesthetic variability amongst types of cultural expression can make it more challenging for those studying cultural value to establish patterns between art forms that might inform a general structure of value shared by cultural activities.⁵⁰ Culture's interaction with subjective content like art, and its reception by audiences, also causes relationships operating in the aesthetic register to be highly unique (or at least fluid), largely because they depend on individual (varying) perceptions. This means when dealing with the strategic deployment of cultural 'assets' such as artistic content, it can be difficult to control attempts to exercise cultural power across geo-politically diverse locations, especially if the conception of value (of culture) is inconsistently understood across scholarly literature to begin with. These complexities explain the circumstances of why, perhaps, cultural value has come to be so tightly articulated.

However, this thesis challenges the over-emphasis on an instrumentalised perspective of cultural value that occurs in Australia, on the basis that it places the function and understanding of culture within a frame that is too narrow. Accordingly, the interactions and tensions between the various governmental and arts-based understandings of culture point to the wider problem: that the technocratic and more democratic processes of culture do not speak the same 'language.' I argue that by reconceptualising our understandings of cultural value today, particular attention should be paid to

⁵⁰ See Zamorano, (2016) *Reframing Cultural Diplomacy*, pp. 168-169. For further information regarding the definitional variation of cultural diplomacy also refer to Mark, Simon, (2009) *A Greater Role for Cultural Diplomacy*, Netherlands Institute of International Relations, Clingendael, Netherlands; and Schneider, Cynthia P., (2005) 'Culture Communicates: US Diplomacy that Works,' in Melissen Jan, (ed.), *The New Public Diplomacy: Soft Power in International Relations*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, pp. 147–168.

overlapping and differing agendas within these registers, in order to determine a way for them to interact more meaningfully.

By reconceptualising aspects of cultural value, this thesis emphasises the valuable, transformative potential of culture using examples from the arts. I argue that this potential is currently under-utilised in Australian cultural and foreign policy.⁵¹ In the scholarly context concerning the valuation of culture, its under-utilisation is linked to two wider issues in current cultural policy debates which Eleonora Belfiore summarises as ‘cultural value and the challenge of its measurement.’⁵² As a response to these debates, my analysis focuses on how culture operates and is evaluated within Australia given recent political developments regarding the roles of culture. In doing so, the case study chapters analyse examples of how culture is valued in Australia, especially within the context of the knowledge economy.

Structuring the examination in this manner means that the current theoretical and practical boundaries of cultural value concerning politics (through cultural diplomacy), economics (through the rhetoric of the creative economy and impact agenda) and the social (participatory arts) can be compared. Doing this means that the patterns of how culture is exploited and contained for specific purposes are discernible. For cultural

⁵¹ Fischer-Lichte introduces the concept of transformative aesthetics in an edited volume as a reference point for the discussion of art internationally and the kinds of perceptions, impact and transformations it elicits on the recipient during the aesthetic process. Therefore, aesthetic experience can be understood as a particular kind of liminal experience which allows for ‘new and potentially disturbing experiences.’ Fischer-Lichte, Erika & Wihstutz, Benjamin, (eds.) (2018) *Transformative Aesthetics*, Routledge, Oxon and New York, p. 2.

⁵² Belfiore, (2015) ‘Foreword,’ in *Making Culture Count: The Politics of Cultural Measurement*, p. ix.

diplomacy, this is the pursuit of soft-power objectives. In economics, it is the increase of capital or opportunities that will provide future avenues for growth. For the social dimension, it is for engagement and altruistic goals, such as social cohesion. These characterisations support my claim that culture, in these examples, predominantly operates in a restrictive manner. As a result, I will be challenging the focus upon utility as discerned in the positivist International Relations approach to culture and the primacy of the creative economy rhetoric that is evident in cultural policies in Australia.

Ultimately, the following chapters of this thesis consider the possibility for changes in the way culture is pursued within the policy arena in the dominant, neoliberal system that characterises developed western nations like Australia.⁵³ As an ideological and policy model, neoliberalism is used throughout this thesis to refer to the ideology that informs governance related to free-market capitalism, economic growth and competition and reduced government investment in favour of private-sector initiatives, which was set in motion in the 1970s across developed nations. Although variants of neoliberalism differ across countries, principles of rational self-interest and competition,

⁵³ Scholars such as Weller and O'Neill note that Australia, as an advanced economy, is integrated into a transatlantic neoliberal project, but argue the neoliberal lens should not be applied uncritically, especially due to variations in the definitions of neoliberalist and neoliberalism. See Weller, Sally & O'Neill, Phillip, (2014) 'An argument with neoliberalism: Australia's place in a global imaginary,' *Dialogues in Human Geography*, Vol. 4, no. 2, p. 107.

Tonts and Haslam-Mackenzie also trace the impact of neoliberalism in Australia in policymakers and governance in the 1980s, which involved favouring the role of market forces. They describe how the effects of neoliberal policy approaches contributed to social disadvantage and social upheaval, leading to austerity approaches which signified a shift in the initial neoliberal market-orientated approach of the 1980s. More recently, there is a recognition of what Tonts and Haslam-Mackenzie term a 'softer' form of neoliberalism that acknowledges the limits of the free market.

See Tonts, Matthew & Haslam-Mackenzie, Fiona, (2005) 'Neoliberalism and Changing Regional Policy in Australia,' *International Planning Studies*, Vol. 10, no. 3–4, pp. 183–200.

attributed to Adam Smith, are central to this ideology.⁵⁴ To consider the possibility of change in the cultural policy arena, I offer a contribution to knowledge that suggests modifications to the articulation of cultural value that are more inclusive of interrelationships, networks and aesthetics and propose the use of symbiosis to conceptualise these interactions.⁵⁵ The question of how to navigate cultural value, especially within the context of the knowledge economy and neoliberalism, is an evolving subject and its impact within cultural policy is a continued topic of academic and governmental debate.⁵⁶ By examining the variety of influences that impact upon this field, I contend that more interdisciplinary inquiry between politics, economics, cultural studies and arts-based approaches is required in order to better understand the conditions and interactions that characterise cultural value today.

⁵⁴ See Smith, Adam, (1880) *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, Clarendon Press, Oxford.

⁵⁵ This articulation of cultural value resides in Belfiore and Meyrick et al.'s discussion that 'value' cannot only be contained or accurately conceived through the logic of the market, or economic language, which is developed further in chapter two. See Belfiore, Eleonora, (2015) 'Impact', 'Value' and 'Bad Economics': Making sense of the problem of value in the arts and humanities,' *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice*, Vol. 14, no. 1, pp. 95–110; and Meyrick et al., (2018) *What Matters? Talking Value in Australian Culture*.

⁵⁶ Redden's work, for example, identifies the link between instrumental cultural policy and neoliberalism and provides useful context to this thesis, as he discusses how value is described in terms of benefits of the arts' utility. He states '...[the] funding of cultural activity is seen as an investment with possible kinds of quantifiable yield... capitalism, above all, requires measures of value for its calculative transactions to take place...' Redden, Guy, (2015) 'Culture, Value and Commensuration: The knowledge politics of indicators,' *Making Culture Count: The Politics of Cultural Measurement*, pp. 28 and 38.

I have highlighted the logic of accumulation present in the tendency to describe value in commensurate terms, to contextualise the mentions of neoliberalism with regard to cultural value and cultural policy that occur throughout this thesis, to denote a set of circumstances where a rise in instrumentality in arts and cultural policy effectively, as Gray, notes 'le[ads] to a commodification of public policy through the creation of the ideological conditions within which exchange-value becomes increasingly favoured over use-value in the creation, implementation and evaluation of policies.' Gray, Clive, (2007) 'Commodification and instrumentality in cultural policy,' *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, Vol. 13, no. 2, p. 203. From this point on, the thesis aims to examine alternatives to exchange-value rhetoric in the articulation of the value of culture.

Outline of the Thesis

In order to conduct an analysis of the value of culture in an Australian context, the structure of this thesis was developed around the intersections of politics, economics, culture and the arts and is transdisciplinary in nature. This is reflected in the structure of the thesis, which consists of a literature review, in chapter two, and the development of the conceptual context concerning relationships, in chapter three. The discussion of the methodology occurs in chapter four, which draws together how the considerations and challenges of cultural value and relationships explored in previous chapters will be discussed and applied in the remainder of the thesis. Consequently, the remaining chapters of the thesis consist of case studies that develop, respectively, the political, economic and social dimensions of cultural value that I introduced above. Chapter five considers DFAT and the NPEA, chapter six examines the City of Melbourne and chapter seven analyses a performance work from theatre collective, Rimini Protokoll. While discussion occurs in each of these chapters, chapter eight analyses my findings further and summarises the thesis's overall argument. A detailed breakdown is provided below to outline the key issues that will be addressed in each chapter.

Chapter two conducts an in-depth analysis of the nature of the debates surrounding cultural value introduced earlier in this chapter. This is done to better understand the challenges of navigating different forms of value within the one discourse and to examine how cultural value might alternatively operate in policy and scholarly contexts. One of the fundamental problems in this debate is that there are competing notions of how to understand cultural value, depending on who is seeking to benefit from it, and I

argue in this chapter that there is a lack of sustained attention to the relationships between the stakeholders involved in this context. The examination of the literature also discusses how the narrative of instrumentalisation is the dominant means by which cultural value is currently articulated in Australia today, especially from the perspective of the public sector.

Chapter three outlines how symbiosis provides a more straightforward and concise manner with which to approach the relationships that are constructed through cultural activities. Based upon ecological relationships found in the field of biology, I propose cultural symbiosis as a conceptual metaphor that serves as a provocation for practitioners, public servants and scholars to compare and understand the ‘work’ in this field. Lakoff and Johnson propose that the power of the conceptual metaphor lies in its ability to alter the conceptual system and the perceptions and actions that the system gives rise to.⁵⁷ I propose that the culture of cultural value can be changed through the more comprehensive introduction of cultural symbiosis that develops an emphasis on the social reality of valuing culture. This social reality lies in attention to relationships and interactions forged over the course of cultural activities.

Due to the long-term nature of the goals that are articulated by governments (in terms of cultural and arts policy and cultural diplomacy), I anticipate that cultural symbiosis

⁵⁷ However, from the outset it is important to stress that cultural symbiosis is not an ontological metaphor that imposes an entity structure; rather, it rejects this objectivist model (which Lakoff & Johnson state are bound by fixed relationships) and encourages an emphasis on an experiential basis of relationships. See chapter three for a more detailed discussion of conceptual metaphors. Lakoff, George & Johnson, Mark (1980) *Metaphors We Live By*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago IL, pp. 131 and 220.

may also provide a means to better track how relationships evolve over time. As a result, this thesis increases the emphasis on the creation and trajectory of relationships within cultural activities to help us to better understand the value of culture. I also propose that the use of relational categories allows input from a variety of sources to be incorporated into examinations of the value of culture. These sources include aesthetic contributions, policy propositions and government priorities regarding the use of culture. I argue that it is through further analysis and interrogation of relationships and networks that the broader aims of diplomacy and cultural policy can be more strategically realised and assessed and the scholarship of cultural value is enhanced.

As a conceptual metaphor provoking us to think differently about cultural relationships, cultural symbiosis also functions as a type of exploratory research to provide an improved way to analyse the public value of culture.⁵⁸ In this approach, arts and government-based perspectives are combined to overcome the instrumental/intrinsic divide and the common, instrumentalist understanding of culture by governments and institutions that, as Belfiore notes, places pressure on the cultural sector in that the arts have had to 'attach' themselves to achieving policy outcomes that carry 'a heftier political weight,' such as economic and social benefits to society.⁵⁹ The divide between

⁵⁸ See chapter two for a discussion of public value.

⁵⁹ Belfiore makes this claim with regard to the British public sector's focus on instrumentality and notes that in academia, the expression 'instrumental cultural policy' can be traced back to the early 1990s in response to cultural policy making trends in the 1980s. Belfiore, Eleonora, (2004) 'Auditing Culture. The Subsidised Cultural Sector in the New Public Management,' *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, Vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 183–202.

McCarthy, Kevin F., Ondaatje, Elizabeth H., Zakaras, Laura, & Brooks, Arthur, (2005) 'Gifts of the muse. Reframing the debate about the benefits of the arts,' *Rand Corporation*, https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2005/RAND_MG218.pdf [accessed 13 Feb 2020], pp. xi–xii.

instrumental/intrinsic claims of value is linked to how the public funding of culture and the arts is often argued on the basis of a 'higher,' instrumental benefit to society rather than, less tangibly, the unique or intrinsic worth of the arts and culture.⁶⁰ The instrumental/intrinsic divide with regards to the value of culture refers to the tendency of governments to justify arts and cultural spending on the basis of instrumental arguments rather than considering, or adjacently considering, the intrinsic worth of the arts and culture. Central to this divide is the rise of instrumental cultural policy which many scholars discuss in relation to the widespread economic challenges of the 1980s in western economies.⁶¹

Chapter four describes the research design of the thesis, and provides further details into how I conducted my multi-method, case study research. With

Belfiore, Eleonora, (2006) 'The Unacknowledged Legacy: Plato, the *Republic* and cultural policy,' *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, Vol. 12, no. 2, pp. 229–244.

⁶⁰ McCarthy et al. note a similar trend in America to what Belfiore identifies in the UK where, by the early 1990s, the pressure to articulate the public value of the arts increased, resulting in a public sector emphasis on instrumental benefits. They note that the instrumental/intrinsic divide operates in a binary form that privileges the social and economic goals of the arts, while other intrinsic benefits are downplayed—even though most people-policy advocates acknowledge the enriching effect they have on people's lives. They, too, note the link between instrumental public policy and a rise in a quantitative approach to public sector management. Belfiore refers to this as the 'audit society.'

However, this schism between types of value, in which instrumental/intrinsic value (of culture) is debated, has philosophical roots that date back to Platonic and Aristotelian conceptualisations of art, which Belfiore considers in detail. In moral philosophy, a related typology of value theory exists in axiology which regards the ontological status of value through contemplation of an intrinsic/instrumental distinction. This is concerned with that which is 'good' and 'good for' as an evaluative aspect of classifying value underpinned by metaethical exposition. Due to the scope of this thesis, an in depth inquiry to the philosophical status of value is not considered in detail in this thesis.

See McCarthy et al. *Gifts of the Muse*, and 'Value Theory,' (2016) *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy Archive*, Fall, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2016/entries/value-theory/> (accessed 12 Feb 2021).

⁶¹ With relation to Scandinavian cultural policy, Vestheim describes this context and the emphasis on culture as a means rather than an end in itself and defines instrumental cultural policy as 'us[ing] cultural ventures and cultural investments as a means or instrument to attain goals in other than cultural areas.' See Vestheim, Geir, (1994) 'Instrumental cultural policy in Scandinavian countries: A critical historical perspective,' *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, Vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 64–65.

consideration of the case studies that feature in later chapters of the thesis, chapter four further elucidates how the diverse set of case studies are linked and why a transdisciplinary approach was necessary to allow me to more comprehensively analyse the circumstances and themes surrounding cultural value in Australia today. The selection of discourse data (concerning cultural value), is also outlined in further detail in this chapter. The data across the three case studies varies. This includes government annual reports, policy proposals, strategic plans, post-event evaluations and feedback, as well as performance analysis and socially based theories of art and culture.

To develop the ecological approach further within the discursive context of cultural value and to examine relationships in practice, the later chapters of the thesis analyse three case studies that demonstrate how culture has been co-opted, either successfully and/or unsuccessfully, to provide a representative sample demonstrating how current cultural narratives are arranged and prioritised. The case studies in chapters five, six and seven also provide particular insight into the narratives surrounding the operation of culture within Australian government policy and the arts, and highlight competing notions and contextualisations of cultural value. The diversity of case studies, with examples from the (proposed and current) policy context and the performing arts, also provides an insight into the distinct roles of culture that are found within the domains of the creative economy, cultural diplomacy and cultural relations. From the policymakers to the artists themselves, analysing the various

motivations across these fields demonstrates just how different cultural activities can be perceived, articulated and strategically deployed. This diversity indicates why a more multimodal, even rhizomatic approach to culture could be beneficial as a means to align these various 'knowledges' in a manner that is more holistically integrated, in order to better understand cultural value in the context of the knowledge-based economy.

The first case study is a document analysis of a cultural policy from the Ministry for the Arts in Australia, the National Programme for Excellence in the Arts, that attempted to tap into these political and economic lines of inquiry. I then thematically cross-reference the policy to the Public Diplomacy Strategy 2014–16 from DFAT and DFAT annual reports from the years 2013–2017. My use of supporting documents from DFAT assist in assessing the wider milieu that the Australian government operates within concerning its strategic use of culture and how value is understood. By analysing these tensions, I discover the structural double bind that contemporary cultural diplomacy and cultural policy ideologically encounters.

I chose an example of a controversial cultural policy as it is representative of the wider complexities that occur when the contexts of change, valuing culture and politics intertwine. As a result, this case study helps to explore the structural contradictions that the arts (especially the public role of arts and culture) encounter when they directly interact within economic and political domains.

The policy proposal is of particular interest to discussions concerning how to best value culture, as the controversy surrounding the NPEA evoked a range of responses from the cultural sector and the public, which in turn provide additional materials for examination beyond the policy itself. The additional materials that I consulted in this case study include related media coverage that discusses the ramifications of the policy proposal and the public's response, and several academic papers that explore the NPEA with relation to Australian arts funding, cultural policy and politicisation of the arts.

The second case study in chapter six discusses the application of the creative economy today through an analysis of the City of Melbourne's (CoM) policy goal of being a creative city. It reviews council plans from 2009 to date to explain how the council articulates and measures its cultural output. Despite a long-ranging attention to culture in the council's strategic plans, its value is defined in economic terms that measure sector size and the amount of cultural output generated as the primary means of describing the contributions that culture makes in the city.

The third case study, in chapter seven, consists of a performance analysis of *100% City*, a work created by European theatre collective, Rimini Protokoll. As a qualitative inquiry, it introduces the possibility of arts-based research as I argue that the case study has the potential to critically reflect on how cultural value might operate in a social sense, through attention to the various relationships

that occur as a result of this participatory arts project. This evaluation is a different kind of case study, as it examines aesthetic content and creative development processes rather than policy and government documentation. It suggests that cultural value (and indeed policy) would benefit from considering *how* sources of culture are involved in 'world making,' fostering mutual understanding and hence, providing additional types of value. By deconstructing and reconstructing the practices of artists such as Rimini Protokoll, my analysis offers new ways of engaging with the political and economic systems they are enmeshed within. In the aesthetic register, the consideration of Rimini Protokoll's work reveals that notions of cultural engagement are displayed, reconfigured and played with, rather than conclusively defined.

The findings I discuss in chapter eight demonstrate that the contributions that culture makes, or intends to make, exceed the typical, instrumental vocabulary of cultural policy and political science. However, despite the complex and sometimes intangible influences that culture has on people and societies, a major issue when valuing culture (in the public sense) is that it is largely justified through the rhetoric of utility and what it can do for the nation, especially in terms of soft power/public diplomacy outcomes or the expansion of the creative economy. To address this throughout the case studies, I provide symbiotic insight of the creation of networks and relationships formed within the (expanding) contexts of cultural activities. This task provides valuable insight into the current function and operation of cultural value, especially with regard to cultural

diplomacy and cultural relations in Australia. I conclude that focussing on the interactions that occur in this space, therefore, is an essential step in better articulating the types of value that culture can provide.

Although relationships will always be subject to the political and social contexts of the day, my research aims to provide a direction of travel to enhance the understanding and role that cultural value might play in a twenty-first century world. Given these considerations and the thesis outline above, the final section of this introduction presents the link between culture, instrumentality and cultural policy to highlight the areas in which I will broaden cultural value discourse.

Chapter 2 — Literature Review: The Problem of Value and the Political, Economic and Social Dimensions of Cultural Value

Try not to become a [person] of success but rather try to become a [person] of value ...[success] in our day [is one] who[m] gets more out of life than [they] put in. But [people] of value will give more than [they] receive.

—Albert Einstein¹

Despite Einstein's advice to question life and reality with a sense of curiosity and exploration, contemporary political discussions concerning the public value of culture are centred around the premise of getting *more* in terms of value for money. This conflates 'success,' with value. In this sense, cultural activities resulting from public arts subsidies are held accountable by funders and are required to 'punch above their weight' in terms of how the public sector, cultural and arts institutions, or artists themselves, are required to measure the impact of their work or to appraise their ability to deliver outcomes. Outlined below, many of these impacts and outcomes are articulated through an instrumental policy frame that links cultural activities to other policy spheres, such as those relating to politics, economics and social benefits. In the context of instrumental cultural policy, the justification of culture is largely dependent on its evaluation. *Efficiently* delivering outcomes becomes the way in which cultural

¹ Quote has been amended to avoid the use of sexist language, original quote is 'Try not to become a man of success but rather try to become a man of value. He is considered successful in our day who gets more out of life than he puts in. But a man of value will give more than he receives.' Einstein as quoted in Miller, William, (ed.) (1955) 'Death of a Genius: His fourth dimension, time, overtakes Einstein,' *Life Magazine*, Vol. 38, no. 18, 02 May, p. 64.

policies and programming are considered successful and is thus the basis of value to Australia and its public.

However, success and value are not equivalent. By requiring cultural programs and activities to deliver a number of pre-determined political, social and economic outcomes, the scope in which the value of culture is described is narrowed to positivist, and often positive, terms. Therefore, when examining cultural value, one must not only ask how the value of culture is conceived, but how is it measured? While many scholars are currently tackling these issues, a lack of unity across cultural value discourse indicates that the conceptual basis of this field is still developing. As a result, many aspects of this debate have not been fully interrogated, especially from an Australian perspective. In order to specify what is missing from these debates, the following review outlines the major contributions across this field and explores the reasons why there is a need for alternative ways to perceive value. Doing so provides a better understanding of the contributions that the arts and culture can make and advances cultural value discourse.

The structure of this chapter below includes an examination of the background and current state of contemporary cultural value discourse, and then outlines the three key dimensions in which I examine how cultural value manifests as political, economic and social and how instrumentalisation occurs across these dimensions. These dimensions also form the basis of my Australian case studies in chapters five, six and seven. The literature discussed is deliberately wide-ranging, as it considers cultural value discourse

alongside the political, economic and social dimensions in which expressions or the pursuit of cultural value are evident. This is necessary to introduce how culture is valued across these different dimensions depending on the perspectives or contexts in which it operates. The benefits and limitations of how culture is valued in each dimension also contributes to the gaps in cultural value literature which are summarised towards the end of the chapter. The examination of these dimensions is done in order to highlight the major themes and narratives that operate within cultural value discourse in applied contexts, but also to present how cultural value is prevalent within these dimensions, even when discourse does not typically make explicit reference to the examples that are discussed below. To begin this review, we first need to outline how cultural value discourse has evolved, as it orientates the discussions throughout the rest of the chapter.

Influential Debates concerning Cultural Value Discourse

From the 1980s onwards, public sector management of the arts in the United Kingdom and Australia shifted its focus towards non-arts outcomes as a means of articulating value for the state.² The development of cultural indicators during this period occurred ‘as a tool for expressing the role of culture in human development.’³ Many subsequent conversations and debates in the public sector have featured a narrative of instrumentality that shapes the discourse surrounding cultural value. Therefore, before

² Crossick & Kaszynska, *Under Construction: towards a framework for cultural value*, p. 121.

³ Badham as cited by Blomkamp in *Making Culture Count: The Politics of Cultural Measurement*, p. 14. Further to this, Blomkamp notes that cultural indicators have evolved as a form of social statistic to include “[a] range of numerical phenomena that measures economic, social and cultural aspects of the arts and cultural sector is usually what is meant today by the term ‘cultural indicator.’” Ibid., p. 15.

a discussion of cultural value, I will consider the broader context of value creation in the public realm in areas of management theory, policy and government which have informed the trajectory of cultural value discourse in recent scholarly debates.

The notion of public value is essential to this discussion but, like culture, it is a contested concept that is applied differently across academic, policy and institutional settings.⁴ As Alford and O'Flynn highlight, the variation in the meanings and pursuit of public value means that at a definitional level, a similar ambiguity is shared by cultural value (as closely linked to public value).⁵ However, public value can be traced back to its initial conception in the mid-nineties by public management scholar, Mark Moore, and the early research at the Kennedy School of Government that sought to import knowledge from private sector management to the management of government agencies.⁶ Public value as an abstract concept was less conceived in terms of a concrete definition, but be an underlying principle of value that would vary in particular circumstances and be envisioned by public managers in diverse ways. However, Moore does stipulate that public value should integrate politics, substance and administration.⁷ Others, such as

⁴ Furthermore, the same limitations faced by public value, including fragmentation, lack of coherence and different methodological approaches to how best to define and pursue what public value consists of also apply to cultural value, as this chapter will highlight. The fragmentation in approaches to public value is seen, for example, in O'Brien and Lockley's discussion of UK cultural policy approaches that adopt public value, which notes that 'various organisations, including Arts Council England, the Heritage Lottery Fund and the British Broadcasting Corporation, all adopted public value in distinct (and, sometimes, contradictory) ways.' O'Brien, David & Lockley, Pat, (2015) 'The Social life of Cultural Value, p. 91.

⁵ Alford, John & O'Flynn, Janine, (2009) 'Making Sense of Public Value: Concepts, Critiques and Emergent Meanings,' *International Journal of Public Administration*, Vol. 32, pp. 171–191.

⁶ For a history of this initial research examining the management styles across private and public sectors to assist government managers to set strategies for government agencies, see Moore, Mark & Khagram, Sanjeev (2004) *On Creating Public Value: What Business Might Learn from Government About Strategic Management*, (working paper) Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative and Harvard University, Massachusetts.

⁷ Moore argues that 'a useful, conditional conception of public value can be envisioned by public managers if they integrate: 1. Substantive judgements of what would be valuable and effective; 2. A diagnosis of

O'Connor, summarise that public value is a type of institutional value, understood as the 'kind of trust and esteem,'⁸ built up over the years, or as Oliver and Walmsley note, public value is about the politics of 'value for money,' and justifications for the allocations of public funding.⁹

While the nature of public value (i.e. actual benefits to the public) would vary, public value is a concept in which the discussion of collective, often social, value can be incorporated into public sector strategy and policy formation. Underpinning this was a connection to the private sector's management focus on what Moore describes as 'customer-driven government,' which proposed that public value was also related to standards (of some form) and that the public could be conceived as clients or customers of the government, whose satisfaction could be tied to the value of a public enterprise. This context was realised through concepts such as Moore's strategic triangle that aimed to assist public-sector decision makers create an analytical framework to guide the strategic pursuit of public value goals.¹⁰

political expectations; and 3. Hard-headed calculations of what is operationally feasible.' Moore, (1995) *Creating Public Value*, p. 22.

⁸ O'Connor outlines how public value is built up by cultural institutions, stating that, '[t]he notion of intrinsic value was pushed into the UK policy arena by John Holden [in 2004 and 2006], who distinguished the 'intrinsic' from both the 'institutional' and the 'instrumental'. The 'instrumental' was social and economic uses; *the institutional was the kind of trust and esteem, or public value, built up over the years by cultural institutions*. 'Intrinsic' referred to the value unique to culture, its aesthetic value or individual enjoyment.' (emphasis added). See O'Connor, Justin (2015) 'Assessing the Cultural Impact of Economics,' in, MacDowall, Lachlan, Badham, Marnie, Blomkamp, Emma & Dunphy, Kim (eds.), *Making Culture Count: the politics of cultural measurement*, Springer, London UK, p. 67.

⁹ Oliver & Walmsley, (2011) *Assessing the Value of the Arts*, p. 86.

¹⁰ Moore, Mark, (1995) *Creating Public Value: strategic management in government*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge.

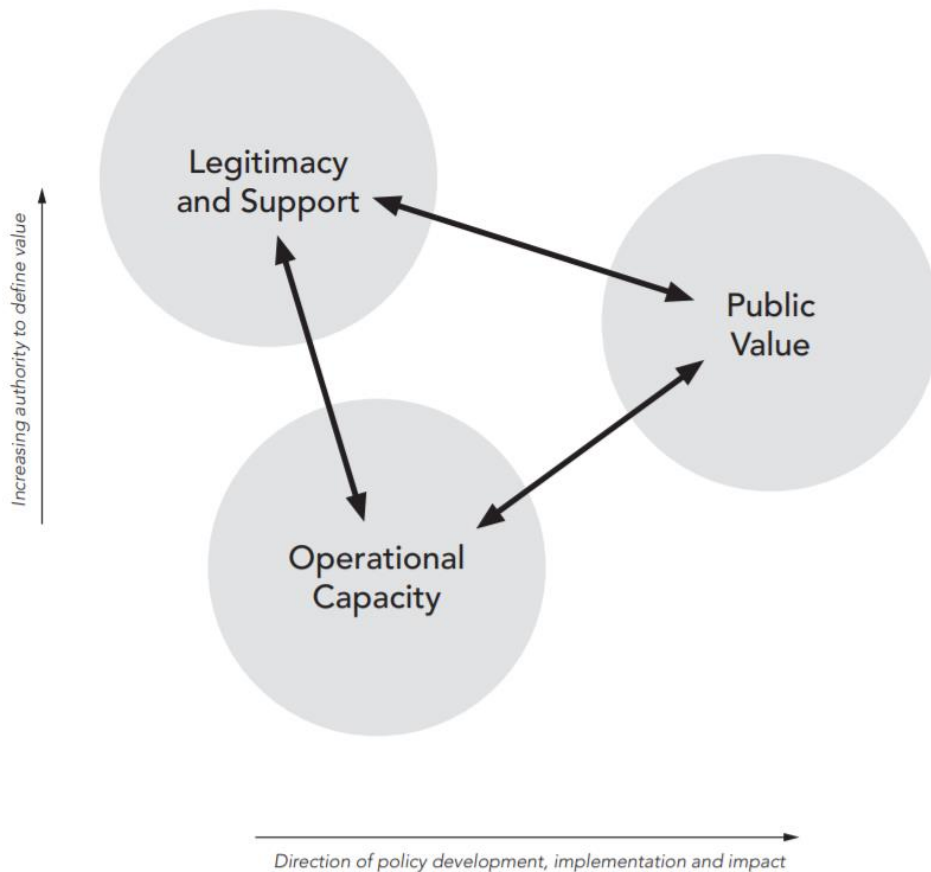


Figure 1: Moore's Strategic Triangle¹¹

As Figure 1 demonstrates, Moore's strategic triangle promotes the alignment of the three key areas in the course of devising strategy to increase public value.¹² It is geared towards *maximizing the efficiency* of public decision-making.

However, not all considerations of public value agree that the symmetry between value in public and private sectors is usefully adaptable. Scholars such as Bozeman describe how the tenets of market efficiency encouraged public agencies to be more business-

¹¹ Moore, Mark, (2013) *Recognizing Public Value*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, p. 103.

¹² Moore describes the elements as: Public value: a new conception of public value they could produce using the assets entrusted to them. Legitimacy and support: sources of legitimacy and support for that vision of public value. Operational Capacity: the operational capacity they would need to materially produce the envisioned public value. Ibid, p. 102.

like, but that public value, on the whole, is 'marginalized as nonmarket, market intervention, or market failure.'¹³ In this sense, public value can be limiting because the 'frame' of the private sector puts the concept of public value at a disadvantage, where it essentially refers to the private value of public things; this frame is adopted in many attempts to value culture, such as The City of Melbourne's council plans and Creative City aspirations, discussed in chapter six.¹⁴ Therefore, when it comes to examining value in terms of the public interest, he proposes that repositioning the discussion of value should also include consideration of a public-failure model, where the consideration of public value may guide choices in policy and public management.

As a result of this context, public value presented to public institutions a philosophical orientation that would draw direct parallels with the private sector through its attention to mechanisms of accountability and the rhetoric of productivity. Furthermore, as Alford and O'Flynn outline, public value can also be harnessed to develop performance management frameworks, which complement public value's initial borrowings from private-sector management and business administration. Thus, in this iteration, public value as a source of legitimacy of government (when it adds value successfully) can also function as a broader means to measure government performance (than that of economic value alone). As Kelly, Mulgan and Muers note, public value can provide 'a rough yardstick against which to gauge the performance of policies and public

¹³ In that, Bozeman links public value as based on a market-failure model because it 'provides an easily applied (at least in concept) set of criteria for making collective decisions.' See Bozeman, Barry, (2002) 'Public value failure: When efficient markets may not do,' *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 62, no. 2, Mar/Apr, pp. 145–146.

¹⁴ Ibid, p. 146.

institutions.¹⁵ It is in this context of measuring performance and private-sector management that emphasis upon public value would in turn require cultural policy to, as Crossick and Kaszynsk describe, deliver other policy priorities and require evidence of its demonstrable impact.¹⁶ These considerations of public value and the impact of the private upon the public thus have important ramifications for culture, where the struggle for legitimacy of cultural funding depends on the performance of cultural activities.

These origins, and public value's connection to policymaking and performance-management frameworks, impact upon how cultural value may be conceived, defined and measured. In 2004, Holden and Hewison's work on cultural value with regard to cultural institutions was, as O'Brien and Lockley argue, almost 'synonymous' with public value.¹⁷ Furthermore, as Marston and Watts describe, there is a heightened role of evidence-based policy in the creation of value which is connected with instrumentalist approaches to policy and public administration that have a managerialist emphasis on value for money.¹⁸ It is this context of public value and evidence-based policy that underpins many of the narratives surrounding cultural value, which I explore in the section to follow.

¹⁵ Kelly, Gavin, Mulgan, Geoff & Muers, Stephen, (2002), *Creating Public Value: An Analytical Framework for Public Service Reform* (discussion paper), Cabinet Office Strategy Unit, United Kingdom, p. 4.

¹⁶ Crossick & Kaszynska, (2014) *Under Construction: towards a framework for cultural value*, p. 121.

¹⁷ O'Brien, David & Lockley, Pat, (2015) 'The Social life of Cultural Value,' in MacDowall, Lachlan, Badham, Marnie, Blomkamp, Emma & Dunphy, Kim (eds.), *Making Culture Count: the politics of cultural measurement*, , p. 91.

¹⁸ Martson, Greg & Watts, Rob, (2003) 'Tampering with the Evidence: A critical appraisal of evidence-based policy making,' *The Drawing Board: An Australian Review of Public Affairs*, Vol. 3, no. 3, pp. 147–148.

Throughout the past fifteen years, Badham notes that the trajectory of cultural value discourse has also included some calls to rebalance the cultural/public sector in light of a perceived over-reliance on an ‘audit society,’ and the instrumentalisation of cultural policy beholden to a style of evidence-based, policy-effectiveness discourse.¹⁹ Indeed, Belfiore describes the official emphasis on an evidence-based approach to policymaking in the UK as, ‘a way to bring a modicum of transparency and accountability to decision-making within the public policy sphere.’²⁰ The focus upon rebalancing an overreliance on auditing has resulted in critiques that question the normative assumption that cultural value is best, and sometimes exclusively, understood through *measurements* of (typically positive) social or economic impact. While in Australia, evidence-based policy as a whole-of-government approach is less holistically practised, the language of evidence bases and evidence-based policy is pursued to differing degrees across various fields, including social policy, health care and criminal justice. Yet what is interesting for

¹⁹ Nutley, Davis & Walter offer insight into evidence-based practice in policy by outlining the interest in the role of evidence in policy that was renewed following the 1997 UK election of a Labour government, whose modernising agenda identified evidence as a means to generate long-term outcomes. This occurred alongside an emphasis on productivity, a more educated public, availability of more types of data and IT developments, and the rise in scrutiny of governments and accountability for public funds. They remind us that evidence-based policy is not a neutral process with a straightforward incorporation of evidence to form policy; there are varying and shifting strategic relationships and agendas between research, knowledge policy and practice. See Nutley, Sandra, Davies, Huw & Walter Isabel, (2003) ‘Evidence-based policy and practice: Cross-sector lessons from the United Kingdom,’ *Social Policy Journal of New Zealand*, Vol. 20, pp. 29–48.

For a detailed history of evidence-based policy making in the UK, see pages 188–192 of Belfiore, (2004) *Auditing Culture: The Subsidised Cultural Sector in the New Public Management*; Davies, Huw, Nutley, Sandra & Smith, Peter, (2000) *What Works: Evidence-Based Policy and Practice in Public Services*, Polity Press, Bristol UK; and for Australian context refer to Banks, Gary (2018) ‘Whatever Happened to Evidence Based Policy Making?’ Alf Rattigan Lecture, 20 Nov, Australia & New Zealand School of Government <https://www.anzsog.edu.au/preview-documents/research-output/5307-alf-rattigan-lecture-2018/file> [accessed 21 May 2020] and ‘Challenges of Evidence-based policy-making,’ *Australian Public Service Commission*, Australian Government <https://www.apsc.gov.au/challenges-evidence-based-policy-making> [accessed 21 May 2020].

²⁰ Belfiore, *Auditing Culture. The Subsidised Cultural Sector in the New Public Management*, p. 185. Belfiore, ‘Foreword,’ in *Making Culture Count: The Politics of Cultural Measurement*, p. x.

culture, is that the scholarly debate centred around limitations of what counts as 'proper' evidence, how much input it should have in the policy process and formation of knowledge hierarchies, is primarily derived from medical models of evidence assessments that prioritise scientific evidence and reliance on quantitative impact.²¹ This is to the detriment of qualitative and experiential evidence, which is central to arts and cultural activities, especially in terms of how the public interacts with, and their subjective opinion of it (e.g. their thoughts following attendance at a theatre show).

However, the question of impact, whether quantitative or qualitative, is central in the work of Bakhshi and Belfiore. From a cultural economics perspective, Bakhshi explored this in his keynote speech about measuring cultural value at an Australian conference in 2012, noting that cultural and economic value in terms of cultural policy is fraught with tension, partly due to the failure of cultural leadership to firmly relate to a public interest.²² While in this speech he does not define public interest, we can deduce that

²¹ See Martson & Watts, (2003) *Tampering with the Evidence: A critical appraisal of evidence-based policy making*. Despite these critiques, there is renewed encouragement from two Australian thinktanks for Coalition and Labor governments to commit to a more robust evidence-based policy process. A cross-section of evidence-based Australian policies can be found in Lesh, Matthew, (2019) *Evidence Based Policy Research Project*, newDemocracy and Institute of Public Affairs, <https://www.newdemocracy.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Evidence-Based-Policy-2019-%E2%80%93-IPA.pdf> [accessed 21 May 2020].

²² The meaning of the term public interest will vary in definition depending on its context. This is best highlighted in Morison and Anthony's work on public interest and global administrative law, which argues that the 'concept' of public interest can '... enjoy meaning in the global setting only insofar as it maps onto identifiable publics and institutional processes.' Anthony, Gordon, Auby, Jean-Bernard, Morison, John & Zwart, Tom (2011) *Values in Global Administrative Law*, Hart Publishing Ltd, Oxford and Portland, p. 215.

Specific to the UK, where Bakhshi focuses much of his research, there are many circumstances under which the term public interest may apply, across legal and government contexts. Like Morison and Anthony, The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales states that, by definitively defining the public interest, there is the risk of unintentionally narrowing its application. They warn that the 'public interest is an abstract notion; [and that] to argue and be able to hold out that an action (or inaction) is in the public interest can require consideration of a number of complex factors and impose a burden of proof.' 'Acting in the Public Interest: A Framework for Analysis,' (2012) *The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales* (ICAEW), <https://www.icaew.com/-/media/corporate/files/technical/ethics/public-int-rep-web.ashx?la=en> [accessed 13 Feb 2020], p. 4.

Bakhshi's use of the term public interest appears to be in reference to how cultural institutions operate to the advantage or benefit of the general public or the broader shared interests of society, rather than to the benefit of the institution itself or its programming. In terms of public administration (of a cultural body), Bakhshi's use of the term might also refer to a public interest in terms of a cultural institution serving the public as customer or client.²³ Bakhshi posits that the tensions of cultural policy are partly because cultural institutions find it easier to engage with the economics of impact, where impact '...refers to the measurement of the employment, output and productivity consequences of cultural activities.'²⁴ Bakhshi is concerned and makes the point that those like myself conducting research into cultural value conflate culture as a locus for economic (or indeed other types of) development, instead of using economic tools that seek to examine intrinsic value created as a part of cultural activity.²⁵ In defence of the economic approach, he argues for the development of cultural economics as informed by Bruno Frey's conception of 'good economics', which offers 'authoritative estimates

Instead, the ICAEW advocates for a framework approach that can iteratively be applied to help institutions, by policymakers who act in the public interest to assist them in defining what the public interest means in a particular set of circumstances.

While public interest may be abstract in definition, The Information Commissioner's Office provides more clarity when it outlines the public interest within the context of the UK's Freedom of Information Act as '...cover[ing] a wide range of values and principles relating to the public good, or what is in the best interests of society.' The Freedom of Information Act itself also avoids defining the public interest. 'The Public Interest Test,' *Information Commissioner's Office*, https://ico.org.uk/media/for-organisations/documents/1183/the_public_interest_test.pdf [accessed 13 Feb 2020], pp. 5–6.

²³ While Bakhshi does not define what he means by 'public interest,' on the topic of improving how cultural policy, institutions and the public understand public value in terms of culture, he states, '[i]t is one of the great ironies in recent years that cultural institutions have found it easier to engage with the economics of impact, in terms of jobs created and value added, than with economic tools that can shed light on intrinsic value created as part of their core missions. In my view this is a failing of cultural leadership. That is, cultural leadership insofar as it relates to how cultural institutions are led in a way that serves a public interest that lies beyond individual institutions or initiatives.' See Bakhshi, Hasan, (2012) 'Measuring Cultural Value,' Keynote speech delivered at *Making Culture Count: Measuring Cultural Value Forum*, 20 March, Customs House, Sydney, Australia, <http://culturehive.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Measuring-Cultural-Value.pdf> [accessed 20 Oct 2018], p. 2.

²⁴ Belfiore, *Auditing Culture. The Subsidised Cultural Sector in the New Public Management*, p. 1.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

of the 'public value' of art which permit fair comparisons with other uses of funds.²⁶ Like Bakhshi, this thesis considers public value in the examination of cultural value, but seeks a broader context than the cultural economics approach that he suggests. Belfiore also notes that the distinction between impact and value must be made explicit, agreeing with Bakhshi's assertion that value is often collapsed into impact in debates surrounding the cultural sector and related policymaking.²⁷

Belfiore's conceptualisation of cultural value differs as she pays attention to impact in terms of 'the prioritization of economic usefulness,' in her work concerning British cultural policy practice and research, especially in terms of the arts and higher education policy.²⁸ Belfiore problematises the distinctively economistic and narrow instrumental rationale that is used to justify UK public spending, sharing my belief that the cultural value debate should be opened beyond an economistic framing to consider how else public value can be created.²⁹ Together, the ideas Belfiore and Bakhshi explore help demonstrate how the word value (in accordance with valuation), typically resides within an economic domain. They also remind us that, in terms of the cultural value debate, value also refers to public value as in value for the public, which is a broader conception of worth. However, they advocate for different approaches to the role of economics in the cultural value debate: Bakhshi, confident in the development of a specialised,

²⁶ Bakhshi, Hasan, Freeman, Alan & Hitchen, Graham, (2009) 'Measuring Intrinsic Value – How to Stop Worrying and Love Economics,' *Mission Models Money*, Munich, https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/14902/1/MPRA_paper_14902.pdf [accessed 18 Oct 2018], p. 2.

²⁷ Belfiore, *Impact*, 'Value' and 'Bad Economics'.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 97.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 107.

cultural economics; and Belfiore, urging us to move beyond the economic lens as we attempt to value culture.

This thesis, while acknowledging the role of economics in the policymaking process, agrees with Belfiore's mode of exploring cultural value, in that it is necessary to address the over-reliance on it when considering the value of culture. Building on this, I propose that it is also necessary to relationally reflect upon economic, social *and* political contexts when considering how better to understand cultural value, even if 'outcomes' from these areas are not as comparably measurable as outcomes that are assessed in economic (even culturally based) impact studies. Therefore, rather than inheriting a frame informed by economics-based impact studies, I adopt a reconceptualised understanding of cultural value that requires focus on a wider trajectory, which as Crossick and Kaszynska state '...refer[s] to the effects that culture has on those who experience it and the difference it makes to individuals and society'; where value is, therefore, an ability to effect change of varying degrees.³⁰ Currently, the effects that cultural activities have on the public are typically measured by evaluation practices that seek to describe their value using proxy indicators.

Describing Cultural Value: The Role of Evaluation

Similar to public value and evidence-based policymaking, the context of evaluation in cultural value discourse also shares an economic frame. Evaluation is explored in the

³⁰ Crossick & Kaszynska, *Under Construction: towards a framework for cultural value*, p. 124.

work of Madden, Holden, and Blomkamp who discuss various types of cultural indicators that approach cultural value in a practical context underpinned by the evidence-based approach to policymaking in countries with advanced liberal economies, such as the UK and Australia. Madden advises that, used properly, quantitative cultural indicators offer valuable insight into arts and culture, providing the means to better communicate their importance.³¹ Cultural indicators are a part of the wider movement of social indicators and are 'special' compared to statistics, in that they can mould (rather than 'objectively' measure certain aspects of) culture. That is to say, that cultural indicators survey but '...usually also influence behaviour and have strategic effects beyond mere measurement.'³² Historically, this means that cultural indicators collate cultural data for reporting purposes and present it in such a way that it provides analysis that informs future policymaking. This is typically recognised through four main uses of cultural indicators: for the purposes of monitoring and/or evaluation; learning; influence or strategic effects; and for the purposes of advocacy.³³ However, the ability of indicators to influence behaviour is also significant. It means that cultural behaviour (such as arts content, activities and initiatives) may be guided by the terms of how it will be measured, especially in instances where subsidies for cultural work are available. Despite the connection to a quantitative process, cultural indicators are not neutral measurement tools.

³¹ Madden, Christopher, (2005) 'Indicators for Arts and Cultural Policy: A Global perspective,' *Cultural Trends*, Vol. 14, no. 3, pp. 217–247.

³² Ibid, p. 221.

³³ Ibid., pp. 224–226.

Holden also considers the role of cultural indicators in his work on cultural value. His 2004 pamphlet, *Capturing Cultural Value*, proposes cultural value as a *principle* that is capable of ‘reflecting, recognising and capturing the full range of values expressed through culture’ and invigorated debates surrounding how to measure culture beyond (quantitative) targets.³⁴ By focussing on the development of new language in this field, Holden’s study sought to expand the discourse of cultural value to include a consideration of the intrinsic aspects of culture that cultural indicators, on the whole, fail to account for. In doing so, his new perspective provided cultural institutions and practitioners more agency, arguing that they should be leading cultural conversations instead of being ‘moulded’ by the agendas of arts funders/bodies.³⁵ Although Holden’s iteration of cultural value intended to ‘recognise that professional judgement must extend beyond evidence-based decision-making,’³⁶ and provide a more holistic means to consider the qualitative contributions of culture than current measurement systems (based on quantitative cultural indicators), balancing the instrumental aspects of cultural value with the intrinsic is a substantial undertaking. Furthermore, the dualistic characterisation of cultural value in terms of instrumentality and intrinsic worth

³⁴ Holden, John, (2004) *Capturing Cultural Value: how culture has become a tool of Government policy*, DEMOS, London, p. 9.

However, as O’Brien states, Holden pioneered culture value as a discourse but notes that cultural value was ‘...first used in a speech by Ellis (2003), [however] the term is most notably associated with the work of John Holden (2004) and the think tank Demos. Holden provides the bridge between public value and cultural value.’

O’Brien, Dave, (2014) ‘Chapter 6: The Value of Culture: theories of ‘public value’ and cultural organisations,’ in *Cultural Policy: Management, Value and Modernity in the Creative Industries*, Routledge, London and New York, p. 123.

³⁵ Holden, *Capturing Cultural Value*, p. 59.

Indeed, Australia’s largest and oldest professional theatre company, Melbourne Theatre Company, describes its company mission: ‘To be the best theatre company in Australia at telling stories relevant to audiences in the 21st Century and so *lead the national cultural conversation*.’ [emphasis added]. See ‘Company Information,’ Melbourne Theatre Company, <https://www.mtc.com.au/discover-more/about-us/the-company/> [accessed 03 Mar 2019].

³⁶ Holden, *Capturing Cultural Value*, p. 10.

oversimplifies a more complex arena.³⁷ Therefore, a reliance on cultural indicators (especially ones that are quantitatively based) is a particularly narrow scope to examine cultural value.

Following these discussions, Blomkamp provides a useful linkage of indicators and value in her historical conceptualisation of the four dimensions of cultural value: individual; collective; commodity; and process. These underpin her identification of the six types of cultural indicators: economic; human rights; ecological; symbolic; artistic; and social policy.³⁸ Her typology provides more detail of the instrumental versus intrinsic divide that is assumed in much cultural value debate. Blomkamp argues that due to the various contexts in which culture occurs, a plurality of approaches to its measurement is preferable, rather than relying on one 'holy grail of cultural management.'³⁹ She revises the dualistic intrinsic/instrumental frame that Holden's work on cultural value enforces by providing a spectrum that advances how culture is conceptualised depending on the choice of indicator used to examine cultural value. While Blomkamp's discussion of the four dimensions of cultural value and the conceptualisation of cultural value as a spectrum are useful to the wider context of this thesis, my research does not share the same emphasis upon cultural indicators. Therefore, while Blomkamp's work makes important contributions to the broader scholarship concerning cultural value, it will not be a primary focus in this thesis.

³⁷ Belfiore, *Auditing Culture. The Subsidised Cultural Sector in the New Public Management*, p. 197.

³⁸ Blomkamp, *Making Culture Count: The Politics of Cultural Measurement*, p. 12.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

Crossick and Kaszynska provide a further direction of travel for this thesis, as they highlight the influence of socially progressive agendas and cultural value in their discussion of methodology within the UK's Arts and Humanities Research Council project on cultural value.⁴⁰ They argue that exclusively focussing on the positive benefits of culture in cultural measurements is an incomplete exercise. If, as they say, we should seek to research 'the role of arts and cultural engagement in shaping the reflective individual and the engaged citizen,' it is unwise to reduce the power of art and culture to 'narrow agendas of cohesion, inclusion, and stability.'⁴¹ In terms of the articulation of the value of culture in this thesis, and cultural evaluation generally, this means that '[s]tarting with people's experience of arts and culture, rather than the secondary benefits that follow', enables a broader conception of cultural value, beyond the economic or the quantitative, to emerge.⁴² Belfiore adopts a similar emphasis on experience in her study of UK reality television series, *My Big Fat Gypsy Wedding*, that features Gypsy and Traveller communities, where she notes that single cultural 'objects' can exhibit both positive and negative value depending on what/whose perspective is adopted in an analysis.⁴³ Therefore, identity politics present challenges to the discourse of cultural value, especially when it comes to developing an appropriate methodology to evaluate the value of cultural activities or projects.

⁴⁰ Crossick & Kaszynska, *Under Construction: towards a framework for cultural value*, pp. 120–131.

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 124–125.

⁴² Ibid., p. 123.

⁴³ In the case of MBFGW, Belfiore notes the tension between economic value of the TV series as versus the negative social impact (or negative value) upon many members of the Gypsy and Traveller community. Belfiore, Eleonora, (2018) 'Whose cultural value? Representation, power and creative industries,' *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, DOI: 10.1080/10286632.2018.1495713, pp. 11–13.

Although Belfiore's work concerns reality television and this thesis is concerned with cultural policy and cultural practice in the form of live performance, her points are relevant: there can be a struggle of authority between actors to make claims in terms of culture, and that culture can be experienced positively, negatively and perhaps even ambivalently at the same time across varying 'stakeholders.' This is a fundamental point, and by paying attention to the vested interests within the cultural value process, the need for a holistic approach to cultural value that considers multiple perspectives from a variety of stakeholders is demonstrated. This impetus could result in more insightful investigations into the outcomes of cultural activity than the more widely used measures of cultural evaluation, such as indicators. The implications of Belfiore, Crossick and Kaszynska, therefore, begin the salient task of reorientating cultural value discourse in order to pursue a more holistic approach to value.

A realisation of a more multi-dimensional conceptualisation of cultural value is evident in the work of Capano, Marx, and Wyszomirski, who place emphasis on the existence of actors and the relationships among them in public policy contexts. Capano's work on public policy and theoretical exploration of policy change argues that public policy is not only an arena of institutionalised power, but consists of sets of networked relationships between policy actors.⁴⁴ Marx looks at the actors in Swiss regional cultural policy formulation and the design stage as a means to assess decision-making power in cultural

⁴⁴ Capano, Giliberto, (2009) 'Understanding Policy Change as an Epistemological and Theoretical Problem,' *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis: Research and Practice*, Vol. 11, no. 1, p. 18.

policy.⁴⁵ Marx's research concerning Swiss cultural policy provides a useful orientation towards the value of actors that are involved in the policy process, rather than being overly reliant on analysing policy implementation and the allocation of resources that are present in many cultural (and more broadly, policy) evaluations. She argues that the roles and impacts of artists and culture have been studied in several strands of research, but are rarely examined systematically over time or through the comparison of many cases. Marx's analytical framework adopts an actor-based perspective because the literature 'lacks a more theoretical and precise means of analysing the power of cultural actors – and of other groups and institutions – in cultural policy.'⁴⁶ Wyszomirski examines the arts policy realm in America as it expanded from a few actors, to a wider variety of stakeholders, operating within an issue network that is more diffuse and fluid.⁴⁷ Belfiore also encourages the examination of actors in her consideration of the power dynamics between people represented in cultural activities, arguing that not all actors involved in cultural projects have equal voice or access.⁴⁸ Herein lies another concern that underpins this thesis: when attempting to put a value on culture, a hierarchy of value often ensues, especially when accompanied by the use of

⁴⁵ See Marx, Lisa, (2018) Who Governs Culture? Actors, federalism and expertise in Swiss regional cultural policy, *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, DOI: 10.1080/10286632.2018.1518977.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 1.

⁴⁷ Wyszomirski notes that, since 1989, federal arts policy in America evolved from prioritising distributive policy that provided financial support for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) to a new environment that increased the number of stakeholders and issues facing arts funding. Issues arose following the incorporation of arts funding policy into the wider domestic policy process, which involved regulatory, distributive and redistributive policy priorities and a wider array of stakeholders involved in various political relationships would be relevant in arts funding debates. It is in this context that the arts policy realm can be understood as an issue network that contains many dynamic participants containing degrees of mutual commitment in which members of the network vie with each other for policy influence. See Wyszomirski, Margaret Jane, (1995) 'Chapter two: The Politics of Arts Policy: Subgovernment to Issue Network,' in Mulcahy, Kevin V. & Wyszomirski, Margaret Jane, (eds), *America's Commitment to Culture*, Westview Press, Boulder, pp. 47–76 and Hecl, Hugh, (1978) 'Issue Networks and the Executive Establishment,' in King, Anthony (ed.), *The New American Political System*, American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, Washington, p. 102.

⁴⁸ Belfiore, *Whose cultural value? Representation, power and creative industries*, pp. 1–15.

quantitatively based cultural indicators or evaluation methods. Therefore, more work in this area is required to examine the *dynamics* of the relationships in this field and further develop cultural value discourse. This represents a way forward, to rebalance the framing of culture in primarily economic terms with evidence bases reliant on quantitative or narrow cultural indicators, to a consideration of relational value and the experiences of culture and cultural activities.

The Cultural Value Paradox

The above discussion shows that cultural value is not a neutral principle. Cultural indicators, metrics, key performance indicators and other evaluation tools have been developed by various governments, cultural policymakers, scholars and cultural institutions and they all adopt their own approach to classification that outlines how culture contributes to society, especially in terms of public value.⁴⁹ Despite the political character of this process, as Blomkamp notes, the contemporary measurement of culture (such as cultural indicators) should not be a substitute for politics,⁵⁰ nor a substitute for cultural value per se. Therefore, in policy and political arenas, I argue there is more work to be done that considers the assumptions, perspectives and narratives that arise from specific framing and (e)valuations of culture. This is also because, in practice, resources tend to be devoted to developing an array of methods to monitor

⁴⁹ For a detailed discussion of these within an Australian context, see the case study chapters of this thesis; in particular, chapters five and six.

⁵⁰ Blomkamp, Emma, 'Introduction' in *Making Culture Count: The Politics of Cultural Measurement*, p. 10.

how cultural activities and cultural relations deliver a return on investment, in what Belfiore refers to as an 'explicitly instrumental justification for arts funding.'⁵¹ She notes:

cultural value is in fact something that is continually defined and redefined, contested and fought over: it has a clear relational nature and it involves power struggles and vested interests... The allocation of cultural value therefore is an inherently political process and one in which power relations play an important role. There are winners and losers in struggles over value.⁵²

This is further confirmation that even a purportedly 'value-free' means of cultural evaluation found in quantitative measurements and impact studies still contains specific views of culture, which make it curated and, therefore, in need of further investigation to examine its apparent hierarchical orientation. Marx establishes that this orientation is structural when she notes that, despite interest concerning cultural evaluation, it is the power and politics that matter in cultural policy and, therefore, more attention is required in terms of examining the explicitly political aspects of cultural policy.⁵³ Accordingly, the cultural value debate is aptly described by Walmsley as an apparent paradox, where 'we know, and yet still don't seem to know, the value and impact of the arts.'⁵⁴ This not only refers to specific political challenges of determining cultural value, but also to factors such as the limitations of language to describe things that are felt and experienced (such as the arts) and the differing perspectives surrounding what should

⁵¹ Belfiore, *Auditing Culture. The Subsidised Cultural Sector in the New Public Management*, p. 185.

⁵² Belfiore, Eleonora, (2014) 'The Politics of Cultural Value: Towards an emancipatory framework,' *Cultural Value Project Blog*, <https://culturalvalueproject.wordpress.com/2014/07/18/dr-eleonora-belfiore-the-politics-of-cultural-value-towards-an-emancipatory-framework/> [accessed 18 Oct 2018].

⁵³ Marx, *Who Governs Culture? Actors, federalism and expertise in Swiss regional cultural policy*, p. 14.

⁵⁴ Walmsley, Ben, (2018) 'Deep hanging out in the arts: an anthropological approach to capturing cultural value,' *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, Vol. 24, no. 2, p. 272.

be included in terms of cultural valuation and whose agenda commands more authority in this process.

To summarise the varying schools of thought surrounding cultural value, one perspective favours the economic frame because it 'allows cultural value to be put to work.'⁵⁵ Oakley and O'Connor highlight the efficiency of understanding culture in terms of production and consumption because, in the main, it removes questions (judgements) of culture and politics. This attention to cultural value purely in terms of the market means that in a dynamic global environment, there are '...no grounds for deciding what should be valued or why, only what is innovative and productive of new commercial value.'⁵⁶ If commercial values are increasingly adopted as methods to benchmark cultural policy, the principle of commercial value is also evident within public policy, especially under the new approaches to public sector management.⁵⁷ Blomkamp considers how this works in practice, by noting that the most popular type of cultural indicators rely on economic indicators that commonly use industry data and/or methods from cultural economics.⁵⁸ As a form of what Mulcahy calls 'cultural utilitarianism', this practice establishes the benefits of the arts through the use of data to quantitatively

⁵⁵ Oakley, Kate & O'Connor, Justin, (2015) 'The Cultural Industries: an introduction,' in Oakley, Kate & O'Connor, Justin (eds.), *The Routledge Companion to the Cultural Industries*, Routledge, London and New York, p. 9.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 9.

⁵⁷ New public sector management refers to the approach (especially in the UK and evident in Australia) to modernise the public sector through the adoption of private-sector management techniques. This stemmed from the need to demonstrate impact as with particular emphasis on articulating value of the cultural sector in economic terms. See Crossick & Kaszynska, *Under Construction: towards a framework for cultural value*, pp. 120–122.

⁵⁸ Blomkamp, *Making Culture Count: The Politics of Cultural Measurement*, p. 20. Therefore, while cultural indicators form part of the discourse concerning cultural value, their narrow focus on economics means cultural indicators as a category of value are not the key focus of this study, which instead focuses on the wider discourse of valuing culture.

prove a return on investment to the taxpayer.⁵⁹ This presents the flattening of cultural value in terms of its integration into the policy environment, which tends to restrict the frame of reference to specific questions of economics, or even socially based performance indicators that are able to be quantitatively expressed, while, in reality, the terms of cultural value are continually renegotiated with each expression of culture. Most importantly for this research, it contextualises how cultural value is applied; while it may be more than the study of cultural indicators, cultural (and other types of) indicators continue to be heavily relied upon in the public sector.

Another perspective, as seen in Bakhshi and in O'Brien, adopts a cultural economics point of view. Unlike discourse that predominantly emphasises the economics of cultural policy and value in terms of the creative industries, this line of reasoning adopts a non-reductionist approach.⁶⁰ Towse and Hernández describe cultural economics as the use of economic theory and empirical testing to explain the many aspects of the creative economy.⁶¹ Amongst many schools of thought that cultural economists may work within, many share an interest in cultural policy as it plays a fundamental role in shaping

⁵⁹Kevin Mulcahy as cited in Redden, *Culture, Value and Commensuration: The knowledge politics of indicators*, p. 28.

⁶⁰ See Lee, Hye-Kyung, (2017) "The Political Economy of the 'Creative Industries'," *Media, Culture & Society*, Vol. 39, no. 7, pp. 1078–1088 and Banks, Mark, 'Valuing Cultural Industries,' in *The Routledge Companion to the Cultural Industries*, pp. 51–60. The history of cultural economics dates back to an arts focus in the 1960s, with interest in economically analysing museum finance and performing arts. For a more in-depth overview of the origins of cultural economics, see the following text that traces the history of contributions to this area from Baumol and Bowen, Smith, Jevons, Keynes, Galbraith, Robbins Scitovsky, Montias, Peacock, Caves, Frey, Throsby and Withers. See Towse, Ruth, (2019) *A Textbook of Cultural Economics*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK, pp. 15–24.

⁶¹ The major areas of the economics that feature in cultural economics include microeconomics, welfare economics, public choice economics and macroeconomics. Therefore, cultural economics may encompass a wide array of methodologies often combined in single studies, as Towse and Hernández note, 'tackle things at different levels.' Towse, Ruth & Hernández, Trilce Navarrete (eds.), (2020) *Handbook of Cultural Economics Third Edition*, Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd, Cheltenham, UK, pp. 1–8.

the profile of the cultural sector.⁶² Cultural economics, therefore, determines cultural value within existing economic frameworks and metrics favoured by pundits of evidence-based policymaking and fuelled by the context of the global economic crisis.⁶³ Adopting an economic approach to valuing culture in Australia, Throsby conceptualises cultural capital as the fourth type of capital in economics, proposing that while cultural value is different to economic value, they influence each other and, in defining items of cultural capital, they can then be understood as assets that contribute to cultural value.⁶⁴ By bringing the arts into ‘economic calculus for the purposes of formulation [of] cultural policy,’ (cultural) value is positioned as constructed as it is formed by the preferences of humans, where economic measurements such as ‘willingness-to-pay’ can be possible as a means of tabulating the value of culture.⁶⁵

However, economic logic cannot account for intrinsic value, meaning that there is a gap in determining cultural value in full; yet, cultural economics is still considered useful as it allows for a broad correlation between a range of cultural goods and the provision of empirical evidence.⁶⁶ While cultural economics has a role to play in mediating

⁶² Towse, *A Textbook of Cultural Economics*, p. 33.

⁶³ MacDowall, Lachlan, (2015) ‘Introduction’ in *Making Culture Count: The Politics of Cultural Measurement*, p. 5.

Also see Bakhshi, Freeman, & Hitchen, (2009) *Measuring Intrinsic Value – How to Stop Worrying and Love Economics*, and O’Brien, Dave, (2010) ‘Measuring the Value of Culture: A Report to the Department for Culture Media and Sport,’ *Department for Culture Media and Sport*, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/77933/measuring-the-value-culture-report.pdf [accessed 18 Oct 2018].

⁶⁴ Throsby makes the connection between existing discussions in sociology of cultural capital (Bourdieu), human capital (Costanza & Daly) and cultural capital in terms of human natural environment interaction (Berkes & Folke) to argue in favour for the insertion of cultural capital into economics discourse. Throsby, David, (1999) ‘Cultural Capital,’ *Journal of Cultural Economics*, Vol. 23, no. 1/2, pp. 5-6.

⁶⁵ Throsby, David, (2003) ‘Determining the Value of Cultural Goods: How much (or how little) does contingent valuation tell us?’ *Journal of Cultural Economics*, Vol. 27, no. 3, pp. 277-288.

⁶⁶ *Ibid*, p. 280.

communications between cultural institutions and governmental and bureaucratic entities, the limitation of discussing value in terms of cultural equivalence, in the articulation of cultural value and culture in terms of economic environments, is not the sole focus of this thesis. Yet, throughout it, I respond to this logic in terms of how the value of culture can be conceptualised in a broader manner.

A final perspective relevant to my discussion of cultural value is evident in the work of others such as Belfiore and Meyrick, Phiddian and Barnett. These scholars overtly critique the narrowness of continuing to rely on the economic frame, arguing that it is an incomplete measure of cultural value, over-reliant on metrics and one that reduces the wider question of value into one of quantitative impact.⁶⁷ This is central to my argument for turning towards a consideration of relationships to better understand the value of culture, as the critique of a sole reliance on economic value helps identify what is *not* being captured in a narrower definition of cultural value. Meyrick et al. summarise the shift towards the narrowing of the concept of value (in the cultural value debate) of the arts in particular, when they note that '[v]alue was once something to be discriminated; that is, discerned according to critical judgement. Today we are happier when it can be counted.'⁶⁸ This suggests a flattening of the experience of cultural activity and its reception, which may lead to a lack of impetus to discuss new and perhaps more meaningful ways to articulate its value. Belfiore proposes the narrowing of value is more about cultural policy's preoccupation with the *measurability* of desired impacts in a

⁶⁷ See Belfiore, 'Impact', 'Value' and 'Bad Economics', pp. 95–110.

⁶⁸ Meyrick, et al., *What Matters? Talking Value in Australian Culture*, p. 14.

managerialist public sector, rather than arguments surrounding value being understood as either instrumental or intrinsic, per se. Like Belfiore and Meyrick et al., Hutter and Throsby seek to broaden the frame to consider the non-economic value of culture in their discussion of the tension between economic and cultural modes of evaluation, as does Klammer, who focusses on the need for evaluation that considers subjective factors of cultural value, such as the experiences and perceptions of stakeholders involved in cultural activities.⁶⁹ Throsby, noting that cultural value ‘lacks a common unit of account,’ when it comes to the valuation of cultural goods and services such as the arts, also argues that we need different metrics to cater for the various characteristics that give rise to a cultural good’s value, such as social, historical, symbolic, spiritual and aesthetic value.⁷⁰ Angelini and Castellani also focus on rearticulating value in terms of the arts and cultural goods with relation to the temporality of value. They distinguish between static and dynamic value where ideas and the sense of value might evolve (or remain stable) over time.⁷¹ Importantly, Throsby, Angelini and Castellani’s introduction of a series of value ‘variables’ better delineate the nuances of the value of culture; however, there is less discussion concerning how these different approaches or categories of value might contribute to a more relational conceptualisation of cultural value, which I seek to explore.

⁶⁹ Hutter and Throsby’s edited volume considers the issues surrounding the valuation of a number of cultural forms, including art works, the arts, cultural activities and ‘general ways in which we express our culture.’ See Hutter, Michael, & Throsby, David, (eds.) (2008) *Beyond Price: value in culture, economics, and the arts*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge and New York. Klammer’s evaluation of an artistic good involves three values: the economic or exchange value, the social value and the cultural value (which is all else apart from social and economic value). Klammer, Arjo, (2009) ‘The Lives of Cultural Goods,’ in Amariglio, Jack, Childers, Joseph W. & Cullenberg, Stephen (eds.), *Sublime Economy: On the Intersection of Art and Economics*, Routledge, Abingdon and New York, p. 267.

⁷⁰ Throsby, David, (2003) ‘Determining the Value of Cultural Goods: How much (or how little) does contingent valuation tell us?’ *Journal of Cultural Economics*, Vol. 27, no. 3, pp. 275–285.

⁷¹ Angelini, Francesco & Castellani, Massimiliano, (2018) ‘Culture and Economic Value: a critical review,’ *Journal of Cultural Economics*, Springer, doi.org/10.1007/s10824-018-9334-4, p. 7.

Accumulatively, the varying perspectives above point to a contradiction regarding the debate within cultural value discourse between the use of a cultural perspective, where culture leads (and is visible in decision-making processes), or a more instrumental (often economics-based) perspective, which, as MacDowall notes, sees culture as 'forced unwillingly and unhelpfully into systems of measurement, from where it can be pressed into the service of divergent agendas.'⁷² Although these tensions represent the difference in approaches to cultural value, they also highlight the variation in definitions of culture itself that this thesis concerns itself with: ultimately, between the epistemological understanding of culture as object (to be validated) or culture as a phenomenological question related to experiences, relations and networks. This indicates that an entity's (such as a government's) framing of cultural evaluation and indicators will produce specific worldviews that, in turn, will articulate the 'type' of cultural value that is being exercised. Therefore, when examining cultural value today, paying attention to how it is practically pursued is an important task to undertake. I perform this task in chapters five, six and seven to gain insight into the current nature of how Australian policy and arts practice interacts with the discourse of cultural value. Furthermore, I propose that if there are various realisations of cultural value, considering them in relation to each other, rather than simply as different schools of thought, is also important. There are both different values and different types of value that are produced through culture and cultural events. This is seen across the culture of

⁷² MacDowall, *Making Culture Count: The Politics of Cultural Measurement*, p. 5.

the 'everyday' as it moves through peoples and society, to more structured cultural activities such as attending an arts event.

As I introduced in the previous chapter, rather than exclusively approaching culture from an epistemological or phenomenological perspective, I will approach it through its political, social and economic intersections. This approach impacts upon how the terms of culture are understood which, in turn, means that these specific intersections assist in the evaluation of cultural value in Australia today.⁷³ The economic, political and social dimensions will be used to explore relations and cultural interactions and are, therefore, the key 'pillars' on which this thesis will base its analysis, because they allow for a comparison of how cultural value is exercised across three distinct, but related, contexts. While cultural diplomacy (the political), the creative economy (the economic) and cultural relations (the social) each feature unique characteristics and subject matter, I discuss how they are interrelated. These interrelationships are explored throughout this thesis in terms of their similarities and differences concerning cultural value. Accordingly, the scope of the economic, political and social dimensions, where cultural value in Australia is examined in this thesis, is introduced in detail below to highlight how these dimensions instrumentalise culture in different ways and what this means for the value of culture.

⁷³ As Clammer notes, dimensions are parts of a totality, which in critical discourse, is where an intersection of elements make up reality of social analysis. Clammer, *Culture, Development, and Social Theory: on Cultural Studies and the place of culture in development*, p. 103.

The Political Dimension: Cultural Diplomacy

In political science discourse, one of the most dominant conceptualisations of ‘culture’ exists in the practice and theory of diplomacy. Culture is especially evident in the field of cultural diplomacy, where it functions as a political tool. But what is the value of culture with regard to cultural diplomacy? An ‘act’ of cultural diplomacy, for example, might involve the exchange of cultural assets, whether it be products or people, and that can be shared and transported around the world to further the reputation or linkages between peoples, institutions, companies and states. The concern with reputation and attraction at a state level is often linked to Joseph Nye’s work on soft power.⁷⁴ In this scenario, culture has the potential to be useful to nations that seek to promote themselves on the world stage and culture may have the potential to further other agendas of the nation (such as economic or security-related ones). Therefore, in a political context, culture can potentially provide much value to a variety of stakeholders, including policymakers, strategists, the state more broadly, and its individual citizens. However, the following discussion of culture’s political dimension asserts how it is confined to a predominantly utilitarian role within cultural diplomacy discourse. I argue that this utilitarian role does not account for the networks and types of engagement that international cultural projects yield today. Therefore, I suggest that what culture can ‘do’ in this space is exceedingly dynamic, but that this potential is not fully realised.

⁷⁴ See Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*.

The wider context surrounding the unmet potential of culture in the political realm is succinctly explained by former UK ambassador to Lebanon, Tom Fletcher, who notes that diplomacy itself struggles to maximise the tools of a dynamic global environment.⁷⁵ Following diplomacy, cultural diplomacy must also keep pace with a rapidly changing global environment. Furthermore, governments that seek to ‘harness’ culture by executing cultural diplomacy strategies also encounter many challenges in terms of articulating value and assessing outcomes. These challenges are explored below as I propose that culture is an under-utilised source of value in a political context. By paying particular attention to the relatively recent and dominant ‘place’ for culture in the field of International Relations, especially as articulated through Joseph Nye’s work on soft power, I propose that culture within cultural diplomacy discourse and the way it is valued is in need of re-articulation to be the most relevant for those seeking to harness its influence today. Furthermore, I conclude that cultural diplomacy, and how culture is conceptualised in a political context, has much to add to cultural value debates more broadly.

A major issue within cultural diplomacy, when understood in terms of cultural value discourse, is that it is inherently contradictory and contains a structural double bind. This contradiction is a result of four key factors:

⁷⁵ Fletcher notes: ‘Diplomatic service—the clue is in the name; like the rest of the political class, diplomats have to find new ways to connect with the public they serve. Of course, international relations are much more than simply public relations, but diplomacy is not yet as social, progressive or democratic as it needs to become. It is not yet connected to the new sources of power.’ Fletcher, Tom, (2016) *The Naked Diplomat*, Harper Collins, London, p. 20.

- the instrumental approach in International Relations that sees culture co-opted for 'other' purposes;
- the role of aesthetics, that is rarely present in discussions concerning cultural diplomacy and why or how cultural expression benefits the state;
- the traditional, top-down structure of cultural diplomacy that is overly reliant on the promotion of state-to-state (or state-to-public) forms of communication; and
- the rise of networked power which has complicated the means of communication in terms of infrastructure, frequency and range of actors in the exercise of cultural diplomacy.

The combination of these circumstances means that there is uncertainty surrounding the articulation of cultural diplomacy's value within a globalised environment in theoretical and policy contexts. As a result, tracking and evaluating the influence of cultural diplomacy is problematic in nations such as Australia, especially when broad measures of success are relied upon. This is indicative of a wider disconnection between the belief in the value of culture and cultural diplomacy, and how we identify its outcomes. As a result, there is a gap in the knowledge surrounding how we conceptually understand cultural diplomacy and a need to improve how it is theoretically articulated in order to meet the requirements of cultural policy today.

Addressing this gap begins with the understanding that the parameters of cultural diplomacy are not fixed. Furthermore, critics and analysts lament the absence of substantial cultural diplomacy research, and there is conjecture surrounding how to best

measure the effects of cultural and public diplomacy.⁷⁶ These conditions, combined with an association to public diplomacy, describe an environment where cultural diplomacy resides within a hard power paradigm, yet is primarily described within a ‘softer’ context of relationship- and network-building. This structure also outlines the grounds for the disconnection between the formal articulation of cultural diplomacy and what it achieves in practice. In terms of cultural value, cultural diplomacy firmly adopts a utilitarian understanding of culture, where its activities and outcomes are designed to provide benefits or favourable conditions that benefit a nation. As a nation strategically deploys or subsidises culture, it also means that there is (typically) an epistemological understanding of culture as an object in the exercise of cultural diplomacy.

Cultural diplomacy can assist in achieving policy objectives and promotes mutual understanding between individuals, communities and nations. It is within this context that Cummings proposed the still widely accepted definition of cultural diplomacy as the ‘exchange of ideas, information, art, and other aspects of culture among nations and their peoples in order to foster mutual understanding.’⁷⁷ Cultural diplomacy may also ideally then contribute to conflict management (especially conflict prevention and

⁷⁶ The ‘lack’ of substantial cultural diplomacy research is in comparison to the amount of research into other aspects of political science, such as security and strategic studies, political economy and comparative politics. Banks comprehensively overviews the debate surrounding evaluation in his work concerning public diplomacy, of which cultural diplomacy is a subset. See Banks, Robert, (2011) ‘New CPD Perspectives: A Resource Guide to Public Diplomacy Evaluation,’ *USC Centre on Public Diplomacy*, CPD Blog, <http://uscpublicdiplomacy>, [accessed 01 Apr 2018], pp. 11–14. Sevin also looks at public diplomacy evaluation and argues it should be evaluated with a six-pathway connection framework in terms of its ability to be a foreign policy tool rather than communications process. See Sevin, Efe, (2017) ‘A Multilayered Approach to Public Diplomacy Evaluation: Pathways of Connection,’ *Politics & Policy*, Vol. 45, no. 5, pp. 879–901. However, these sources do not explicitly consider the evaluation of cultural diplomacy, contributing to the argument that it is under-theorised.

⁷⁷ Cummings, *Cultural Diplomacy and the United States Government: A Survey*, p. 1.

potentially de-escalation) more broadly, but more often in a more subtle, incremental, or simply slower, manner.⁷⁸ The arts, as various forms and genres of cultural expression, are a popular instrument of cultural diplomacy as they can express values and represent people, ideas and concepts, all of which contribute to the communication of national identity, such as Japan's *Kawaii* Ambassadors.⁷⁹ These definitions and aspects of cultural diplomacy mean that the value of culture in this context is highly utilitarian, as it seeks to manage the international environment through a strategic use of cultural assets and initiatives.

Nye's perspective on American foreign affairs post-9/11 also defines the value of culture as utilitarian in his work on soft power. He argues that, if public diplomacy describes all that a nation does to explain itself to the world, cultural diplomacy plays a central role in this task.⁸⁰ Accordingly, the prism of soft power provides a mainstream manifestation of how the utility of culture is understood in the international arena. Inclusive of culture, values and foreign policies, soft power was initially described by Nye in his 1990 work *Bound to Lead: the Changing Nature of American Power*.⁸¹ He expands upon these ideas

⁷⁸ Ibid. Despite the emphasis upon mutual understanding, the realist (and western) perspective which is dominant throughout International Relations considers culture as 'a minor matter,' because states will generally behave similarly despite internal differences. See Milner, Anthony, (2017) 'Culture and the international relations of Asia,' *The Pacific Review*, Vol. 30, no. 6, p. 858 and Kenneth Waltz as cited in Mearsheimer, John J., (2010) 'Structural Realism,' in Dunne, Tim, Kurki, Milja & Smith, Steve, (eds.), *International relations theories: Discipline and diversity*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, p. 78.

⁷⁹ Appointed by Japan's Foreign Ministry, female ambassadors of 'cute' were tasked to promote Japanese pop culture overseas. Kaminishikawara, Jun, (2009) "'Cute' Ambassadors Roam Globe to Promote Japan's Pop Culture," *Japan Times*, 17 Jun, <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2009/06/17/national/cute-ambassadors-roam-globe-to-promote-japans-pop-culture/> [accessed 31 Jul 2020].

⁸⁰ Nye sees the role of culture as the use of creative expression and exchanges of ideas, information and people to increase mutual understanding. As cited in Schneider, *Cultural Diplomacy: Hard to define, but you'd know it if you saw it*, p. 191.

⁸¹ See Nye, Joseph Jr., (1990) *Bound to Lead: the Changing Nature of American Power*, Basic Books, New York. In this work, he articulates a multiplicity of modes of power in the world, and that success (for America) in the contemporary political climate requires 'a diversified portfolio of power.' A rising part of

in his seminal 2004 publication to define soft power as, ‘the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payment.’⁸² By delineating between traditional International Relations power structures and soft power, Nye argues that the colloquial sticks and carrots (i.e. coercion and payments) are strategies of power that should be considered ‘hard,’ while the third, less tangible dimension of power exercised through attraction (seduction and co-option), is denoted as soft.⁸³ Nye acknowledges that culture itself is soft power’s most likely resource. This is a central proposition because it consequently informs the domestic values and, therefore, policy directions concerning culture (on national and international levels).⁸⁴ Nye considers culture as ‘a set of values and practices that create meaning for a society in various forms.’⁸⁵ When associating cultural value and the political domain, soft power is commonly adopted as a means to project a particular identity that legitimises or communicates a country’s actions in the international arena. Yet, this identity is also highly utilitarian. Nye’s proposition of value, therefore, is the development of a framework where (political and financial) investment in culture is a justified political manoeuvre due to the return on investment it provides a nation if successfully exploited.⁸⁶ While Nye’s conceptualisation provides a more prominent ‘place’ for culture in foreign affairs and international politics,

this diversification includes soft power, which he describes as the cultural and ideological field that enhances a nation’s ability to effectively cooperate with and operate in international institutions. Also see Smoler, Fredric, (1991) ‘Are we Really Going the Way of the British Empire?’ *American Heritage*, Vol. 42, no. 3, May/June, <https://www.americanheritage.com/content/are-we-really-going-way-british-empire> [accessed 04 Feb 2018], p. 53.

⁸² Nye, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*, p. x.

⁸³ Nye acknowledges the element of risk that soft power represents where guaranteed outcomes are not possible, again confirming why the soft power of culture is presented as a ‘weaker’ strategy in disciplinary IR (i.e. soft). *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 142.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁸⁶ In 2011, Nye expanded his definition describing soft power as ‘the ability to affect others through the co-optive means of framing the agenda, persuading, and eliciting positive attraction in order to obtain preferred outcomes.’ Nye, Joseph Jr., (2011) *The Future of Power*, Public Affairs, New York, pp. 20–21.

it remains a narrow conceptualisation of cultural value as it rests on the justification of culture as an instrument of the state, given its focus on foreign affairs and power, but is less concerned with the existence of additional types of value (beyond the state).

Cultural Diplomacy Debates

There are many points of contention in the cultural diplomacy literature. For example, Arndt argues that, 'cultural diplomacy can only be said to take place when formal diplomats, serving national governments, try to shape and channel this natural flow to advance national interests,' whilst everything else is a matter for cultural relations that 'grow naturally and organically, without government intervention.'⁸⁷ Mitchell agrees, stating that cultural relations are practised by educators, expositors or independent agencies, while cultural diplomacy activities emanate from the political entities of the government.⁸⁸ However, Jora problematises this assertion by contending that the 'exercise of influence is related increasingly to forging partnerships, leveraging private sector support, managing networks and shaping public opinion.'⁸⁹ This influence is not necessarily the result of direct state involvement. Chey concurs, noting that because 'it builds trust and understanding between nations and cultures, [t]rue cultural diplomacy starts with individuals and builds through institutional and government links.'⁹⁰ Kim also agrees that a diversity of actors exists and urges us to consider a stereoscope vision that permits government bodies, nongovernmental organisations and individuals as

⁸⁷ Arndt, *The First Resort of Kings*, p. xviii.

⁸⁸ Mitchell, John M., (1986) *International Cultural Relations: Vol. 3, Key Concepts in International Relations Series*, Allen & Unwin, London, p. 5.

⁸⁹ Jora, *New Practices and Trends in Cultural Diplomacy*, p. 44.

⁹⁰ Chey, Jocelyn, *Cultural Diplomacy and Australia China Relations*, AIIA NSW Branch Lecture - Charteris Lecture, Women's College, University of Sydney, 20 July 2012, p. 23.

conductors of cultural diplomacy.⁹¹ This is at odds with the narrower view of cultural diplomacy as a state-based activity that describes a top-down structure, where power flows in one way and where major cultural players (such as non-government entities) are denied agency or even recognition. However, in reality, cultural diplomacy does not exist without non-government entities and their input. Across these debates, the value that various stakeholders provide, therefore, is also problematic.

Further to these challenges, the political dimension of cultural value as understood through cultural diplomacy is restricted because, as Mark notes, cultural diplomacy is 'poorly explicated.'⁹² Ang contends that it is 'insufficiently analysed' and Jora reminds us that 'the reality is more complex than the political theory created to explain it.'⁹³ It is not an unreasonable assumption that this is compounded by the dynamic nature of culture, which makes designing cultural diplomacy programs an ongoing process, especially, as Goff notes, because cultural diplomacy is contingent, ad hoc and that 'there is no single formula for what works.'⁹⁴ Reasons for the void in cultural diplomacy discourse include Nisbett's suggestion that the literature is 'excessively simplified' in its

⁹¹ Hwajung, Kim, (2011) 'Cultural Diplomacy as the Means of Soft Power in an Information Age,' http://www.culturaldiplomacy.org/pdf/case-studies/Hwajung_Kim_Cultural_Diplomacy_as_the_Means_of_Soft_Power_in_the_Information_Age.pdf [accessed 20 Jul 2017].

⁹² See Mark, Simon L., (2010) 'Rethinking Cultural Diplomacy: The Cultural Diplomacy of New Zealand, the Canadian Federation and Quebec,' *Political Science*, Vol. 62, no. 1, p. 64.

⁹³ Ang, Ien and Isar, Yudhishtir R & Mar, Phillip (2015) 'Cultural diplomacy: beyond the national interest?' *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, Vol. 21, no. 4, p. 365.

Jora, Lucian, (2013) 'New Practices and Trends in Cultural Diplomacy,' *Political Science International Relations*, Vol. 10, no. 1, p. 43.

⁹⁴ Goff, Patricia, M., (2013) 'Cultural Diplomacy,' in Andrew F., Heine, Jorge & Thakur, Ramesh (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Diplomacy*, Cooper, <http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199588862.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199588862-e-24> [accessed 04 Apr 2018].

focus on soft outcomes, while Glade also attributes this failing to a lack of metrics—particularly given the long-term variables that cultural diplomacy tackles.⁹⁵ This lack of nuance in cultural diplomacy literature points to the wider difficulty of discerning cultural value in terms of strategic political outcomes, rather than a lack of interest in cultural outcomes, per se. As we recall from the opening chapter of this thesis, DFAT is interested, but is currently developing the pathway of its public diplomacy programming and appealed for public submissions on the topic of soft power. As a result of the gaps in cultural diplomacy literature, discussions concerning the value of culture are also peripheral in political science because vocabulary and metrics are less developed than the conceptualisation of ‘hard’ political topics—such as security and political economy—and the role of aesthetics is rarely present in debates surrounding cultural diplomacy, especially within positivist international relations discourse. Ultimately, cultural diplomacy is complicated by issues surrounding aesthetics, authenticity, top-down power structures, its detailed consideration of the success of people-to-people relations and an overall conceptual disagreement concerning who it involves and its benefits. As Bound, Briggs and Jones note, the multiplicity of actors and infrastructure within this arena is an ongoing source of discussion because the model of cultural diplomacy is still predominantly based on the old (and outdated) style of diplomacy that primarily deals with communications between fewer players, such as formal state representatives and the public elite.⁹⁶ Today’s cultural diplomacy must deal with interactions that are

⁹⁵ See Nisbett, *New perspectives on instrumentalism: an empirical study of cultural diplomacy*, p. 572 and Glade, William, (2009) ‘Issues in the Genesis and Organization of Cultural Diplomacy: A Brief Critical History,’ *Journal of Arts, Management, Law and Society*, Vol. 39, no. 4, p. 257.

⁹⁶ Bound, et al., *Cultural diplomacy – culture is a central component of international relations. It’s time to unlock its full potential*, p. 75. The restrictive definitions of cultural diplomacy have not been wholly dismissed by IR practitioners. Two key theoretical distinctions are relevant to this historical overview of diplomacy, the first of which was developed in the 1970s. Here, a subcategorisation of various levels

(especially in the online environment) many-to-many in nature to produce maximal value to a nation and its citizens. Public diplomacy in a contemporary sense needs to be much more responsive and to welcome two-way communication exchanges to adapt to how cultural messages are created and consumed across the world today.

Contemporary Public Diplomacy: the challenge of keeping up with networks and rapid communications

A contemporary approach to understanding the value of cultural diplomacy not only pays attention to soft power outcomes (e.g. being considered 'attractive' by other stakeholders), but, within the context of globalisation, investigates *how* new relationships and interactions are formed that generate influence/attraction. Today, it is insufficient to seek new networks through the use of culture, which is the stated objective of cultural diplomacy as understood through old diplomacy and the original soft power thesis. Instead, there needs to be a critical examination of how, where and what these networks consist of. As Cull notes, the existence of a two-way street which exhibits the element of mutuality is a requirement of new public diplomacy.⁹⁷

within diplomacy was developed to revise the understanding of new and old diplomacy. *Track I* and *Track II* was first articulated by United States diplomat, Joseph Montville and usage based upon this basic model continues today. Homans, Charles (2011) 'Track II Diplomacy: A Short History,' *Foreign Policy*, 20 Jun <http://foreignpolicy.com/2011/06/20/track-ii-diplomacy-a-short-history/> [accessed 25 Apr 2018]. Later, a third track was added, and indeed some models have extended this to five, even nine-track models. See Diamond, Louise & John McDonald, John, (1996) *Multi-Track Diplomacy: A Systems Approach to Peace*, Kumarian Press, West Hartford, pp. 4–5.

⁹⁷ Cull's recent work also advocates for an exploration of public diplomacy 2.0 that takes into account the significance of public opinion upon the conduct of foreign policy. He argues that we should look at technology's ability to create relationships (such as social networks), the rise of user-generated content and the horizontal configuration of these networks. Cull, Nicholas J., (2013) 'The Long Road to Public Diplomacy 2.0,' *International Studies Review*, Vol 15, no. 1, doi.org/10.1111/misr.12026, pp. 124–126. Cull, Nicholas J., (2009) *Public Diplomacy: Lessons from the Past*, Figueroa Press, Los Angeles, p. 23.

Information in public diplomacy today should be analysed in terms of its mutual flow and solicitation of a greater degree of exchange. It is in this sense that cultural diplomacy not only transmits culture through content, but is a culture in its own right.⁹⁸

Examining these elements of new public diplomacy potentially offers a means to add clarity to address much of the ambiguity that surrounds cultural diplomacy, an ambiguity that is partly due to cultural diplomacy's connection to old diplomacy. However, Owen agrees that despite theoretical debate surrounding new public diplomacy, the changes and global context that we reside in today remain insufficiently addressed by diplomatic practice and theory. In particular, the impact of digital communications in relation to soft power and public diplomacy is ambiguous and fails to meaningfully account for the fact that we, the public, now engage in 'relations with everyone.'⁹⁹ Owen questions, therefore, whether we should rely on (state) institutions to regulate and constrain behaviour in the midst of decentralised and fluid networks of people. One way to address this, he suggests, is a digitisation of the traditional tools of diplomacy. Grincheva explores this premise in her work on international practices in museums around the world. In her discussion, museums are positioned as valuable vehicles of cultural diplomacy 2.0 through their creation of trans-cultural encounters that can act as public forums, especially through their use of social media.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 127.

⁹⁹ Owen, Taylor, (2016) 'The networked state and the end of 20th century diplomacy,' *Global Affairs*, Vol. 2, no. 3, p. 305.

¹⁰⁰ For more information please refer to Grincheva, Natalia, (2013) 'Cultural Diplomacy 2.0: Challenges and Opportunities in Museum International Practices,' *Museum & Society*, March, Vol. 11, no. 1, pp. 39–49.

Bjola and Holmes also consider the changing nature of diplomacy but do so through the language of organisational behaviour, positioning it as a sophisticated method of change management.¹⁰¹ They argue that digital diplomacy should be at the forefront of managing information, public diplomacy and international negotiations in today's global conditions. They too, however, note that little is known from an analytical standpoint regarding the limitations or degrees of success it may offer.¹⁰² Less is also known on the effects of culture in the digital world in terms of direct effects on the longer-term diplomatic agendas of nations. While the focus on digital communications is not a theme of this thesis, the above provocations are useful to the discussion of the value of culture, as they encourage exploration of the ways in which international actors *interact*, as digital diplomacy does in terms of social media engagement and other forms of online user-generated content. The attention to the interactions between actors in the consideration of cultural value is central in this thesis.

Cultural diplomacy in today's global society: its evolution and the context of Australia

Cultural diplomacy's current state of flux is due to several reasons that predominantly involve the role of actors and technology. As Muldoon, Zamorano, Owen and Fletcher emphasise, the actors on the 'official' diplomatic stage include NGOs and representatives from multinational corporations, as well as an increasing number of non-state agents playing a more substantial role in this arena that was previously

¹⁰¹ Bjola, Corneli & Holmes, Marcus, (2015) *Digital Diplomacy: Theory and Practice*, Routledge, London, p. 1.

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 4.

reserved for professional diplomats, politicians, international bureaucrats and high-level officials.¹⁰³ Regarding the discussion of the value of culture, understanding cultural diplomacy in terms of its relationships and networks becomes essential. Technology has transformed communications not only between individuals, but communities and right up to the transnational level. It is more layered and complex and has redefined and expanded audiences or the 'receivers' of information. Rather than targets of cultural diplomacy, diplomatic strategies in this space need to evolve to understand this shift better and then harness the network as a means to power (and even meta-power).¹⁰⁴ One simple example is the ease with which people can access and disseminate information on the internet beyond that officially released or reported by more traditional news and media sources. This may certainly advance, question or harm the way a nation 'explains itself to the world' and does not emanate from formal diplomatic channels. Furthermore, if one has access to online digital networks, the internet restricts the control of a central narrative as emanating from a state. It would follow that if a state wished to be more involved in this flow of information, it too should embrace the tools of digital communications in a more horizontal capacity that is based on more 'authentic' interactivity rather than the projection of a pre-determined narrative. Value,

¹⁰³ See: Muldoon, James, P. Jnr., Aviel, Joann Fagot, Reitano, Richard & Sullivan, Earl, (eds.) (1999) *Multilateral Diplomacy and the United Nations Today*, Westview Press, Colorado, USA, pp. 203–204; Zamorano, *Reframing Cultural Diplomacy*, p. 169; Owen, *The networked state and the end of 20th century diplomacy*, p. 305; and Fletcher, *The Naked Diplomat*.

¹⁰⁴ Definitions of meta-power vary across disciplines, but it is used in this thesis in relation to Burns and Hall's assertions that meta-power involves power over power, which is transformative and structuring. Burns, Tom R., & Hall, Peter M., (2013) *The Meta-Power Paradigm: Structuring Social Systems, Institutions and Global Contexts*, Peter Lang GmbH, Internationaler Verlag der Wissenschaften, <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=sso&db=cab00006a&AN=melb.b6514141&site=eds-live&scope=site> [accessed 27 Feb 2020], p. 13.

therefore, becomes less focused on a top-down transmission of messages via cultural mediums and dependant on the interactions between a variety of platforms and users.

Theoretically, in the standard definition of cultural diplomacy, culture is assigned a utilitarian position that denies the potential to generate newer forms of cultural diplomacy because the scope of culture is constrained. But this definition does not wholly reflect the reality within which international cultural projects operate and the types of value they can generate today (as I discuss in chapter seven). A large part of this is due to the fact that the goals and actors are pre-determined in a soft-power style of cultural diplomacy, yet a wider diversity of actors now exist. Therefore, a pre-orchestration of outcomes is a contrived exercise. This means that cultural diplomacy is underappreciated in political discourse and also that there is potentially much 'cultural diplomacy' that is under-interrogated, especially on the unofficial, diplomatic stage. This represents missed opportunities for states and relevant policy stakeholders to leverage cultural diplomacy to yield more specific outcomes, or at least begin the exploratory process with which to identify patterns that might be of use in the future to describe other manifestations of cultural value.

A repositioning of cultural diplomacy is essential if its cultural value is to be understood more comprehensively. This task begins with addressing its tendency to rely on instrumentality (such as soft power) and top-down configuration, and expanding this tendency to adopt a more exploratory approach to recognising value. Ultimately, the importance of culture's value in International Relations is under-theorised compared to

other aspects of the discipline, such as political economy and security studies and international governance.¹⁰⁵ Byrne notes, in terms of public diplomacy and soft power, that this is 'a discussion that is only beginning.'¹⁰⁶ However, while the political context has a limited scope in terms of how the contributions of culture are understood, it is not the only dimension in which culture is reduced to a predominantly instrumental perspective with which to describe its value. The next section discusses the role of the economic dimension in the examination of cultural value with regard to the creative economy.

The Economic Dimension: Creative Economy

As in the political dimension, culture is constrained when approached from the specific economic perspective that gained popularity in the late stages of the twentieth century onwards, called the creative economy. Both approaches adopt an overly narrow definition of culture but do so in the pursuit of different objectives: the instrumentality

¹⁰⁵ This is not to say that the culture and cultural issues are completely absent in International Relations. See, for example, Lapid & Kratochwil, Lebow's cultural theory of International Relations and Bleiker's work on aesthetics and world politics. Yet despite growing interest in the intersection of culture and International Relations, it is not yet a major tenet of the discipline. Moore and Shepard suggest that interest in 'cultural' areas, such International Relations' aesthetic turn, are less visible due to the disciplinary structure of IR that '...[has] rigid definitional boundaries of the appropriate subject of analysis by serious IR scholars, materials that have progressed very little since the inception of the discipline.' Since the publication of these works (in 1996, 2009, 2008 and 2010), Bleiker notes in 2017 that, while global politics and the discipline of International Relations have evolved beyond state-centric themes to consider alternative approaches in IR '...[as] influential enough to make a significant difference... *not yet have [they] entered the mainstream* of International Relations scholarship.' [emphasis added].

See: Lapid, Yosef & Kratochwil, Friedrich V., (1996) *The Return of Culture and Identity in IR Theory*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, Boulder; Bleiker, Roland, (2009) *Aesthetics and World Politics*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York; Lebow, Richard Ned, (2008) *A Cultural Theory of International Relations*, Cambridge University Press; Moore, Cerwyn & Shepherd, Laura J., (2010) 'Aesthetics and International Relations: Towards a Global Politics,' *Global Society*, Vol. 24, no. 3, p. 299; and Bleiker, Roland, (2017) 'In Search of Thinking Space: Reflections on the Aesthetic Turn in International Political Theory,' *Millennium Journal of International Studies*, Vol. 45, no. 2, p. 259.

¹⁰⁶ Byrne, *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*, p. 178.

of the political dimension was concerned with the ability of culture to accrue advantage and power with regards to the state; while the economic dimension is predominantly concerned with the accumulation of monetary value as a result of cultural activity and content. The creative economy paradigm has flourished in post-industrial economies where ideas are highly valued forms of capital, and the cultural industries are legitimised and expanded to incorporate the various economic activities concerned with the creative sector.¹⁰⁷ Australia's creative economy is robust, with the most recent 2016 Census showing that the creative workforce comprises 5.5 per cent of Australian employment, growing annually by an average of 2.2 per cent from 2011 to 2016.¹⁰⁸ From 2016–17, cultural and creative activity contributed \$111.7 billion to Australia's economy.¹⁰⁹ These figures outline the economic impact that the creative and cultural industries have in Australia, an impact that makes them an important aspect to examine in any conversation that considers cultural value.

¹⁰⁷ The creative economy is an umbrella term effectively encompassing the following: the creative industries, creative cities and clusters, cultural industries and the creative class to consider a modality of economics/creativity. For a historical overview of cultural industries/ creative industries see 'Chapter 2: The Culture of Cultural Policy,' in Bell, David & Oakley, Kate, (2015) *Cultural Policy*, Routledge, Oxfordshire and New York and Howkins, John, (2001) *The Creative Economy: How People Make Money from Ideas*, Penguin, London.

¹⁰⁸ This rate of growth is nearly twice that of the Australian workforce, according to the QUT Digital Media Research Centre. See 'The Creative Economy in Australia,' *Queensland University of Technology (QUT) Digital Media Research Centre*,

<https://research.qut.edu.au/dmrc/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2018/02/Factsheet-1-Creative-Employment-overview-V5-1.pdf> [accessed 01 May 2018].

Australia also experienced an annual 2.8 per cent growth in employment from 2006–2011 within the creative industries (and creative work in other industries). This represents a rate of growth 40 per cent faster than in the economy as a whole. 'Creative Economy Report Card,' 2013, *ARC Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries and Innovation (CCI)*, http://www.cci.edu.au/Creative_Economy_report_card.pdf [accessed 10 October 2014]. N.B. CCI's Creative Economy Report Card 2013, used 2011 Australian Census data.

¹⁰⁹ 'Cultural and creative activity in Australia 2008-09 to 2016-17,' *Australian Government Department of Communications and the Arts*, Oct 2018, <https://www.communications.gov.au/publications/cultural-and-creative-activity-australia-2008-09-2016-17> [accessed 20 Dec 18].

The impacts of globalisation, especially the frenetic movement of information and people, fluidity of trade, capital and other investments combined with the expansion of the cultural industries are crucial to examining the role of the creative economy in the definition of cultural value.¹¹⁰ For the cultural industries, the pace of globalisation means that cultural assets can be experienced, shared, interacted with and consumed at an extraordinarily expedited rate. The impact of globalisation on cultural value in terms of economics also involves the evolution of global markets, transnational corporations and increased connectedness between societies.¹¹¹ While international finance and trade have fluctuated and flattened since the Great Recession of late 2000s/early 2010s, global inflows and outflows not only include goods/services and finances, but also people and data, meaning that the 'real value of globalisation: [lies in] the flow of ideas, talents and inputs that spur innovation and productivity.'¹¹² This connectedness means that globalisation does not exclusively pertain to the economic domain, but simultaneously interacts with cultural, social and political spheres.¹¹³ Wiseman's prophetic observation concerning globalisation in 2001 is perhaps even more relevant today:

It involves a set of contradictory and contested processes that provide both threats and possibilities...[it] is the shorthand for all the ways in which space and

¹¹⁰ As categorised by the International Monetary Fund as the four basic (economic) aspects of globalisation. See IMF, (2000) 'Globalization: Threat or Opportunity,' *IMF Publications*, 12 Apr, <http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/ib/2000/041200to.htm> [accessed 03 Feb 2018].

¹¹¹ Manyika et al. describe this latest phase of globalisation as characterised by digital flows that describe the processes of cross-border information and data exchange. The McKinsey Global Institute (MGI) note that, over the last decade, digital flows of commerce, information, video and communication traffic have surged, with cross-border bandwidth growing by 45 times since 2005 and is projected to increase another nine times by 2021. See Manyika, *Digital Globalisation: the new era of global flows*, p. 8.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Wiseman, John, (2001) 'Thinking and Acting Locally and Globally,' paper presented at *Globalisation and the Live Performing Arts Conference* (23rd and 24th June), Centre for Theatre and Drama Studies, Clayton, Monash Theatre Papers, Victoria, p. 30.

time have been compressed by the acceleration of financial, resource and information flows so that distant actions have local effects.¹¹⁴

Acknowledging the potentially positive and negative effects of globalisation, the often exploitative nature of it is made clearer: it can be perceived as a triumph of market-led values, and simultaneously exclude (or take advantage of) countries or individuals which are not as commercially or digitally developed.¹¹⁵

Value in terms of the Creative Economy

The creative economy model deliberately commodifies creativity. This commodity can be sold, traded and divided, as well as possessed by workers, individuals, groups, institutions or nations. Florida's claim that 'creativity is everyone's natural asset to exploit,' succinctly illustrates the fundamental, capitalist assumption of this perspective.¹¹⁶ Yet, what is creativity? For many nations, the answer to this question is articulated in economic terms: creativity is the capital that facilitates the cultural assets that produce the goods or products of an enterprise. Australia's former cultural diplomacy body, the Australian International Cultural Council (AICC), defined Australian cultural assets as various types of creative activity including: theatre; dance; film; television; new media; music; visual arts; literature; cultural heritage and conservation

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p. 28.

¹¹⁵ However, the exploitative nature of globalisation may also be felt in developed countries. The global financial crisis, which intensified in mid-2007 and in which the USA was the premier, free-market economy at the time, demonstrates how globalisation may encompass negative consequences regardless of one's relation to (and status within) the global market. This inequality, therefore, is experienced within both emerging and developed economies.

¹¹⁶ Florida, Richard, (2002) *The Rise of the Creative Class*, Basic Books, USA, p, 2.

services; design and architecture; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts; disability arts; multicultural arts; community arts; and national collecting institutions.¹¹⁷ In the creative economy, various genres of artistic expression and infrastructure that produce content are valued in terms of their involvement in an economic process. Inputs are the skills and talents that are creatively exercised by people to produce aesthetic content, which is the output. Creative capital is also the power or ability to produce the outputs or aesthetic content. Cultural value, in this domain, is generated when creative capital is successfully deployed.

Du Gay and Pryke contextualise the prolific, entrepreneurial focus on creativity by noting that the 'cultural turn' is not only bolstered by a general belief that culture can enhance understandings of modern life, but that cultural considerations can tangibly intervene in contemporary economic and organisational life.¹¹⁸ As a producer of cultural products, another central tenet of the creative economy is its association with utility that aligns culture and creativity with materiality, the physical and the quantifiable (and marketable). The cross-pollination of cultural and economic spheres link practical outcomes with more abstract aesthetic considerations in a commodifying process whereby 'turning ideas into assets anyone can make creativity pay.'¹¹⁹ Marketing the assets of culture is not only a legitimate selling technique, but represents the enmeshed spheres of the cultural and economic where '...culture itself is increasingly being

¹¹⁷ 'Australia International Cultural Council,' *Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade*, <http://www.dfat.gov.au/aicc/index.html>, [accessed 13 Mar 2015].

¹¹⁸ Du Gay, Paul & Pryke, Michael, (2002) *Cultural Economy: Cultural Analysis and Commercial Life*, Sage, London, p. 1.

¹¹⁹ Howkins, *The Creative Economy: How People Make Money from Ideas*, back cover.

supplied in commodity form, i.e. as goods and services produced by private firms in conformity with price signals and profitability criteria.’¹²⁰ The narrative of cultural value in terms of the creative economy and investment in its creative industries are now normative aspects of modern economies and their future development. In Australia, 2013 marked the release of a national cultural policy, *Creative Australia*, almost 20 years after the Keating Government’s *Creative Nation* report in 1994, which was Australia’s first ever federal cultural policy.¹²¹ *Creative Australia* presented a 10-year plan for the Australian cultural sector, declaring that it

celebrates Australia’s strong, diverse and inclusive culture. It describes the essential role arts and culture play in the life of every Australian and how creativity is central to Australia’s economic and social success: a creative nation is a productive nation.¹²²

The emphasis upon the arts and culture in this policy delineates a scope that firmly defines value in terms of industry, economic development and productivity. This scope also acknowledges the value of creative people who leverage their culture to produce creative goods and services, and the physical spaces in which they work, reside and pursue leisure.¹²³ Florida names these people as being a part of a ‘creative class,’ who

¹²⁰ Anheier, Helmut & Isar, Yudhishtir R., (eds.) (2008) ‘The Cultural Economy,’ *The Cultures and Globalisation Series Vol 2*, Sage, London, p. 308.

¹²¹ ‘Creative Nation: Commonwealth Cultural Policy,’ *National Library of Australia*, October 1994, <http://pandora.nla.gov.au/pan/21336/20031011-0000/www.nla.gov.au/creative.nation/contents.html> [accessed 01 May 2018].

¹²² ‘Executive Summary: Creative Australia,’ *Australian Government Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport*, 13 Mar 2013, <http://apo.org.au/system/files/33126/apo-nid33126-39286.pdf> [accessed 01 May 2018], p. 6.

¹²³ For further discussion of creative people see Florida’s work on the ‘creative class,’ which identifies a socio-demographic of people who not only produce creative content/goods/services but also those who live ‘creatively,’ who are typically highly educated, upwardly mobile and experimental peoples. The

form 'creative clusters.'¹²⁴ The creative economy neatly aligns with neoliberalism, in which mechanisms of market principles define the category of the creative class with associations to being employed and involved with profit, the expansion of the size (space) of the market, the (creative) self as entrepreneur/market participant and decline of public spending in favour of the creative output of the individual. In this paradigm, the concept of value is bound to the market and the pursuit of being a successful, innovative or knowledge-based society or member within such a society.

The Creative Economy - Theoretical challenges in Terms of Cultural Value and the Impact Agenda

One of the major challenges of relying on the creative economy to express the value of culture is that an economic viewpoint only partially represents how creativity functions. Nevertheless, the economic perspective is the sole, or at best the predominant, means of understanding and justifying the cultural value of creativity in many governmental and policy contexts, which I explore in chapter six. Yet, it is not the only experience of culture and creativity (such as the arts) that people are involved in and not every form of creativity can be quantified and measured according to specific (economic) criteria. This disconnect creates a paradoxical scenario where economic criteria are merely one means of 'valuing' cultural and creative expression, yet are the predominant mechanism

physical places where these creative individuals work and reside become the basis for *creative clusters*, where creativity is productive and prolific. To Florida, in addition to cultural output, both people and places play important roles in the creative economy. See Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, p. 8.

¹²⁴ The creative class is defined as 'a cluster of people who have common interests and tend to think, feel and behave similarly, but these similarities are fundamentally determined by economic function - by the kind of [creative] work they do for a living.' Creative clusters are the location of the new power bases that contain people from the creative class. Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, pp. 6–8.

by which types of cultural expression, such as the arts, are held accountable by governments in many countries as a means of justification to their publics.¹²⁵

The concept of the creative economy is also challenged in debate about the appropriation of creative terminology into practices of commodification and the use of global market rhetoric to define the value of culture to publics.¹²⁶ For many, the insertion of the creative domain into market-driven logic is incomplete at best. In a review of the economics of cultural impact, O'Connor notes that '[t]he once esoteric language of neoclassical economics...now pervades discussion of cultural activity.'¹²⁷ Bharucha extends the argument that economic language is problematic when he asserts that the terms surrounding the cultural/creative industries and economies are enmeshed in assumptions of power structures, geared towards income-making processes, structures and vocabularies, and are often used interchangeably. Thus, the

¹²⁵ This includes countries with a comparable westernised economic structure and developed cultural sector, such as the UK and Australia. See Walmsley, who argues that over the past few decades in the UK, neo-liberal perceptions of cultural value have dominated the creative industries where arts and culture have been so monetised and industrialised that 'their real (social and intrinsic) value has become secondary.' Walmsley, *Whose value is it anyway? A neo-institutionalist approach to articulating and evaluating artistic value*, p. 200.

Also see Meyrick, Phiddian and Barnett who contend in their work based on experiences surrounding value within the context of Australian culture that the arts should resist being wholly quantified and that 'datafied modes of analysis are claiming authority over domains of human existence they have *limited capacity for understanding*.' (Emphasis added). Their case study research concerning the communication of the actual value of arts and culture using Adelaide's arts and culture and state and local government reference points led them to contend that when it came to acknowledging value publicly, measurement strategies from governments and the cultural sector alike, '...seem[ed] to forever fall short of the requisite level of proof.' Meyrick, et al., *What Matters? Talking Value in Australian Culture*, pp. viii–xi.

¹²⁶ For further information, refer to Pierre Bourdieu's 1979 work *La Distinction: Critique sociale du jugement* and 1999 work, *Une révolution conservatrice dans l'édition*. This critique forms a central aspect of the Frankfurt School's condemnations of commodified culture.

¹²⁷ To O'Connor, economic terminology is so pervasive in the cultural sector that he notes that '[c]ulture might be the delicious flesh but the hard bones, the heart and lung system of the real, are economic.' O'Connor, Justin, (2015) 'Assessing the Cultural Impact of Economics,' *Making Culture Count: The Politics of Cultural Measurement*, p. 81.

creative economy is not genuine advocacy for the arts, but a neo-liberal capitalisation based upon an affiliation with artistic practice.¹²⁸ He notes ‘...the creative economy... [has] very little to do with the multi-dimensional complexities of creativity as it unfolds and manifests itself in a multitude of artistic and cultural practices.’¹²⁹

When value is defined from the context of a market-driven logic, questions about participation arise—namely, who benefits from the manifestation of a creative economy, and who is excluded from this domain?¹³⁰ Gibson and Klocker urge us to consider what it means when particularly northern, economic knowledges are universalised and absorbed as normative. They also share suspicion about the concept of the creative economy, suggesting that there is a ‘critical absence of reflexivity in the production, distribution and reception of the ideas contained [in the literature about creativity and the creative industries].’¹³¹ When challenged in this manner, the link between creativity and capitalism is problematised: the creative economy is not so much a descriptor of the contemporary cultural industries, but an influential narrative surrounding wealth creation and market exchange of assets that primes cultural value

¹²⁸ Bharucha, Rustom, (2010) ‘Creativity: Alternative Paradigms to the Creative Economy,’ in Anheier, Helmut, & Isar, Yudhishtir R., (eds.), *Cultural Expression, Creativity and Innovation: The Cultures and Globalization Series Vol 3*, SAGE, London, pp. 21–22.

¹²⁹ Bharucha notes that creativity does not always operate as a commodity, as demonstrated in his examination of the everyday arts practice of the *kalam pattu* in India. This performance/art is communally owned and resides outside a commercial paradigm. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

¹³⁰ Hewis addresses the problem of access in his work that highlights how the insertion of cultural practices into the market paradigm occurs seamlessly, leaving many issues conveniently unanswered. He observes that it contributes toward a pseudo-democracy of supply and demand. Anheier & Isar, *The Cultural Economy: The Cultures and Globalisation Series Vol 2*, p. 6.

¹³¹ Gibson, Chris & Klocker, Natascha, (2004) “Academic Publishing as ‘creative’ industry, and recent discourses of ‘creative economies’: some critical reflections,” *Area*, Vol. 36, no. 4, p. 423.

to be predominantly approached through the rhetoric of economic principle. Specifically, Bharucha urges us,

...to work against this hype in order to highlight those particular modes and modalities of creativity in the cultures of the 'South' which do not lend themselves to the imperatives of the global economy, [especially] as they seek out their own modes of sustainability within - and against - the logic of commodification.¹³²

Resistance to the creative economy paradigm, however, is largely incremental, with the status quo ultimately maintained as the marketplace is presently a central focus in much cultural policy.¹³³ This is partly because the neoliberal nature of endless accrual and consumption establishes a situation where being 'left out' or a non-participant in the creative economy would be worse than being a participant that is disadvantaged by its inequalities.¹³⁴ It is also because the creative economy is cleverly positioned as a rational, quantifiable explanation for the changes that have occurred in the last half-century because, after all, it is largely our active participation in the creative economy which has prompted such transformation. As a consequence, the (perceived) lack of

¹³² Bharucha, *Cultural Expression, Creativity and Innovation: The Cultures and Globalization Series Vol 3*, p. 21.

¹³³ The notion of the market as central is explored in the case study later in this thesis, which examines the City of Melbourne and its policy pursuit of being known as a 'creative city.' Also see Belfiore, *'Impact', 'Value' and 'Bad Economics'*, pp. 95–110.

¹³⁴ Anheier and Isar note that even seemingly non market-driven forms of culture are being forced into cultural economic paradigms across the world. The United Nations exemplifies this increasing trend in investing in a creative economy as a means to stimulate local economic growth or to improve the quality of life through marketing the arts and crafts of a region. This type of economic reasoning is also common to international financial institutions, NGOs and regional development banks. Anheier & Isar, *The Cultural Economy: The Cultures and Globalisation Series Vol 2*, p. 6.

resistance against capitalism's reign legitimises the perception that the marketplace is a necessary evil.

Ultimately, the creative economy is a constitutive theory that privileges those with access to, or the ability to exploit, the market. It is underpinned by an instrumental understanding of culture. It is not a model that explains cultural value and/or encompasses the changes currently underway in contemporary society, it is an example of the asymmetrical effects of globalisation. For example, Florida's solution for the underprivileged (the underpaid, underemployed and disadvantaged) in society is to fully integrate them into the creative economy which (by appropriately paying people for their creative skills) is the key to their improvement.¹³⁵ Yet, if everyone is exploiting their (and others') creativity, the demand for it (and thus the price it commands) must level out and drop once the point of oversupply or saturation of the market occurs. Creativity's 'value' is therefore reductive, albeit functional, in this model and one wonders what happens when creativity's stock plunges and no longer provides its current competitive advantage. Furthermore, if the value of creativity is defined by the price determined by the market, what happens to creative output that resides outside of this paradigm?¹³⁶ If we remain within this framework, the value of our creativity, and

¹³⁵ Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, p. 10.

¹³⁶ Bharucha cites the example Indian floor drawings that are a performance tradition called *kalamezhutu pattu* or *kalam pattu* (*kalam*) in Kerala. He argues that their impermanent nature (they are wiped and swept away as part of the performance's conclusion) challenges the creative economy's primary functions of accrual and investment for future gain. Furthermore, Bharucha notes that the *kalam* belongs to no one, but is communally shared by all those who participate in the ritual from creators to bystanders. The creative economy is again challenged as this lack of ownership refutes the process of commodification and the distribution of profit, as authorship/copyright does not exist or is easily accommodated by existing creative commons. Bharucha, *Cultural Expression, Creativity and Innovation: The Cultures and Globalization Series Vol 3*, pp. 23–30.

indeed our culture, where market logic is the only means by which culture is valued, could be potentially worthless if it does not exhibit economic utility.

The attention to an over-reliance on the creative economy is also explored by scholars who operate in the fields within and related to cultural policy. Collini notes that when measuring output or impact as an indication of value in and of itself, the contributions of the arts and humanities in academia are overlooked in favour of economic 'officialise.'¹³⁷ Moreton argues that the creative economy script is 'one of contradiction, variable measurements and challenging practices or creative labour.'¹³⁸ Others, such as Belfiore, O'Brien and Bulaitis, provide detailed overviews of the increasing prioritisation of the 'impact agenda' when it comes to measuring and justifying the use of public investment in culture and the humanities.¹³⁹ In this instance, impact is linked to the articulation of attributable change. It is also geared towards developing the appropriate tools to measure the effects of policy in a manner that is often skewed towards the life and natural sciences.¹⁴⁰ An output-led, economic justification concerning the value of the arts sector, however, is incomplete because alternative notions of value are often excluded or minimised. Bulaitis notes that, in practice, the cultural industries and creative economy are at the forefront of much of the thinking from policymakers and

¹³⁷ Collini as cited in Bulaitis, Zoe, (2017) 'Measuring Impact in the Humanities: Learning from accountability and economics in a contemporary history of cultural value,' *Palgrave Communications*, Vol. 3, no. 7, DOI: 10.1057/s41599-017-0002-7, p. 3.

¹³⁸ Moreton, Simon, (2015) "Rethinking 'knowledge exchange': new approaches to collaborative work in the arts and humanities," *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, Vol. 22, no. 1, doi:10.1080/10286632.2015.1101081, p. 106,

¹³⁹ See Belfiore, 'Impact', 'Value' and 'Bad Economics', pp. 95–110, O'Brien, Dave (2014) 'Cultural Value, Measurement and Policy Making,' *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education*, Vol. 14, no. 1, pp. 79–94 and Bulaitis, *Measuring Impact in the Humanities*.

¹⁴⁰ Reale, Emanuela et.al., (2017) 'A review of literature on evaluating the scientific, social and political impact of social sciences and humanities research,' *Research Evaluation*, Special Issue, pp. 1–11.

governments.¹⁴¹ Yet, as this discussion has shown, the relationship between industry and cultural knowledge production is more nuanced and thus cannot be comprehended by a positive/negative binary in terms of (who provides and how much) cultural value.

Another aspect of this equation is the use of economic terms to justify the value of the art by cultural institutions and artists themselves. Whether this is due to a reliance on public funding, sources of private philanthropy or sponsorship, Belfiore notes that institutions remain reluctant to criticise the dominance of the economic frame that articulates their social value. Accordingly, it largely remains unchallenged:

Particularly problematic here is the ‘rhetoric of no alternative’ deployed to justify very narrow understandings of economic impact and value at the expense of a more pluralistic discussion of what might make [policy], and its constituent disciplines, valuable (or indeed, not valuable) to the nation, and why.¹⁴²

This emphasis upon justifying the arts via the creative economy and its affinity with the wider impact agenda mirrors the utilitarian position that the arts and culture are placed within the political domain.¹⁴³ In both instances, the ‘value’ of the creative product in

¹⁴¹ Bulaitis, *Measuring Impact in the Humanities*, p. 6.

¹⁴² Belfiore, ‘Impact’, ‘Value’ and ‘Bad Economics’, p. 105.

¹⁴³ The wider context of the impact agenda is in relation to the body of work that considers the evaluative practices used across higher education institutions, especially within the UK and USA. Benneworth describes this agenda as “driven by increasing policy-maker demands for the creation of scientific and societal ‘impact,’” and Holbrook outlines the history of the term since the 1990s and its links to neoliberalism, describing the impact agenda in terms of an attempt to make research institutions and academics more accountable for their sources of public funding and operate more in service of economic principles.

As an impact agenda seeks to demonstrate the effects of academic output on stakeholders beyond the academic realm using this approach, like cultural value, there are issues surrounding tangible effects and value. Indeed, the core of the impact agenda concerns discussions of arts and humanities research and

itself lies not in its aesthetic contributions or expression, but its ability to contribute to a more business-like purpose. Culture, therefore, is a vehicle for success or gain, with creativity absent, or a secondary concern, in creative economy discourse and application. If, as Belfiore notes, the dominance of the economic frame used by institutions in the discussion of the value of culture is largely unchallenged, there are critical gaps in the knowledge surrounding the pursuit of value across political and economic sectors, which should be examined further. The task of challenging the instrumentalist frame when seeking more comprehensive means to better understand the value of culture is, as Molas-Gallart notes, particularly urgent today due to the increase of funding organisations/sources that seek evidence of the results and effects of their investments, despite the unique challenges in assessing the value of the arts and humanities.¹⁴⁴ While understanding the value of culture by relying on economic and quantitative criteria alone may be problematic and as Meyrick et al. note ‘...do[se]n’t make sense for culture,’ many governments struggle with value in relation to cultural

the tension between intrinsic and instrumental approaches to value, thus sharing a direct link to the association with the creative sector and how to show evidence (impact) of the value of arts and cultural practices and activities and the discussion of cultural value.

Sowey problematises the impact agenda in institutions when they are reductively focused on ‘showing’ evidence as it leads to the formulation of measurable impacts, rather than creating impact which is more visionary and, ideally, inspiring.

Belfiore also questions the impact agenda when it deploys a dominant, instrumental (and economic) rationality that is adopted uncritically, and a ‘collapsing value into impact of the sort that lends itself to be expressed in monetary terms.’

For further information regarding the impact agenda, please see:

Benneworth, Paul, (2015) ‘Putting impact into context: The Janus face of the public value of arts and humanities research?’ *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education*, Vol. 14, Issue 1, pp. 3–8.

Holbrook, J. Britt, (2017) ‘The future of the impact agenda depends on the revaluation of academic freedom,’ *Palgrave Communications*, Vol. 3, no. 39, <https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-017-0041-0>.

Belfiore, ‘Impact’, ‘Value’ and ‘Bad Economics’.

Sowey, Helen, (2018) ‘The measurement tail should not be wagging the impact dog,’ Conference Paper, *Australasian Research Management Society Conference*, 20 September, Hobart, Australia. Moreton, *Rethinking ‘knowledge exchange’: New approaches to collaborative work in the arts and humanities*, pp. 100–115.

¹⁴⁴ Molas-Gallart, Jordi, (2015) ‘Research Evaluation and the Assessment of Public Value’, *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education*, Vol. 14, no. 1, p. 112.

policy because of the push for governments (and thus their policymaking environments) to be more accountable, efficient and business-like.¹⁴⁵ Leicester and Sharpe describe this conundrum when they observe that, while all of art's value lies in monetary valuations, making a 'special case' for the arts is also unproductive.¹⁴⁶ To overcome this gap in knowledge, there is a need to reimagine value beyond this dichotomous rhetoric if cultural value is to develop beyond an instrumental perspective. A commonly adopted frame to reduce the reliance upon economic rationale replaces the accrual of economic capital with social capital. By turning towards social outcomes of cultural activities, a third 'type' of outcome is commonly referred to in cultural value debates, which is informed by culture's ability to improve society, and explored in the section to follow.

The Social Dimension: Cultural Relations

As discussed above, the Australian interest in the value of culture has resulted in the expansion of creative economies and increased focus on the importance of cultural policy in Australia across various departments and councils, such as those explored in this thesis: DFAT and CoM. In one sense, strategic outcomes of the arts, such as those sought after in cultural diplomacy initiatives and cultural policy, are a popular means for

¹⁴⁵ Belfiore traces the impact of New Public Management rhetoric upon government policymaking and administration and cultural policy as she analyses Britain's practices of defining cultural policy rationale on the basis of economic and social benefits that encourage 'investment' in the culture sector. Her attention to the use of instrumentally-orientated and managerialist language within the context of evidence-policy making describes the policy environment in which cultural policy must be devised and evaluated in today's 'audit society.' Belfiore, *Auditing Culture. The Subsidised Cultural Sector in the New Public Management*, p. 84.

¹⁴⁶ They note '...[i]t is no good trying to relate all the value of arts and culture to monetary valuations, and equally unhelpful to try to justify the arts as some kind of special case, different from all other spending priorities and subject to unique criteria.' Leicester, Graeme & Sharpe, Bill, (2010) *Producing the future: understanding Watershed's role in ecosystems of cultural innovation*, Watershed, Bristol, p. 11.

governments globally to justify the subsidy of public art and cultural projects and articulate their value in political terms. Another type of emphasis within cultural value discourse focuses on social outcomes as a result of cultural activity (which includes the arts). This conceptualisation of culture has liberal humanist roots with notions of excellence, refinement, and quality of life at its core. In the tradition of Victorian humanist Matthew Arnold's 1869 text *Culture and Anarchy*, the civilising aspect of culture means that, '... culture is, or ought to be, the study and pursuit of perfection; and that of perfection, as pursued by culture, beauty and intelligence.'¹⁴⁷

The idealism within cultural discourse, argues Belfiore, remains in part in the twenty-first century in cultural debates surrounding what 'counts' as art and what does not (especially within the context of arts funding bodies).¹⁴⁸ The emphasis on the *pursuit* of cultural perfection highlights a continuing belief in the elevating effect that (certain) cultural practices and activities can have on people. In Australia, the association of culture with transformative effects is demonstrated by the consultative draft concerning cultural indicators published by the federal Department of Communications and the Arts (DCA), that notes that 'the arts show us what we are and what we might become.'¹⁴⁹ The City of Melbourne (CoM) shares this emphasis on the social improvement aspect of culture through its strategic cultural policy goal of being a Creative City, which is articulated as '...[being] about fulfilling people's basic needs around meaning and

¹⁴⁷ Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy and other Writings*, p. 81.

¹⁴⁸ Belfiore, Eleonora, (2008) *The Social Impact of the Arts: An Intellectual History*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, p. 28.

¹⁴⁹ 'Vital Signs: Cultural Indicators for Australia,' *Australian Government Department of Communications and the Arts*, Dec 2016, <https://www.arts.gov.au/publications/vital-signs-cultural-indicators-australia-first-edition-consultation-draft-2010> [accessed 10 Jan 2019], p. 8.

belonging, and about enabling them to realise their highest ideals and potential.’¹⁵⁰ The ability of culture to ‘improve’ a nation, community or individual has filtered into mainstream public policy and governance debates. It is also evident across the not-for-profit sector, the arts industry and amongst artistic practitioners themselves. When culture is tactically positioned by governments, institutions and practitioners themselves as a vital force in contemporary societies and source of value in a social sense, this shapes cultural practice itself. Cultural practice is directed when subsidies are provided and policies are dedicated to obtaining outcomes such as community building, multi-cultural integration and health and wellbeing through, for example, art therapy. The impact this has on the cultural output itself raises important questions about how essential the actual content of cultural activities is to the architects of cultural policy and discourse of cultural value.

The following discussion uses a case study of participatory art to explore the relationship between artistic content and the socially geared motivations of cultural policymaking as a means to express and pursue value. It is important, however, to note that the social value of cultural activities is a topic of discussion across a variety of contexts and is not specific to participatory arts practice. For example, the cultural practice of group singing that occurs when someone is a member of a choir is linked to various social and health benefits, such as positive immune competence, social inclusion and self-esteem, and increased wellbeing across many populations including the elderly and prisoners.¹⁵¹

¹⁵⁰ ‘A Creative City,’ *City of Melbourne 2017-21*, <http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/about-council/vision-goals/Pages/creative-city.aspx> [accessed 23 Mar 18], p. 24.

¹⁵¹ For information on the effects of group singing and immune function: see Kreutz, Gunter, Bongard, Stephan, Rohrmann, Sonja, Hodapp, Volker & Grebe, Dorothee, (2004) ‘Effects of Choir Singing or

While there is a wide body of research that focuses on the social benefits that specific cultural activities provide to individuals, communities and societies more broadly, this thesis focuses on one specific type of cultural activity—participatory theatre practice—in chapter seven. This case study explores the social value of culture using participatory arts to provide an in-depth example rather than surveying ‘culture’ more broadly.¹⁵² Chapter seven’s case study examines participatory theatre arts practice that specifically focuses on social forces, relationships, outcomes and implications to contribute to the discussion of cultural value in terms of its ability to be an example of a cultural activity that can ‘improve’ society and contribute to public value. The context of the following discussion introduces and then interrogates the ability of participatory arts practice to contribute to social benefits and agendas. This discussion also offers a means to better understand how ‘the social’ contributes value within cultural value discourse.

Central to participatory arts practice is an emphasis on cultural activities that involve active participation and engagement. This means participatory arts practice is often community-focused and operates in collaborative conditions, which has implications

Listening on Secretary Immunoglobulin A, Cortisol, and Emotional State,’ *Journal of Behavioural Medicine*, Vol. 27, no. 6, pp. 623–635; on social inclusion and self-esteem, see Welch, Graham F., Himonides, Evangelos, Saunders, Jo, Papageorgi, Ioulia & Sarazin, Marc, (2014) ‘Singing and social inclusion,’ *Front Psychol*, Vol. 5, article 803, doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2014.00803, 12 pages; on older populations, see Johnson, Julene K., Louhivuori, Jukka & Siljander, Eero, (2017) ‘Comparison of Well-being of Older Adult Choir Singers and the General Population in Finland: A Case-Control Study,’ *Music Sci.*, Vol. 21, no. 2, pp. 178–194; and on prison inmates, see Cohen, Mary L., (2009) ‘Choral Singing and Prison Inmates: Influences of Performing in a Prison Choir,’ *Journal of Correctional Education*, Vol. 60, no. 1, pp. 52–65.

¹⁵² For a wider overview of this topic, see Belfiore, Eleonora, *The Social Impact of the Arts: An Intellectual History*, Barraket, Jo, (2005) *Putting People in the Picture? The Role of the Arts in Social Inclusion*, Brotherhood of St Laurence and Centre for Public Policy, Melbourne, and Woolcock, Geoff & Davern, Melanie, (2015) ‘Creative Accounts: Reimagining Culture and Wellbeing by Tapping into the Global Movement to Redefine Progress’ *Making Culture Count: The Politics of Cultural Measurement*, , pp. 129–144. Belfiore’s comprehensive text on social impacts discusses history of the arts (as a cultural activity) that is linked to a wide variety of outcomes such as health, community building and cohesion, the integration of foreign peoples, education and self-development and the moral improvement of citizens.

for how we can value culture in a social sense. Brown et al.'s involvement framework concerning arts participation in Connecticut proposes that there are five individual participation types within arts practice that range from active to passive. These are: inventive; interpretative; curatorial; observational; and ambient.¹⁵³ Their study of arts and cultural activity asserts that the most positive impacts occur when cultural activities involve high levels of active participation and contain a creative element.¹⁵⁴ Studies such as these are the basis for the rhetoric surrounding modern cultural policy in Australia, which logically assumes that more participation in the arts equates to more social benefits. This assumption is evident in CoM's emphasis upon magnitude when it predominantly refers to the size of its creative sector. However, CoM also demonstrates an implicit interest in participation through the evaluation of its Creative City policy by monitoring the levels of artists, infrastructure for artists and participation in artistic and cultural activities.¹⁵⁵ The magnitude of participation is not the only altruistic assumption with regards to social outcomes that is evident within modern cultural policy. The DCA refers to the positive social impacts of engagement with and participation in arts and culture in their discussion concerning cultural indicators, which noted that

Apart from being rewarding for individuals, active engagement [in arts and cultural activity] contributes to community wellbeing and quality of life.

¹⁵³ Brown, Alan S & Associates LLC, (2004) 'The Values Study: Rediscovering the Meaning and Value of Arts Participation,' *Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism*, <https://www.giarts.org/sites/default/files/values-study-rediscovering-the-meaning-and-value-of-arts-participation.pdf> [accessed 10 Jan 2019], p. 11.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 4–5.

¹⁵⁵ Discussed in detail in chapter six.

Participation connects people with others, fostering varied and open social relationships and promoting social inclusion.¹⁵⁶

The link between participation in the arts and the benefits it delivers in a social sense is a major rationale behind the subsidisation of arts and cultural policymaking. For the arts, the specific vocabulary that emerges from this rationale has led to the articulation of many categories that encapsulate participatory projects, one of the main ones being participatory art. Participatory art has many manifestations or aliases including collaborative art, dialogic art, social practice, socially engaged arts and community-based art. Bishop argues that, despite categorical nuances, much of this art shares the common, albeit challenging, aim of effecting social change.¹⁵⁷ This type of art is not only appealing on a grassroots level, as it directly engages with specific populations, but the impetus towards (assumedly positive) change is of much interest to the actors that seek to harness the value of culture. More prescriptively, Australian state government funding and advisory body, Creative Victoria, categorises participatory art as ‘... [when] an artist works with a community to facilitate a creative process that enables participants to express their needs, aspirations, identity or sense of place.’¹⁵⁸ It should be noted that the trend towards participatory cultural activities encompasses varying conceptions of social development or outcomes, and that participation is realised across a range of interdisciplinary genres including urban regeneration, social engagement,

¹⁵⁶ ‘Vital Signs: Cultural Indicators for Australia,’ *Australian Government Department of Communications and the Arts*, p. 55.

¹⁵⁷ Bishop, Claire, (2006) ‘The Social Turn: Collaboration and its Discontents,’ *Artforum*, Vol. 44, no. 6, Feb, pp. 178–183.

¹⁵⁸ ‘Making art with Communities a work guide,’ *Creative Victoria*, https://creative.vic.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0004/57064/Community_Partnerships_Workguide_hires_2014edit.pdf [accessed 04 Feb 2018], p. 3.

community cultural development and the creative economy.¹⁵⁹ However, what the following discussion focuses on is how art, as a cultural activity, is positioned as a public good that provides benefits of various types to assorted communities through an emphasis on participation. I also consider how the value of participation is linked to social outcomes and the assumption that participation is an inherently positive influence.

Understanding the Connections: Participation, Social Benefit and Arts Practice

Drawing upon the lineage of thinkers such as Walter Benjamin, Michel de Certeau, Giles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, Nicolas Bourriaud and particularly Guy Debord, the trend of locating art within social and participatory frameworks to describe its value proposes that artistic pursuits are justified through their ability to enrich the human experience.¹⁶⁰ This is evident in Debord's calls to 'rehumanis[e] a society rendered numb and fragmented by the repressive instrumentality of capitalist production.'¹⁶¹ Yet, the degree of success this rehumanisation achieves, varies widely from project to project and audience to audience, thus making Debord's claims idealistic. Nonetheless, artists are devising social situations that maximise collective engagement and are

¹⁵⁹ For further detail about urban regeneration see Hall, Tim & Robertson, Iain, (2001) 'Public Art and Urban Regeneration: Advocacy, claims and critical debates,' *Landscape Research*, Vol. 26, no. 1, p. 7. For further detail about social engagement and arts practice see Bishop, Claire, (2012) *Artificial Hells: Participatory Arts and the Politics of Spectatorship*, Verso Books, London, p. 1.

¹⁶⁰ See Benjamin, Walter, (1936) 'L'œuvre d'art à l'époque de sa reproduction mécanisée [The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction],' in *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung Jahrgang V*, Félix Alcan, Paris, pp. 40–68; de Certeau, Michel, (1980) *L'invention du quotidien, Vol. 1 [The Practice of Everyday Life]*, Groupe Flammarion, Paris; Deleuze, Giles & Guattari, Félix, (1980) *Mille Plateaux [A Thousand Plateaus]*, Les Éditions de Minuit, Paris; Bourriaud, Nicholas, (1998) *Esthétique relationnelle [Relational Aesthetics]*, Les Presses du Réel, Paris; and Debord, Guy, (1967) *La Société du Spectacle [The Society of the Spectacle]*, Buchet-Chastel, Paris.

¹⁶¹ Bishop, *Artificial Hells*, p. 11.

endeavouring to produce art that suggests, agitates and connects with the societies that they are communicating with. It is relational and active in its attempts to enrich its audiences. Most significantly for the discussion of cultural value, the aspect of collective engagement means participatory art orientates its practice toward outcomes or goals that aim to realise a strengthening of the social bond.¹⁶² For some, like Bishop, this is a highly political project that affirms collectivity over the individual, who is aligned with neoliberalism and privatisation.¹⁶³ For others, like public servants involved with public diplomacy programming, it is not about a rebuttal of neoliberal sentiment but about dispersing a cohesive narrative that will strengthen Australia's influence through engagement with subsidised, participatory activities that capitalise on the nation's creative industries.¹⁶⁴ For cultural institutions, it becomes a medium to enhance their engagement with various communities through arts practice. However, what does this mean for the art in this situation—how are participatory, aesthetic and political considerations balanced? In other words, what is the value of the social in participatory arts practice?

The connection between social causes and the rise of participatory arts resides in the post-industrialist economies of the late twentieth century. Institutions, policymakers and politics are not only comfortable with the realisation that the arts do not reside in a

¹⁶² The New Labour rhetoric in the UK used this thinking in its cultural policies on social exclusion. The push to make the arts socially inclusive was done so to address wider welfare and society problems, and aimed to maximise participation in this field in order to address 'disruptive' individuals. Ibid., pp.13–14.

¹⁶³ Ibid., pp. 11–13.

¹⁶⁴ DFAT's *Public Diplomacy Strategy 2014-16* notes that by leveraging Australia's creative industries by funding arts and cultural activities in priority regions, it aims to '...influence perceptions of Australia at home and abroad.' 'Public Diplomacy Strategy 2014-2016,' DFAT, p. 5.

wholly autonomous, aesthetic realm, but they actively justify the official and unofficial use of the arts in terms of material relations and culture. The Australia Council for the Arts, for example, maintains that cultural participation advances social cohesion.¹⁶⁵ However, in the global age, the social dimension of the arts and culture is dynamic and complex. This complexity exists within the context of increasingly restrictive federal, state and local budgets, in which arts funders and advocates encounter increasingly managerialist pressures from governments to yield measurable and relatively predictable or risk-averse (controllable) outputs. This pressure may be in the form of reduced amounts of finance, to the more prescriptive use of grants that encourage artists to produce works that explore or promote certain themes, subject matter or engage with certain populations.

In this context of neo-liberalism, the participatory aspect of participatory art is of particular value to societies where the justification of arts funding for projects, training or local festivals (for example) use participation as a metric within evidence-based programs. The definition of participation in this instance could range from a physical headcount of audience numbers, to the amount of online reach that a social media campaign receives. This approach is often considered desirable as it produces quantitative data that can be used to justify the effective and accountable use of public (or other) money. It may also form the basis of statistical understandings that illustrate

¹⁶⁵ The findings from the Australia Council's National Arts Participation Survey in 2017 highlight, as Chief Executive Tony Grybowski notes, that the research shows more how the arts are vital in building social cohesion, which promotes a healthy and inclusive public for Australians. 'Connecting Australians: The National Arts Participation Survey,' *Australia Council for the Arts*, November 2017, <https://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/news/media-centre/media-releases/connecting-australians-the-national-arts-participation-survey/> [accessed 04 Mar 2019].

how harnessing the power of art can be used to target outcomes specific to particular groups, individuals, families, and communities.¹⁶⁶ Social return on investment can then be promoted to relevant stakeholders as an overall benefit of participatory art. Furthermore, when creative practitioners or power brokers engage with the language of bureaucracy, participatory art is articulated in a way that enables stakeholders to justify creative output as offering clear returns on investment for public or private investors, specific demographics, or the general public. Consequently, knowledge economy-based societies embrace a functional positioning of creativity, and its resulting cultural products, because it is associated with the driving force of economic growth. The marketisation (on a potentially global scale) of an artistic practice's ability to achieve specific outcomes (such as social inclusion) becomes the norm. However, this raises the question of whether the pull towards the creative economy has derailed genuine advocacy for the arts that privileges aesthetic distinction and exploration over increasingly managerialist, bureaucratic rhetoric that privileges participation in arts activities that achieve specific and measurable social outcomes.

The promotion of the social benefits of art can be characterised as an attempt to place the arts higher on the agendas of state and federal governments. Hall and Robertson

¹⁶⁶ A 2007 Arts Victoria report (completed by Deloitte) argues that participatory art contributed to community development by:

- enhancing community creativity and community wellbeing (76%);
- enhancing education, training and lifelong learning (67%);
- strengthening communities (66%);
- enhancing the learning experiences of young people (57%);
- providing opportunities for cultural tourism (53%);
- promoting community cultural participation through volunteering (52%); and
- improving health and wellbeing of people in their community (48%) (Deloitte 2007).

'Making art with Communities a work guide,' *Creative Victoria*, p. 9.

highlight, for example, that in order to obtain public sector advocacy the arts in 1980s Britain, there was a development beyond the mere promotion of the interests of artists towards a debate where economics was the key player:

[There] was the need to expand audiences for the arts...to support non-traditional art forms, evaluate projects and acknowledge the interests of the market. These concerns were widely promoted as arts funding bodies assumed the roles of advocates.¹⁶⁷

Although this was not the first time a Western nation renewed its articulation of the role of arts within society, the ramifications of the increasingly global technologies, marketplace and populace would mean these effects would be more far-reaching and influential than before. Promoting the additional benefits to society that the arts can provide beyond the arts and cultural sector conceptualises culture in an instrumental context. This conceptualisation positions culture (cultural products and activities) as a tool that may be utilised to pursue a variety of social, economic and political outcomes, including those in a foreign affairs or trade export context.

When considering how participatory art might operate as a tool to pursue outcomes in social terms, numerous power structures and potential influences exist which interact with public, economic and political conceptions of value. Art in a social context is not solely for art's sake, but also serves a utilitarian, and often loftier, purpose in the eyes of political operatives and simultaneously generates immense symbolic capital. This

¹⁶⁷ Sara Selwood as quoted in Hall & Robertson, *Public Art and Urban Regeneration*, p. 6.

purpose could range from info-educational to military propaganda directed to both domestic and foreign audiences. The social return on investment for a community art project (for example) may be initiated to raise awareness on issues of health, environment, urban or rural revitalisation, cultural planning, community strengthening, social inclusion and cultural diversity.¹⁶⁸

A key distinction that is often neglected in the discussion of participatory arts' social benefits is that partaking in participatory art and participation in society do not necessarily align.¹⁶⁹ Bishop delineates that participation in art that incites self-realisation and collective action, must be differentiated from participation in society that refers to individual civic responsibility. This civic responsibility is to be self-sufficient and with minimal or no reliance on the state.¹⁷⁰ Although there is a clear difference in these types of participation, blending the term across these spheres means that the previously more emancipatory usage of the terminology of participation, creativity and community, has been co-opted to 'no longer occupy a subversive, anti-authoritarian force, but ha[s] become a cornerstone of post-industrial economic policy.'¹⁷¹ Like the conflation of participation in art and society, the conflation of art and social benefit occurs with regards to valuing culture. Blomkamp discusses how a specific type of cultural indicator she identifies as the 'artistic set,' assumes that art is civilising or contains transcendent power.¹⁷² This conception based on an understanding of 'high art' means that culture is

¹⁶⁸ 'Making art with Communities a work guide,' *Creative Victoria*, p. 4.

¹⁶⁹ Bishop, *Artificial Hells*, p. 14.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Blomkamp notes '[a]lthough not always explicitly acknowledged, these [artistic set] indicators are generally based on the idea that culture is cultivation – a civilising force or [wielding] transcendent power.'

positioned as generally having a cultivating effect, especially in terms of social outcomes. The assumption of art's ability to (better) cultivate society demonstrates how culture in social terms is skewed towards the themes of enhancement, progress and enlightenment. This social dimension also tends to be orientated towards the generation of intrinsic value, which is, as Blomkamp notes, more difficult to measure.¹⁷³ This makes indicators reliant on proxy measurements of engagement in arts and culture, which are often expressed in terms of the frequency in which people engage in artistic and cultural activity. It also means that the less tangible aspects of cultural value are often flattened or hold less legitimacy within debates surrounding the justification of cultural activity that demand evidence-based responses.

In order to counter the tendency for participatory art's value to be primarily articulated in terms of edification, alternative understandings of these forms of art-making that contain a consideration of critical, artistic and curatorial responses are required.¹⁷⁴ This thesis looks to the varieties of relationships that emerge from arts practice to consider value in less positivist terms. The challenge of doing so reflects how the arts have a complex relationship when it comes to engaging with competing conceptions of value. At its most extreme, we are confronted with a double bind where types of artistic expression may strive to be subversive yet are confronted with the parameters of a government's status quo in order to access funding. This government status quo refers

Blomkamp, Emma, (2015) 'Chapter 1: A Critical History of Cultural Indicators,' in *Making Culture Count: The Politics of Cultural Measurement*, p. 20.

¹⁷³ The third type of cultural indicators intersect with human rights, often in terms of development goals and a further, related indicator type that measures cultural diversity through both objective (quantitative) and subjective assessments. Ibid pp. 19–21.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

to how the value of culture and the arts, whether viewed in terms of its social, political or economic dimensions, is commandeered for instrumental purposes, and quantified, in order for it to be legitimised in the public arena. In this context, the arts are also subjected to the parameters of instrumental cultural policy, which as I discuss below, present issues within cultural value discourse between culture and the arts, and how they are valued.

Cultural Value Issues and Problems

When viewed collectively, the political, economic and social dimensions this chapter has analysed show an over-reliance on instrumentality as a means to discuss cultural value. The unresolved challenges that arise across these dimensions illustrate gaps in the discourse of cultural value. Walmsley summarises these gaps as a confusion over what cultural value *actually is*, and what culture should be measured in terms *of* in order for it to be useful to a nation or organisation seeking to gain from the achievement of cultural outcomes.¹⁷⁵ This is further complicated by empirical and conceptual studies into cultural value by Oancea, Florez-Petour and Atkinson who found that ‘no single, cohesive articulation of cultural value and no commonly accepted techniques and indicators to measure it,’ existed across their sample.¹⁷⁶ This literature shows that even

¹⁷⁵ In terms of the cultural value paradox discussed above from Walmsley, *Deep hanging out in the arts: an anthropological approach to capturing cultural value*, p. 272.

¹⁷⁶ They note: ‘The fact that our data yielded no single, cohesive articulation of cultural value and no commonly accepted techniques and indicators to measure it is a consequence of the conceptual, practical and political complexities besetting the attempt to use ‘cultural value’ as a straightforward alternative to ‘economic value’ in the arts and the humanities. As a contested concept, cultural value may not settle long-term debates; but it may enrich them through prompting efforts to articulate, challenge and recognise valid arguments and their political consequences.’ Oancea, Alis, Florez-Petour, Teresa & Atkinson, Jeanette, (2018) ‘The ecologies and economy of cultural value from research,’ *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, Vol. 24, no. 1, DOI: 10.1080/10286632.2015.1128418, p. 21.

the value of cultural value is disputed. In this thesis, I suggest that the role of relationships and relations are typically overlooked in the literature when discussing value. In terms of this thesis, the work from scholars including Capano, Marx and Wyszomirski is useful because they examine the limitations of the predominantly economic approach to understanding the value of culture. With regard to relations, however, Capano, Marx, and Wyszomirski may stress the role *of* actors, but the relationships *amongst* these stakeholders are less thoroughly interrogated in their consideration of cultural value. While there are significant debates surrounding knowledges and dimensions that underpin cultural value and cultural indicators in particular, which I have outlined above, there is less in the literature that provides a comprehensive explanation of how relations can be understood. Therefore, the literature struggles to consistently approach relationships in this domain and certain types of relations that are evident within cultural value discourse are often overlooked, especially in more complex interactions. Here, there is a failure to properly consider the nuances of the relations amongst the different actors who are important players in discussions surrounding cultural value.

Belfiore appeals to us to develop new critical approaches that ‘...[a]cknowledge the real, negotiated and often antagonistic nature of cultural value.’¹⁷⁷ In response to this appeal and the gaps in the literature I have discussed above, I propose that the value of culture can be considered relationally by more closely examining the nature (hence value) of the interactions between different cultural stakeholders. That is, to examine the

¹⁷⁷ Belfiore, *Whose cultural value? Representation, power and creative industries*, p. 12.

different types of relationships that produce various types of value over the course of cultural and arts activities. By analysing how notions of cultural value co-exist and integrate, I aim to contribute to critical inquiry by looking into the gap within the existing discourse surrounding cultural value and relationships. Drawing upon Crossick and Kaszynska's call to focus on outcomes beyond positive benefits, this thesis examines the negative, unknown or neutral effects, as well as the desirable outcomes of cultural activities to map new terrain for how cultural value might be theorised. In doing so, I do not intend to propose a one-size fits all, or even most, approach when it comes to cultural value, but to open up debate surrounding its stakeholders and the relationships amongst them as a means to reconceptualise value. Such an approach would better account for the diversity of cultural activities and assets, and allow for the dynamic nature of culture to remain.

This approach is informed by the acknowledgment that culture is an area in which 'a good deal of public value is not mediated through markets, and is therefore not captured through market prices and transactions.'¹⁷⁸ Yet, as Meyrick et al. note, Australia is currently within the throes of 'metric madness' when it comes to valuing culture.¹⁷⁹ Recently, the Arts Council of England, for example, announced plans to adopt the Australian standardised quality evaluation system (trialled in the UK, Canada, Singapore and Australia) called *Culture Counts* as its preferred service provider for its Impact and

¹⁷⁸ 'Public Value Measurement Framework,' *Department of Culture and Arts (Western Australia)* http://www.dca.wa.gov.au/Documents/New%20Research%20Hub/Research%20Documents/Public%20Value/DCA_PVMF_Issues_Paper_2_Benchmarking_2011.pdf [accessed 13 Oct 2018], p. 2.

¹⁷⁹ Meyrick, et al., *What Matters? Talking Value in Australian Culture*, back cover.

Insight Toolkit.¹⁸⁰ *Culture Counts* is a digital platform designed to create benchmarking criteria for the quality of arts and cultural experiences by collecting data based upon standardised metrics.¹⁸¹ A similar philosophy underpins the *Cultural Development Network (CDN)*, which was established in 2000 in Melbourne, Australia to support the role of culture through the capacity-building of local governments and arts organisations.¹⁸² The CDN has developed a schema of measurable outcomes to help people and organisations evaluate outcomes of cultural development activity, with resources available to guide data collection and the evaluation of it.¹⁸³ They do this to assist with the systematic measurement of cultural outcomes in an evidence-based approach.

Cultural policies and organisations in Australia are still predominantly wedded to more quantitative or even neo-liberal forms of evaluation and assessment, as the case studies in chapters five and six demonstrate. While there are calls for more meaningful value reporting in discussions surrounding the arts and culture as a domain of human existence, my case studies from CoM and DFAT highlight how measurables, metrics and

¹⁸⁰ See 'Culture Counts to provide Arts Council England's Impact and Insight Toolkit,' *CultureCounts News*, 06 Jul 2018, <https://culturecounts.cc/news/culture-counts-to-provide-arts-council-englands-impact-and-insight-toolkit/> [accessed 23 Mar 2020] and

Gilmore, Glow and Johanson's outline of the history of the Culture Counts framework, from its initial development in Western Australia and trials in Queensland and Victoria, Australia, Manchester, UK, Singapore and Canada. Gilmore, Abigail, Glow, Hilary & Johanson, Katya, (2017) "Accounting for quality: arts evaluation, public value and the case of 'Culture counts,'" *Cultural Trends*, Vol. 26, no. 4, pp. 283–84.

¹⁸¹ Ibid, pp. 282–294.

¹⁸² 'About Us,' *Cultural Development Network*, <http://www.culturaldevelopment.net.au/about/> [accessed 02 Dec 2018].

¹⁸³ The CDN provides a set of measurable outcomes for cultural activities across five domains of public policy activity: cultural, economic, environmental, governance and social. Using the CDN's framework helps people develop their own Cultural Development Plans that complement existing organisational infrastructures, such Council Plans and annual business plans.

key performance indicators still dominate how cultural value is formally articulated in the Australian public sector.¹⁸⁴ Ultimately, this problem is summarised by Meyrick et al., who note that ‘the problem of the value of culture is not a methodological one...[rather] the search for certainty [cultural evaluation strategies] produces even more uncertain measures, each a further step away from the actual experience of culture.’¹⁸⁵

These issues are evident in Australia in terms of the government’s approach to cultural value. Despite calls to extend the definition of the national interest, the culture of Australia remains tightly defined in terms of its utility.¹⁸⁶ Current reviews and white papers into public diplomacy and soft power, respectively, demonstrate that the Australian government seeks to evolve its thinking in this field. These review processes also highlight an interest in understanding Australian cultural value in a better way and acknowledge that it is under-interrogated or lacks the functionality that the government desires. The degree to which the outcomes of these processes will address the hierarchy of cultural value that Belfiore discusses, remains to be seen. A dramatic departure from an instrumental approach to cultural value is unlikely in the short to medium term, especially given the recent Australian economic outlook.¹⁸⁷

¹⁸⁴ Meyrick et al. call for more meaningful value reporting. Meyrick, Julian, et al., *What Matters? Talking Value in Australian Culture*, p. 109.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid, p. xiii–xv.

¹⁸⁶ Rösler, Bettina, (2015) ‘The case of Asialink’s arts residency program: towards a critical cosmopolitan approach to cultural diplomacy,’ *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, Vol. 21, no. 4, p. 476.

¹⁸⁷ This outlook involves an apparent economic downturn as a per capita recession was predicted to occur in Australia in 2019. Commins, Patrick, “Australia Risks a ‘Per Capita’ Recession,” *The Australian Financial Review*, 03 Mar 2019, <https://www.afr.com/markets/australia-risks-a-per-capita-recession-20190303-h1bxfq> [accessed 04 Mar 2019] and Letts, Stephen, ‘Households’ living standards are still falling as GDP per capita heads for a recession,’ *The Australian Broadcasting Corporation*, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-03-03/households-living-standards-drop-on-gdp-per-capita-recession/10858812> [accessed 04 Mar 2019].

A further problem examined in this thesis is the disconnect between the practice of activities that generate cultural value (on behalf of Australia) and the parameters that currently define them. By looking to the wider discourse surrounding cultural value, there are an array of indicators and evaluation techniques that help to establish the link between the value of a cultural activity and a nation's foreign policy or cultural policy objectives. However, there is not a commonly understood or applied approach across political, social and economic domains in Australia to capture (cultural) value. This knowledge gap also appears across public, private and cultural institutions who do not consistently describe the contributions that culture makes in terms of cultural value in Australia, nor do so in formats that allow for comparative and long-term analysis.¹⁸⁸

The knowledge gap identified in this chapter is partly due to the straightforward manner in which the economistic dimension evaluates cultural events and activities based on metrics and other quantifiable data. The influence of the creative economy model in cultural policy persists because it provides a way to comparatively discuss culture that complements existing governmental reporting structures and frameworks. However, what if there was a way to consider the value of culture, that provides an overview that the machinery of government relies on, and the depth that inherently qualitative and subjective matters require? The above discussion has outlined how the literature concerning cultural value contains a number of competing views. These views, whether

¹⁸⁸ This is not to assume that all stakeholders involved would desire such a common language, but is simply an observation that one does not exist.

based in economics, cultural economics, or new methods of critical inquiry altogether, are invariably adopted by stakeholders and agencies involved in the cultural sector. Therefore, although stakeholders deal with the 'same' cultural content, differing uses of the term mean that conceptions of culture across the various dimensions (discussed above) are interrelated, but vary dramatically in terms of their definition, application and pursuit of (culturally based) outcomes. Examining these relations becomes a valuable task if we are to progress our understanding concerning questions of cultural value and approach culture in a way that complements its dynamic and evolving nature, especially within a global, networked world.

The cultural value issues discussed throughout this chapter are also compounded by the fact that, while there are sources that consider how cultural institutions measure their value, there is less published scholarly information about how Australian governments value cultural activities. This is ultimately due to a wider deficit in how culture is 'talked about.' As Meyrick et al. summarise:

[it] is not that we don't know what we are saying when we make the case for culture's culture, it is that we can't ground it in a deep enough understanding of value's value. This is why our evaluative strategies keep collapsing into the measurement of economic and social effects.¹⁸⁹

When understood in these terms, the problem becomes clearer: we lack the concepts that help to consistently describe the various types of value that culture provides society. This means that we must instead rely on indicators that measure culture. There

¹⁸⁹ Meyrick, et al., *What Matters? Talking Value in Australian Culture*, p. 20.

is a need, therefore, to redefine value in relation to culture, and in doing so, develop more appropriate approaches to cultural measurement. This thesis suggests that one way of doing this is to adopt a relations-based consideration of value. I explain this consideration in detail in chapter three. This methodology offers a new approach to understanding cultural value by developing a way to succinctly describe how cultural activities progress or regress cultural value in and for Australia through their various relations. It not only expands understanding surrounding Australian culture, allowing it to be more integrated into strategic policy designs, but also reconfigures how we perceive cultural value itself on a conceptual level. This reorientation is the basis of a bolder, renewed direction for Australian cultural diplomacy and cultural policy that begins with repositioning the value of culture in a more open and relational manner as explored in the next chapter.

Chapter 3 — Approaching Cultural Value Using Relationships and the Role of Symbiosis

Relationship quality is about good relationships, how well partners get on, and how happy they are in their relationship... there seems to be a growing awareness of the importance of good quality relationships and the impact troubled relationships can have on personal, social, and economic wellbeing.

—Reynolds, Houlston and Lester¹

The political, economic and social dimensions of culture introduced in previous chapters highlight the variety of perspectives through which cultural value can be understood. One of the problems articulated was that although a cultural activity or event might occur singularly, in a particular space and time, its value can be conceived in various ways depending on the perspective of the stakeholders and the context itself in which culture is being valued. Political, economic and social conceptions of the value of culture might differ in their definitions and scope, as the case studies will explore, but they remain closely interrelated. However, these interrelations are often under-interrogated. Walmsley summarises this problem when he notes that ‘...the challenge for cultural value scholars is perhaps not to investigate what value is, but rather how it might be reliably expressed, reflexively and inter-subjectively.’² One way to explore this is to

¹ Reynolds, Jenny, Houlston, Catherine & Coleman, Lester, (2014) ‘Understanding Relationship Quality,’ *OnePlusOne*, <http://www.oneplusone.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/UnderstandingRelationship-Quality-by-Jenny-Reynolds-Dr-Catherine-Houlston-and-Dr-Lester-Coleman.pdf> [accessed 27 Dec 2018], p. 4.

² Walmsley, *Deep hanging out in the arts: an anthropological approach to capturing cultural value*, p. 274.

refocus the discourse of cultural value to include discussions of relationships; however, this begins with casting a wide net. This is because the existing literature discussing various types of relationships between people is most extensive and emanates from the field of psychological research, particularly in terms of individual health and wellbeing. This chapter, therefore, introduces some key discourses that concern the study of relationships, how cultural disciplines have adapted it and, consequently, how relationships may be linked to the concept of cultural value. I then introduce ecology, its scientific origins and cultural usage, before introducing symbiosis to provide a way to conceptualise relationships in a cultural context. This context orientates my reconceptualization of the value of culture in terms of its connections using symbiosis as a potential basis for examining these connections in more depth. This discussion begins with a literature review of the relationship models and considers sources from several scientific and cultural disciplines. It then thematically links these sources to cultural value to address some of the gaps identified in the previous chapter. The remainder of the chapter develops a conceptual metaphor, called cultural symbiosis, which uses symbiotic terminology to show how relationships might be conceptually deployed to further the discourse concerning cultural value.

Examining Relationships in terms of Quality and Networks

This chapter's opening quote from Reynolds, Houlston and Coleman about relationship quality and government social services in the UK encourages us to consider the implications of healthy (and indeed unhealthy) relationships and individual outcomes. Although this example is specific to clinical psychology, it is also relevant to this thesis in

the attention it gives to degrees of enrichment that relationships can have and the potential to expand this application to society. More recently, the concept of relationship quality has been applied in a variety of settings from customer service contexts and supply contracts, to the relationships and networks formed online or through the use of technology to determine how businesses are meeting customers' expectations or to gauge brand sentiment.³ In these instances, relationship quality, which traditionally considers interactions between people in individual, domestic contexts (especially spouses), is expanded to analyse relationships in a variety of environments, especially through the lens of stakeholder engagement.⁴ Expanding the definition of relationship quality, these fields apply psychological theory to investigate patterns concerning the attachment styles of people in terms of interpersonal networks and consumers, as well as relationships between business associates and competitors and between businesses themselves. For evaluations of cultural value, which were established previously in this thesis as overly focused on outputs or forms of cultural indicators, relationship quality represents an opportunity to focus on a less economics-focused form of value when it comes to evaluating the effects of cultural activities.

³ For more information on relationships and marketing (relationship marketing) see Madhavaiah, Chendragiri & Durga Rao, S. (2007) 'Defining Relationship Marketing: A review of Research,' *Asia-Pacific Journal of Management Research and Innovation*, Vol. 3, no. 2, <https://doi.org/10.1177/097324700700300207>, pp. 64–76 and Leonidou, Leonidas C., Katsikeas, Constantine S., Samiee, Saeed & Ayko, Bilge, (2018) 'International Marketing Research: A State-of-the-Art Review and the Way Forward,' in Leonidou, Leonidas C., Katsikeas, Constantine S., Samiee, Saeed & Ayko, Bilge, (eds.), *Advances in Global Marketing*, Springer, Cham, pp. 3–33.

⁴ Armaeshi and Crane describe how stakeholder engagement '...is primarily concerned with the relationship between organizations and their stakeholders with a focus on dialogue, consultation and participation.' However, as Luoma-aho notes, the literature surrounding engagement tends to focus on the impact (and thus pursuit) positive engagement has on organisational reputation. Luoma-aho discusses positively engaged faith-holders, negatively engaged hateholders and the unauthentically produced fakeholders as a means to distinguish amongst different types of stakeholder relationships in the public relations space. As cited in Luoma-aho, Vilma, (2015) 'Understanding Stakeholder Engagement: Faith-holders, Hateholders & Fakeholders,' *Research Journal of the Institute for Public Relations*, Vol. 2, no. 1, Winter, pp. 8–9.

While different types of relationships are now being investigated, the concept of relationship quality remains almost exclusively assessed on the basis of self-reporting as a means to compile relationship satisfaction indices.⁵ This results in the generation of a comparable relationship score. This emphasis on empirical attention as opposed to conceptual analysis of the characteristics of relationships is similar to the challenges of better understanding cultural value when indicators and economic framing is primarily used to define the concept of value. While relationship quality is less visible in discourse surrounding cultural value, the importance of relations remains vital.⁶ A more nuanced understanding of relationships is necessary in the discussion of cultural value, as the use of relationship satisfaction indices to measure relationship quality in a cultural context would result in yet another cultural metric to quantitatively measure as a means to describe the value of a cultural activity.⁷

⁵ These indices involve participants assessing the quality of their relationships by responding to questions that require marking a response on a scale (often a five point scale) that enables data aggregation of responses. Fincham, Frank D., & Rogge Ron, (2010) 'Understanding Relationship Quality: Theoretical Challenges and New Tools for Assessment,' *Journal of Family Theory & Review*, December, DOI:10.1111/j.1756-2589.2010.00059.x, pp. 227–242.

⁶ The recent attention to relationships and cultural activity is seen in Słowińska's work on bottom-up cultural initiatives in local Polish communities. See, Słowińska, Sylwia, (2018) 'Bottom-up Cultural Initiatives in Local Communities – between retreat and social engagement,' *Andragoška Spoznanja* (The Andragogic Perspectives), Vol. 24, no. 1, pp. 35–47. However, this methodology focuses on relationships between individuals and their community, rather than relationships between peoples. Similarly, Vigerland and Borg study relationships in the Swedish art market by focussing on the intersections amongst profit-orientated companies and their connections to companies/organisations that produce art or have 'art itself is in focus.' However, they consider the economical relationships and their associations to the cultural industry in their analysis of symbolic vs monetary value that focuses on how art relates to economic capital. See, Vigerland, Lars & Borg, Erik A., (2018) 'Cultural Capital in the Economic Field: A Study of Relationships in an Art Market,' *Philosophy of Management*, Vol. 17, no. 2, June, pp. 169–185.

⁷ The focus on expanding typologies of relationships is also found in communications studies. Zaharna, for example, uses 'relationism' to explore the cultural differences between regional assumptions surrounding the conceptualisation of relationships to enhance Organisation-Public Relations (OPR) scholarship. Although this thesis does not adopt the OPR approach to relations, Zaharna's call for OPR and the field of public relations to consider relationships as a social condition, rather than individual prerogative, is an example of how the conceptual boundaries of human relations are being interrogated in recent scholarship. See Zaharna, Rhonda S., (2016) "Beyond the Individualism–Collectivism Divide to

Less focused on indices, but still attuned to the conceptualisation of relationships and one which represents a potential way to discuss cultural relationships, is through the use of networks and ecologies to conceptualise the many interrelated people and factors that make up complex cultural interactions. Considering culture in terms of its relationships via networks or ecologies, however, is not a new phenomenon to cultural contexts. For example, Jackson et al. propose cultural vitality as a means to engage with a wider set of stakeholders to broaden the definitional range of a community's cultural activity. They propose three domains of presence, participation and support as important aspects to track in terms of determining community cultural vitality.⁸ Within the context of a cultural landscape with a series of interrelations between art-related entities, cultural vitality intends to serve as a concept to encourage policymakers and arts funders to more critically consider what aspect of a community's cultural vitality they contribute to.⁹ Goldbard also places emphasis on human connections in her discussion of the cultural sector's overreliance on empty metrics, advocating for funders and policymakers to be guided by arts and cultural projects that demonstrate intrinsic impact that promises social bridging.¹⁰

Relationalism: Explicating Cultural Assumptions in the Concept of 'Relationships,'" *Communication Theory*, Vol. 26, no. 2, pp. 190–211.

⁸ This project concerns USA communities at the neighbourhood and city level. Jackson, Maria Rosario, J. Herranz Jr, & F. Kabwasa Green (2006) *Cultural Vitality in Communities: Interpretation and Indicators*, Urban Institute, Washington, DC, p. 14.

⁹ Ibid., p. 21.

¹⁰ Within a cultural development context in the US, Goldbard advocates for a focus on arts and cultural resources in relation to their communities to pay attention to questions such as '[w]hat actors, institutions, and forces comprise the existing cultural ecology? How does differential access to resources affect them and impact cultural development? What relationships are desirable among them to optimize cultural development initiatives? Questions such as these have never been taken up by US cultural policymakers.' Goldbard, Arlene, (2015) "The Metrics Syndrome: Cultural Scientism and Its Discontents," in *Making Culture Count: The Politics of Cultural Measurement*, p. 221.

The importance of relationships is also emphasised in Bourdieu's work on cultural and social capital. Bourdieu argues that cultural products (both symbolic and material) should be understood in relation to their systems of exchange and power relations, and never in isolation.¹¹ In terms of the artist as a producer of cultural content, following Bourdieu's logic involves examining how content is produced and consumed to more fully interrogate its value. Therefore, when considering culture and artistic content in terms of its operation in the political, economic and social dimensions, the contexts, networks and relationships that surround it are also vitally important. Bourdieu's work is useful to the aims of this thesis as the interactions concerning production and consumption are an important starting point to more fully consider the value of culture in terms of relationships.

Vestheim expands on Bourdieu's work by arguing that, for the purposes of cultural policy, Bourdieu's fields spatially conceptualise how the intersection of culture and politics can be understood as residing in two fields that meet in an overlapping zone.¹² This means that an important definition for the purposes of rearticulating the

¹¹ Bourdieu proposes that capital presents itself in three guises: economic, cultural and social. Cultural capital may then exist in three forms: embodied, objectified and institutionalised. Cultural capital is able to be acquired, but due to the social conditions of its transmission and acquisition, Bourdieu proposes that it is predisposed to function symbolically and 'unrecognised as capital, and recognized as legitimate competence.' Bourdieu's attention to cultural hierarchies as realised through his forms of capital also highlight how value can be attributed in societies to certain forms of cultural and artistic forms over others, subject to social and economic conditions, such as class. Bourdieu, Pierre, (1986) 'The Forms of Capital,' in Richardson, John (ed.), *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, Greenwood, Westport, CT, pp. 242–246.

¹² Vestheim, Geir, (2012) 'Cultural policy-making: negotiations in an overlapping zone between culture, politics and money,' *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, Vol. 18, no. 5, p. 530.

contributions of cultural value is to accept that '[c]ulture emerges not as a discrete and elite event, a high cultural monument, but as a material formation that arises from specific historical conditions of production and consumption.'¹³ The contributions of these scholars is their understanding that when culture is deployed, it is essential to examine the environments in which it operates to better appreciate its contributions. These environments might include how value operates in an elite, fine art context or a broader, public policy environment where culture and cultural value is a relevant area of emphasis. However, Bourdieu's orientation towards capital exchange (through the emphasis on cultural production), places more focus upon economic aspects and language when considered in terms of cultural value discourse, which, as discussed in chapter two, is overemphasised in the literature. Attention to systems of exchange, environmental contexts and relationships, however, remain useful to ground this discussion.

Most recently, Oancea, Florez-Petour and Atkinson consider relationships in their 2018 work concerning cultural value and arts and humanities research in the UK in their creation of qualitative network maps that are collaboratively produced (by interviewer and interviewee).¹⁴ Through their interviews, cultural value was a topic that participants were encouraged to discuss in terms of their individual experience and, as a result, network maps were created to depict the intensity of flows (such as partners) between academic and non-academic environments in terms of demonstrating the value of

¹³ Eckersall, Peter, Gray, Dominic, Menon, Jisha & Van Graan, Mike, (2013) 'Valuing Ecologies of Performance: culture and capital in a neoliberal world,' *Performance Research*, Vol. 18, no. 2, April, p. 31.

¹⁴ Oancea, Florez-Petour & Atkinson, *The ecologies and economy of cultural value from research*, p. 8.

higher education, arts and humanities research. The researchers interpreted the multiple meanings and practices associated with cultural value to indicate that culture is connected with a wide variety of fields and modes of inquiry, and that these various conceptions of culture are not discrete but are, in fact, connected in what Oancea et al. describe as ecologies of cultural value.¹⁵ Although the term ecologies of cultural value is not expanded upon further, it is an important provocation that places a firm emphasis on relationships and ecology in the consideration of the value of culture. I expand upon this provocation later in this chapter.

In the absence of a fully realised ecological method of approaching cultural relationships, there is a final conceptualisation of relationships that is essential to this discussion, which is linked to the knowledge economy milieu of the Australian cultural industry. A well-known system of exchange within knowledge economy discourse is the network. Networks are a key influence relevant to the examination of cultural value as they are directly concerned with the *connections between* entities (nodes). Castells notes the impact of networks upon global power in his discussion of networked societies. He defines network-making power as the ability to use specific networks and strategic alliances between actors to benefit the power-wielding 'programmers.'¹⁶ The configuration of actors in a network is redefined in terms of their actual involvement

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 11.

¹⁶ Programmers can control the operation of a network in order to emphasise one narrative over others, especially within a digital capacity. Power, therefore, does not reside in institutions, corporations or indeed the state, but through the programmers and, more importantly, the network itself (and the volume of people who interact with it). See Castells, Manuel, (2004) 'Afterword: Why networks matter,' *Demos Collection*, <http://stuff.ulisesmejias.com/castells.pdf> [accessed 20 Mar 2018], pp. 219–225.

and collaborative contribution to a project, rather than their potential capability to do so. Castells argues that the network, as a form of organisation in the global economy, consists of a set of nodes that connect corporations, businesses, firms and their suppliers and customers through their shared interest in a common 'business' project. These actors move onto other networks and thus new partnerships with each new project.¹⁷ A network is a newer type of social structure to perceive relationships and, for cultural value, the conception of the network is useful because it demarcates a flexible structure that is adaptable and characterised by the ability to evolve with the environment.¹⁸ In cultural value discourse, there is the potential for the study of relationship quality to occur if these relationships are positioned as the links between the nodes within a network.

However, while Castell's network is a more democratic way to map relationships, it is largely geared towards controlling or planning projects (especially using electronically-based technologies) and their role in shaping interactions within society.¹⁹ Network analysis can provide a representation of the many interrelationships present within (cultural) projects from the perspective of project management (and capitalist efficiency). However, in terms of exploring cultural relations within the context of this research, it is limited because it prioritises the outcome or function of the *network itself* instead of the relationships it consists of. This is because it is structured, as Castells

¹⁷ Castells, Manuel, (2000) 'Materials for an exploratory theory of the network society,' *British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 51, no. 1, January/March, p. 11.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 15.

¹⁹ While the use and pervasiveness of new media is an interesting topic for the study of cultural value, it is not the focus of this research.

notes, to include those which actively assist in achieving the network's task but excludes or ignores that which is irrelevant.²⁰ Accordingly, while network analysis can function as a means to analyse a complex array of participants and stakeholders that are linked across a common issue, project or context, it is not the aim of this thesis to adopt a methodology that attempts to manage or contain cultural value (and thus control and measure impacts). Rather than mapping a network using a network analysis methodology or the vocabulary of networks, my contribution begins at the theoretical level, where I seek to broaden the approach to the conceptualisation of value itself within the context of culture, by paying attention to qualitative and more subjective 'data,' as found in perceptions and interactions concerning the relationships within the course of cultural activity.

The limitations of using psychological, project management-based or even public relations-based conceptions of relationships that are based upon the management and control of actors or nodes, indicate the need for an additional approach to relationships that is not based on metrics and data aggregation when it comes to examining the value of culture. Doing so represents the potential at the theoretical level to conceive the value of culture less in terms of an economic frame, that Belfiore warns against, and more in terms of *how it brings various stakeholders together and the nature of their interactions*. To achieve this aim, I return below to a conceptualisation of relationships

²⁰ Castells, *Materials for an exploratory theory of the network society*, p. 15. In terms of relationships, Castells' understanding of the network has the potential for methodological complexity to determine what 'irrelevant' relationships might be, if the focus of study using his conception of the network were relationships themselves, rather than the objective of a network. In a relations-based context, irrelevant relationships would not, theoretically, exist.

that is currently evident in cultural studies, that is relevant to cultural value and borrows terminology from the natural sciences, bolstered by Oancea's deft description of 'ecologies of cultural value.'²¹ Evoking the natural sciences to better understand cultural environments, such as cultural policy formation and arts funding networks, envisages the relationships in these contexts as operating in an ecological manner, rather than, or in addition to, a project or network-based structure.²² The following discussion considers the impact of the ecological turn within arts criticism, including the more recent focus in cultural value discourse upon conceptions of a cultural ecology. While the ecological metaphor is evident across understandings of various cultural scenes, it is typically used for descriptive purposes. I advance the potential of a cultural ecology further to propose the development of a conceptual approach that qualitatively examines the configurations of relations that emerge from cultural activities and allows for the comparative discussion of interactions and outcomes. I refer to this approach as cultural symbiosis. It focuses on benefit or harm in response to national calls for stronger

²¹ Public relations research that is geared towards the evaluation of relationships typically measures the public's opinion of its relationships with organisations. To do so, various scales that measure the impact of these relationships upon behaviour (especially consumer behaviour) exist. Grunig & Hon's model proposes that the organisational-public relationship can be explored using six dimensions: control mutuality, trust, satisfaction, commitment, exchange relationships and communal relationships. Although their work is not directly related to cultural value, as it considers relationships from the perspective of Public Relations and focuses on the relationships between organisations and people, their focus on the value of relationships as a means to better deploy Public Relations strategies is consistent with my logic that understanding cultural value in a better way is through attention to the relationships that operate in that space. See Grunig, James E., & Hon, Linda, (eds.) (1999) *Guidelines for Measuring Relationships in Public Relations*, The Institute for Public Relations Commission on PR Measurement and Evaluation, Gainesville, pp. 1–8.

²² See Holden's work on the UK creative industries in terms of its conceptualisation as a cultural ecology and how it consists of three spheres: publicly funded culture, commercial culture and homemade culture. Holden, John, (2015) 'The Ecology of Culture,' *Arts and Humanities Research Council*, Cultural Value Project, <https://ahrc.ukri.org/documents/project-reports-and-reviews/the-ecology-of-culture/> [accessed 12 Apr 2018].

The thinking of culture in terms of the natural sciences (a cultural ecology), has now entered into knowing consciousness. Rowan Bailey et al. note that the trickle-down effects of thinking about culture as an ecology is seen across many areas. Bailey, Rowan, Booth-Kurpnieks, Claire, Davies, Kath & Delsante, Ioanni, (2019) 'Cultural Ecology and Cultural Critique,' *Arts* 2076-0752, Vol. 8, no. 4, <https://doi.org/10.3390/arts8040166>, p. 2.

engagement with Australian culture and provides a description of value that is not predominantly embedded within an economistic perspective.²³ As a result, the ecological context is repositioned in this thesis to become a means to better understand cultural interactions and offers a perspective that conceives of value as an interactive and network-forming activity. Accordingly, the discussion of cultural value requires a shift in direction to one that emphasises its various forms of relationships and the types of connections that are created in these spaces. These networks might be directed by or intersect with a state's wider public diplomacy agenda or be used to enhance understanding of the cultural policy environment. A way to understand these networks is crucial to further develop cultural competence surrounding the impact of relationships in the examination of cultural value.

Cultural Relationships Today: the Ecological Turn

As introduced above, the topic of relations is not absent from the literature on cultural value. Aside from the mapping of relationships in terms of networks, which is limited due to its focus on the network itself to demarcate its boundaries within a contained system, another approach that deals with complex relationships in cultural studies relies on an application of ecology to the cultural realm. This term, cultural ecology, has anthropological origins.²⁴ From the mid-2000s, the notion of approaching culture in an

²³ The national calls for stronger engagement with Australian culture with a variety of stakeholders (especially international ones) refers to the Australian government moves to streamline the value of its culture introduced in the first chapter of this thesis. They include the 2012 Australian in the Asian Century white paper, the 2017 Foreign Policy white paper, the 2018 Soft Power Review. See 'Australia in the Asian Century White Paper,' *Australian Government Department of Defence*, '2017 Foreign Policy White Paper,' *DFAT* and 'Soft Power Review,' *DFAT*.

²⁴ Julian Steward is attributed with the original development of the term 'cultural ecology', which he developed in the 1950s with regard to the adaptive tendencies that cultural norms exhibit when

ecological manner gained traction with Holden and Rand individually publishing papers on the metaphorical use of ecology to better understand questions of culture.²⁵ As an alternative to the articulation of culture in terms of economy, the use of an ecological approach emphasises relationships and patterns in the cultural sector. Cultural ecology is transdisciplinary, which Finke notes is rooted in natural science and the structure and function of ecosystems but also in the humanities and conceptions of an ecology of the mind, as posited by Bateson and Steward's theory of cultural adaptation.²⁶ The principle of 'learning from nature' is central to cultural ecology as a cultural theory as it allows the consideration of how nature can provide information that might then be relevant to the cultural sphere.²⁷ In fact, I propose that cultural ecology provides the basis of understanding cultural value as consisting of relational elements that are in need of further analysis.

If we can conceive of culture as an organism, doing so is also a means to cater for its dynamic and evolving characteristics that allows for a multiplicity of interactions, and relations, to be included in its evaluation. This approach is evident in Sharpe's work concerning the formation of healthy creative ecosystems, which seeks to explore how to cultivate a sustainable and artistically vibrant arts and cultural sector. By focussing on

considered within their environments. See Steward, Julian, (1955) *The Theory of Culture Change: the methodology of multilineal evolution*, University of Illinois Press, Urbana and Chicago.

²⁵ For more information on the historical origins of 'the ecology of culture,' please refer to Holden, *The Ecology of Culture*, p. 5.

McCarthy et al. refer to an 'organizational ecology of the arts,' when they discuss different arts sectors in the United States. McCarthy et al., *Reframing the debate about the benefits of the arts*.

²⁶ Finke, Peter, (2013) 'A Brief Outline of Evolutionary Cultural Ecology,' in Arnold, Darrell P. (ed.), *Traditions of Systems Theory: Major Figures and Contemporary Developments*, Routledge, New York, p. 293.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 304.

the relationship between the economy and arts, Sharpe proposes that rather than dismissing the economy concept, we should ‘... understand that there is not one economy but many economies, each defined and configured by a different currency, the integrity of which must be maintained in order to keep that economy healthy.’²⁸ Like Florida, Sharpe suggests that cultural value is understood through a delineation of art as a currency, but currency is extended beyond monetary terms to also incorporate value in terms of ‘an economy of meaning’ (although it still incorporates economy-based terminology). This approach draws on ecology, phenomenology and actor-network theory to explore complex systems of value creation that exceed monetary-based commentary. The ecosystem is useful when discussing the value of culture because it provides the conceptual means to think of value as multifaceted and dynamic and to consider the possibilities of complex interrelationships where value might be realised, just as complex interrelationships operate in biological communities.²⁹

The complexity of interrelationships in cultural contexts is acknowledged by a variety of scholars. Holden’s work on cultural value for the UK’s Arts and Humanities Research Council uses the ecological metaphor because, as he notes, it provides us with an ability to see how systems work and the ways in which ‘each part of the overall cultural world co-operates and/or competes with, influences and affects the others.’³⁰ Holden stresses

²⁸ ‘Economies of Life,’ *International Futures Forum*, <https://www.internationalfuturesforum.com/projects.php?pid=31> [accessed 27 Dec 2018].

²⁹ This attention to the ecosystem extends upon Sharpe’s argument that we can study the identity of dynamic systems as a part of a wider pattern of overlapping processes, in a similar way to how complex adaptive systems are studied in ecology. However, he still favours the concept of economies as a means to explain how the arts and creativity ‘work’ in society. See Sharpe, Bill, (2010) *Economies of Life: patterns of health and wealth*, Triarchy Press and International Futures Forum, Axminster.

³⁰ Holden, *The Ecology of Culture*, p. 3. Despite the reference to symbiosis, Holden uses the term in a descriptive sense rather than developing its usage in an in-depth manner. This is demonstrated as, aside

that approaching the complex interdependencies of arts and culture as an ecology provides a structure that allows for the consideration of feedback loops, symbiosis and culture as temporary phenomena where moments of assemblages might occur between people and things.³¹ Considering the arts as an ecology also emphasises the possibility of regenerative potential,³² in that culture may be a source of (individual, community or societal) growth, restoration and resilience, just as regeneration applies to species and environments in a similar, albeit biological, sense which associates change with the notion of life-cycles where living entities flourish and decline. This understanding directly refers to cultural value where multiple variables of reception, reach, interpretation and the wider political climate will invariably impact upon structured attempts to shape relations between countries or increase their 'attractiveness' in the eyes of one another, or how cultural institutions and artists might explain their value to funders and the public. Ecological language can shape how we talk about value and help to answer questions surrounding value to, as Holden notes, 'make the argument more simply and how you order [the value argument] in your mind...and how we talk about value.'³³ Holden introduces the ecological metaphor as a way to justify the value of culture and the arts at an advocacy level.

from the introduction, Holden mentions symbiosis only one other time throughout the report as a synonym for convergence, talking about the fusion between fashion and music in London Fashion week. See page 20 of the report.

³¹ Holden, *The Ecology of Culture*, p. 3.

³² Ibid., p. 3.

³³ Agbabiaka, Rotimi, (2018) 'Finding Your Place in the Cultural Ecology: An Interview with John Holden,' *Theatre Bay Area*, 21 Mar, <https://www.theatrebayarea.org/news/391940/Finding-Your-Place-In-the-Cultural-Ecology-An-Interview-With-John-Holden.htm> [accessed 07 Mar 2019].

Others expand upon Holden's use of the ecological metaphor to discuss specific examples of cultural practice. Notions of ecologies are considered through the works of Kershaw, Paacolainen and Lavery who focus on the connection of the arts to environmental causes in its subject matter, construction and as a means to conceptualise performance practice. Each of them use ecology in practice-based research to examine theatre in an age of environmental action as the cognitive basis to interrogate performance scholarship, and propose the potential of examining postdramatic performances as a part of wider ecosystems.³⁴ These responses explore the praxis of environmental advocacy and the medium of theatre as a means of communication and connection to nature. This demonstrates that the ecological metaphor is somewhat common to cultural scholarship. However, these debates are less focused on the concerns of cultural value, such as evaluation, and explore environmental action in what Kershaw calls biocentric performances that may lead humans to a fuller appreciation of how they are acting in, not on, the earth's environment.³⁵ Ultimately, while terminology such as symbiosis, networks and ecosystems are deployed as overall descriptors of the cultural industry (or aspects of it) or performance scholarship as a means to highlight the *existence of* interdependencies and interactions within a 'cultural ecology,' the use of actual ecological terms to conduct a sustained analysis that discusses cultural content and activities themselves in terms of *value* and as a part of a larger whole, is less evident.

³⁴ See Kershaw, Baz, (2007) *Theatre Ecology: environments and performance events*, Cambridge University, Cambridge and New York; Paavolainen, Teemu, (2012), *Theatre/Ecology/Cognition: Theorizing Performer-Object Interaction in Grotowski, Kantor, And Meyerhold*, [Electronic Resource], Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke [viewed 26 December 2017]; and Lavery, Carl, (2016) 'Introduction: performance and ecology: what can theatre do?' *Green Letters: Studies in Ecocriticism*, Vol. 20, no. 3, pp. 229–236.

³⁵ Kershaw, *Theatre Ecology: environments and performance events*, pp. 313–317.

Consequently, while the above authors demonstrate the strength of the ecological metaphor and imagery to describe varying aspects of cultural value and the cultural industry more broadly, their analogies tend to be surface-based and deployed for illustrative purposes only or to act as future provocations. This chapter extends the ecological perspective to offer more than a means to escape the impact or economically-based rhetoric used to describe and measure the arts and cultural sector. For cultural value, an ecological perspective presents potential to consider value as conceptualised by components of an ecosystem (rather than assets in an exchange-value system). Yet, in order to enhance this potential to better examine relationships within cultural value discourse, a more in-depth application of (science-based) ecology is developed below using the vocabulary of symbiosis.

The Ecology of Cultural Value and Cultural Symbiosis

The following discussion understands ecology to refer to the scientific approach to the study of living organisms in relation to each other and their environmental surroundings. While ecology does feature in cultural studies in various manifestations, as the discussion above has outlined, the origin of the ecological metaphor emanates from scientific disciplines. In the scientific study of ecology, when organisms form close associations with each other, the outcome may be productive for both parties or destructive for one/both. Whatever the outcome, symbiotic relationships will always undergo processes of evolution, including changes in behaviour and even modifications

to their genetic makeup.³⁶ I propose that the ecological interactions classified by biological symbiosis are of direct relevance to how we might better think about the value of culture, especially regarding the association with interactions or relationships and evolution. As a conceptual metaphor, symbiotic relationships can be applied to the circumstances of cultural activities as a means to better articulate their value.

Using the foundation of ecology to re-examine how to value culture differently arises out of the debates surrounding cultural value. Challenges in the cultural value literature identified earlier in this thesis include the tensions between cultural policy and questions of value, and how culture is defined and operates within the neo-liberal market. Symbiosis may be used to further understand the value of cultural activity by conceiving the nature of the relationships amongst policy, content and people in terms of design, execution and outcomes.³⁷ For cultural value, this means that value and even evaluation might be approached relationally, in that examining the interactions and networks that manifest as a result of the production and consumption of cultural

³⁶ Symbiosis can be conjunctive (involving physical attachment) or disjunctive (where no physical union occurs). This thesis's use of symbiosis is concerned with what would be considered examples of disjunctive symbiosis; although, it is possible that certain interactions within cultural activities could involve conjunctive interactions, such as a handshake or a crowded audience at a music event, for example.

³⁷ The reference to people is deliberately broad as the relevant stakeholders in cultural activity vary depending on context. However, looking at the cultural value of a cultural policy, for example, might involve 'people' in a collective or individual sense, such as: the general public who attend cultural events that are programmed as a part of a cultural policy; government officials or policymakers who are involved in the design of a cultural policy that is enacted by a cultural body or department; staff of a cultural institution or government department who are involved in the oversight and logistical coordination of a cultural event; and so forth. The connections amongst these 'people' is an area in which symbiosis may be used to characterise how relationships function/ed over the course of cultural activity. 'People' has not been elaborated further as a pre-determined 'category' of analysis, as this risks creating a pro-forma of desirable relationships which have the potential to become metricised key performance indicators in the measurement of value. Rather, symbiosis encourages the awareness of and attention to people as means to *explore* what connections and relationships were present over the course of a cultural activity that may have (positively or negatively) contributed to cultural value in a given example.

content, symbiosis helps us to ‘evaluate’ culture in a distinctive, relations-based manner. Chapter four describes this potential through a description of the methodology applied in the case study chapters. The current research concerning cultural value is advanced by my proposition of cultural symbiosis, as it is a means to explore instrumental cultural policy objectives with relation to the aesthetic content facilitated by them.

But what are the details of symbiosis that will inform this conceptualisation? Etymologically, the Greek term *sumbiōsis* refers to a living together, or *sumbios*, meaning ‘companion.’³⁸ These roots give an indication as to why it could be appropriate to draw parallels with human relationships, despite the term today being more commonly associated with the biological science of smaller creatures, such as trilobites.³⁹ Traditionally, symbiosis was used in regard to humankind as a description of sociability or an adjective for human societies to describe communal or social life. Gontier documents how symbiosis was originally concerned with the ‘natural’ organisational structure of society in terms of political and sociocultural associations.⁴⁰

³⁸ Stevenson, Angus, (ed.) (2010) ‘symbiosis’, *Oxford Dictionary of English*, OUP, Oxford p. 1,802.

³⁹ For information on trilobites’ symbiotic relationship with sulfur bacteria, please see Fortey, Richard, (2004) ‘The Lifestyles of the Trilobites,’ *American Scientist*, Vol 92, Sept–Oct, pp. 446–453.

⁴⁰ The reference to natural structure is with regard to Jacques Rousseau’s understanding that humans are inherently *good-natured* and *social* (aka live communally) but are corrupted by artificial societies and thus form a social contract to maintain reciprocal social rule. Gontier notes that many of the foundations of symbiosis (such as mutualism, commensalism and parasitism), therefore, previously defined sociocultural human relations with regard to the sociopolitical ideologies of Rousseau. She traces how early symbiologists, such as zoologist/paleontologist Joseph van Beneden, extended the usage of symbiotic terms that previously described human assemblages (commensalism from the French word, *commensaux*) and feelings between humans (mutualism from the French word, *mutuel*) to examine the ‘social lives of animals,’ which used ‘...often socialist and communitarian language to characterise the living arrangements present in the natural world.’ Therefore, she makes the point that intellectual roots of symbiosis were in terms of the close associations of *humankind*, and the zoological and biological applications to animals, and then pathogens and organisms followed, and is how the term symbiosis is predominately used today.

Gontier, Nathalie, (2016) ‘Symbiosis, History of,’ *Encyclopedia of Evolutionary Biology*, <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-800049-6.00015-9> [accessed 11 Mar 2019], pp. 273–274.

However, it was in 1879 that Anton de Bary developed his natural sciences definition of symbiosis that is widely used today. It is broad in definition and refers to the living together of organisms that are not alike.⁴¹ De Bary's original thesis proposed that there are three main categories in symbiosis, which he identified as commensalism, mutualism and parasitism.⁴² While cultural symbiosis is figurative, a basic knowledge of biological symbiosis is necessary in order to sketch the conceptual boundaries which might apply to a cultural application as a means to overcome the conjecture surrounding the definitions (and measurement) of cultural value. Therefore, an introduction to the types of relationships found within biological symbiosis is detailed below. By way of graphical representation in Figure 2, I begin this discussion by presenting the categories of biological symbiosis by which the relationships in cultural activities and policies may be theoretically conceptualised.

⁴¹ Despite historical confusion, claims to a restrictive definition of symbiosis to denote purely mutualism are now seen as outdated. Current usage is widely de Bary's, despite symbiotic terminology's lack of unanimous consensus amongst biologists. See the following for an overview of this definitional conjecture, Martin & Schwab, *Current Usage of Symbiosis and Associated Terminology*, pp. 32–45 and De Bary, Anton, (1879) *Die erscheinung der symbiose* [The phenomenon of symbiosis], Verlag von Karl J. Trubner, Strassburg.

⁴² The following definitions are as articulated in Paracer & Ahmadjian, *Symbiosis: An Introduction to Biological Associations*, p. 6.

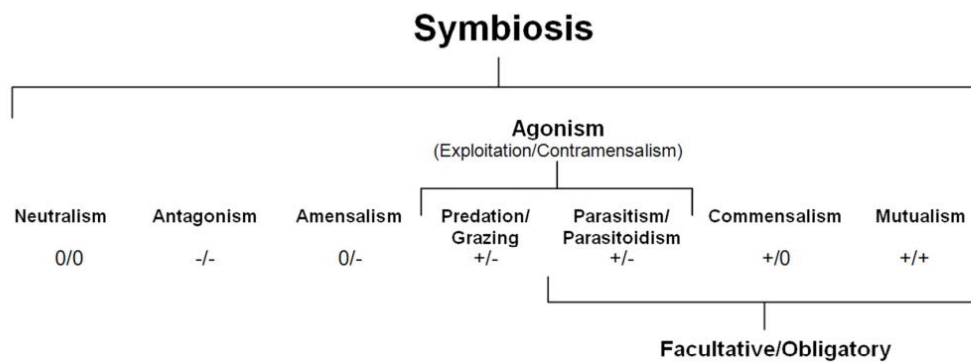


Figure 2: Scheme of symbiosis (Martin & Schwab).⁴³

In this diagram, symbiosis consists of a series of relational categories between a pair of species and is denoted by the following: + = beneficial effect, - = harmful effect, and 0 = neutral effect.

Mutualism in a relationship is defined as one that benefits both species (symbionts) involved in the association. In evolutionary terms, the natural outcome is that both species will survive better as a result of each other's company. A common example is how European honey bees gain nutritional benefit from certain flowers, which are in turn pollinated by the bee. Although assessing benefit can be difficult and varies across mutualistic relationships, biologists generally accept that when determining benefit, there should also include a consideration of the costs that each symbiont faces. Instances of reciprocity and protection are found in mutualism. In some applications, mutualism is used interchangeably with the term cooperation and even symbiosis more broadly.

⁴³ Martin, Bradford D. & Schwab, Ernest, (2013) 'Current Usage of Symbiosis and Associated Terminology,' *International Journal of Biology*, Vol. 5, no. 1, p. 41.

When a relationship is characterised by *commensalism*, one of the species will benefit while the other does not benefit or is not adversely affected by the association. A spider's web on a plant is typically understood as commensal, as the flora is unharmed by the web. There may be aspects of transport, shelter or cohabitation that occur in commensalism where one species is oblivious, indifferent or unaffected by another's actions.⁴⁴ Instances of commensalism may also be determined when an effect is unknown or not able to be determined/verified within the current state of affairs.

A *parasitic* relationship between two organisms is typically characterised by harm. This type of association involves one organism, the parasite, who feeds, receive nutrients or lives off the other. The result is that one symbiont benefits at the expense of the other. A degree of predation may be present in such associations; however, as predation does not occur over long periods of time, it is not always a prerequisite in the parasitic relationship. Ticks are commonly understood as parasites, for example.

In scientific usage today, a further three categories are commonly considered in addition to the main types of symbiotic relationships. A relationship characterised by *ammensalism* is when one species is harmed, inhibited or even destroyed while the other symbiont remains unaffected. Although the possibility of one species being

⁴⁴ In some biological circles, inquilinism (cohabitation) and phoresis (transport, as how eggs may be moved if an insect lays them on the body of another animal) are considered additional symbiotic relationships. However, like Paracer and Ahmadjian, this thesis considers them to be variations of commensalism. Paracer & Ahmadjian, *Symbiosis: An Introduction to Biological Associations*, p. 7.

unaffected is more theoretical, being unaffected may also refer to an almost negligible degree of benefit or harm at the times of assessment. An *antagonistic* relationship is an interaction where both species are negatively impacted. In some usage, it is conflated with parasitism, but other definitions stress that the difference between the two is straightforward as the parasitic interaction will benefit one symbiont, while in antagonism there are no, or negligible, benefits or the identifiable benefits will be overshadowed by harm to the parties.⁴⁵ Parasitism and antagonism are, however, closely related. *Neutralism* refers to interactions where neither species is harmed or affected.⁴⁶ Partly a philosophical interaction, some biologists believe this category is merely theoretical as the chance of zero impact occurring when two species interact is basically impossible. However, it may also refer to instances where the effect of interactions is so negligible at the point of time it was measured. The above categories of symbiosis ultimately function as descriptive summaries, which indicate the presence of benefits and detrimental aspects of a relationship between creatures, one which has the potential to function as a conceptual metaphor to describe the value of culture. In the next section I describe how symbiosis might be applied to cultural value.

Conceptual Metaphors and the Role of Symbiosis in the Question of Value

Following a more developed understanding of biological symbiosis outlined above, we can now further discuss its application to cultural value. Depending on the nature of the relationships amongst the various aspects and actors in cultural policies and activities, I

⁴⁵ Martin & Schwab, *Current Usage of Symbiosis and Associated Terminology*, p. 41.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

propose that cases (and components of these cases) can be conceptually approached through the use of symbiotic principles. Australian case studies in chapters five, six and seven demonstrate this direction across the three dimensions of cultural value discussed in chapter two. Symbiotic analysis can also concisely summarise the interactions that occur in these examples and is primarily intended to serve as a conceptual metaphor through which to provoke a more tangible approach to discussing relationships that are experienced and evolve as a result of cultural activity.

Lakoff and Johnson developed conceptual metaphors in a seminal linguistic text in 1980 that examines their ability to structure understandings and everyday functioning of human experience. Through an extensive collection of common metaphors, such as 'ideas are resources,' 'ideas are money' and 'ideas are plants,' they illustrate how the same knowledge can be experienced differently depending on the metaphorical frame used to describe and experience it.⁴⁷ They then suggest that metaphors outside our conventional conceptual systems have even more powerful and creative potential to reframe experience and structure as using metaphors highlights some features while suppressing others.⁴⁸ In the context of the value of culture discussed in chapter two, the powerful structuring force of economics has been critiqued at length by scholars such as Belfiore, Meyrick and Walmsley. Therefore, it becomes an essential question to ask:

⁴⁷ This particular series of metaphors with respect to ideas are: Ideas are food, ideas are people, ideas are plants, ideas are products, ideas are commodities, ideas are resources, ideas are cutting instruments ideas are fashion. Lakoff, George & Johnson, (2001) 'Metaphors We Live By: Language Thought and Culture,' in O'Brien, Jodi & Kollock, Peter (eds.), *The Production of Reality: essays and readings on social interaction*, Pine Forge Press, Boston MA, pp. 125-126

⁴⁸ Ibid, p. 129.

how else can the language surrounding the value of culture be reframed in order to rebalance some of the dominant metaphorical forces that currently define it?

Scholars discussed earlier in this chapter, such as Holden and Oancea, have made arguments in favour of using ecology in the discussion of the value of culture. I suggest that by following these ecological propositions and Lakoff and Johnson's logic that metaphors are a structuring (linguistically-based) force, the use of symbiosis as a conceptual metaphor can be a means to reposition the discourse of cultural value to be structured in terms of ecology instead of in terms of economics. If, as Lakoff and Johnson propose, the use of metaphor underpins the foundation of theory and 'the essence of the metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another,' our use of language in the discussion of value is crucial because it cannot neutrally describe a series of conditions or experiences. Therefore, if language actually 'acquires the status of truth,'⁴⁹ remaining within an instrumentalist, economic or even outcomes-based frame would mean that cultural value will continue to be dominated by quantitative language and market-based logic that is disproportionately focused on end results of cultural activities, if the same language is used to frame understandings of value. Kochis and Gillespie propose that constellations can form surrounding a single semantic system, which are interrelated sets of conceptual metaphors, and their entailments, that contribute to a meaning system.⁵⁰ It is following these principles as

⁴⁹ This proposition underpins the constructivist position to knowledge which I describe in chapter four. Ibid, p. 125, 130.

⁵⁰ Kochis, Bruce & Gillespie, Diane, (2006) 'Conceptual Metaphors as Interpretive Tools in Qualitative Research: A Re-Examination of College Students' Diversity Discussions,' *The Qualitative Report*, Vol. 11, no. 3, p. 568.

outlined by Lakoff and Johnson, and Kochis and Gillespie, that cultural symbiosis provides experientially orientated provocations to the consideration of relationships in the context of the value of culture. These provocations contain several parameters and key considerations discussed below.

First, it is important to note that, as a means to provoke discussions surrounding the nature of relationships that occur as a result of cultural activities and thus a means to reorientate the discussion of cultural value, symbiosis operates as a conceptual provocation rather than providing a series of literal or bounded classifications. Therefore, cultural symbiosis does not operate as a series of ontological metaphors.⁵¹ This is partly because biological symbiosis includes categorisations of non-human organisms, and cultural value discourse largely concerns the experiences and perspectives of humans; but also because the use of categories implies a series of bounded and discrete characteristics for the purposes of organisation. While cultural symbiosis is not an actual biological categorisation of relationships within cultural activities, it does provide a constellation with which to conceive relations amongst cultural agents that articulate different and individual types of value. Instead of an objectivist model, cultural symbiosis focuses on the experiential aspect of relationships and people's perspectives (and experiences) of them. This negotiation with the

⁵¹ Lakoff & Johnson note that 'the way that a consistent set of metaphors imposes an entity structure with a set of relations between the entities can be represented by an objectivist model. In the model, the entities are those imposed by the ontological metaphors, and the relations between the entities are given by the internal structures of the structural metaphors.' The experientialist alternative emphasises what is coherent or meaningful to the individual, rather than achieving a universally valid point of view (or in the case of cultural symbiosis, universally applied metaphor). Lakoff & Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, pp. 220–228.

environment and other people (in the course of cultural activity) means that understanding comes from interaction and the experience of a relationship, rather than an imposed, static structure. Understanding relationships symbiotically, therefore, rests in the exercise of metaphorical imagination which consists of the 'ability to bend your world view and adjust the way you categorise your experience,' to communicate unshared experience and 'slowly figure out what you have in common.'⁵² These attributes, as outlined by Lakoff and Johnson, provide the experiential roadmap upon which cultural symbiosis can help reshape the conceptualisation of cultural value. In this reconceptualization, relationships can form a more vital part of the discussion surrounding the value of culture as the use of conceptual metaphors in cultural symbiosis permits the understanding of the experience of a relationship in terms of ecology, which has the potential to grow, decline and evolve.

As discussed in chapter two, conceptions of value are dynamic and differ across (and within) political, economic and social dimensions, and cultural symbiosis provides a way to theoretically conceptualise and compare the interactions that occur within these spaces. For example, cultural diplomacy draws upon symbiotic terminology in the concept mutualism and the association with cooperation and benefits. This echoes the outcomes which nations desire in their pursuit of soft power. Furthermore, as we recall, Cummings defines cultural diplomacy as involving exchanges at the individual and national level that foster *mutual understanding*. Thus, mutualism shares the concept of reciprocal benefit that is obtained through exchanges made possible by a symbiotic

⁵² Ibid., pp. 231–232.

relationship. By looking to the biological categories that are used to understand organic relationships (symbiosis), aside from mutualism, the other categorical distinctions above also provide vocabulary currently lacking in the discourse of cultural value.

Second, my proposal to insert symbiosis into the cultural value debate is a means to revise the quantitative-qualitative divide that is evident in the literature. While the limits of impact-related or metric-based approaches are understood by various scholars as incomplete or failing to appropriately link to the qualitative relations they seek to measure,⁵³ as Bakhshi notes, in reality they continue to constitute the terms of engagement in which cultural value is conceived in the public domain.⁵⁴ In light of the almost inescapable nature of measurements, I seek to redirect the discourse of cultural value away from the terms of qualitative/quantitative assessment towards an approach that is not only articulated in terms of measurement and economics, but also is relations-based and ‘assesses’ value in terms of interactions. To become more focused on relations, I propose a language of symbiosis to articulate how relationships operate as a result of cultural activities, which is a useful means of describing these interactions within an ecological context.

⁵³ In terms of valuing culture, Meyrick and Tully describe a value loop that:

‘Evidence doesn’t exist in a vacuum, but in respect to an intellectual field it is deemed to contribute to the knowledge of. For quantitative measurement to be rational, there must be stability in the qualitative relations it addresses, such that methodology fits epistemology fits experience – thus contributing to a sense that we have learnt something we did not know before.’ However, in a distended value loop, methodology becomes too dominant where measuring (value of culture) becomes a logic in its own right and (in the case of arts and culture support) hyper-focused on economic arguments where numerical evidence replaces experience and has little persuasive force in the pursuit of genuine knowledge.

Meyrick, Julian & Barnett, Tully, (2017) “Culture without ‘world’: Australian cultural policy in the age of stupid,” *Cultural Trends*, Vol. 26, no. 2, pp. 117–120.

⁵⁴ Bakhshi notes the difficulty of acknowledging types of benefit that are beyond quantification in a policy environment because, in the end, they all produce quantitative effects. Bakhshi, Freeman & Hitchen, *Measuring Intrinsic Value – How to Stop Worrying and Love Economics*, p. 18.

Third, the variety of symbiotic terms provide the conditions under which relationships can be theoretically experienced in terms of a spectrum of *positive and negative interactions* in a number of configurations. Following my establishment of the variety of categories under which interactions can be conceptually understood, the next task is to consider them in light of examples that concern interactions that require understanding in terms of cultural value. On a macro level, this provides a language to describe the value of cultural activities with regard to the nation as it uses direct language (degrees of benefit and harm) that connects to the power-based concepts in political science and International Relations discourse that concern a state's self-interest in the international arena. The consideration of relationships in terms of symbiosis also provides the cultural policy arena a means to extend the understanding of the arts and culture in terms of ecology which, as discussed above, is an increasingly adopted metaphor to describe complex networks and relations in the field of cultural value from scholars, such as Holden. Furthermore, the symbiotic attention to relationships formed due to cultural policy initiatives is also a means to better conceptualise stakeholder engagement, using language that is not only positive but gears attention towards the nature of the social interactions that occur and what future potential they have. Future potential may include, for example, tracking an ongoing relationship with a mutualistic cultural policy partner, or examining the potential to re-engage and evolve a previously antagonistic interaction between partners surrounding a single cultural activity on which they may need to work together in the future.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ These potential applications suggest the scope for future research in this area, but are outside the scope of this thesis.

While cultural symbiosis might provide insight into an overall experience of a cultural activity or event, it also provides the means to describe a variety of outcomes that occur within one single cultural activity. Ultimately, adopting a symbiotic consideration of a cultural activity in order to describe the nature of interactions between many stakeholders draws upon consistent, interactions-based language to identify and analyse relationships. This provides a consistent vocabulary of somewhat incomparable, qualitative data in the sense that symbiosis provides the language to compare similar types of connections and relationships in order to gain insight into enduring patterns and trends that may occur regionally, globally or as a result of activities between certain stakeholders. This provides a practical effect for those adopting symbiotic language as a series of cultural activities between two cultural partners, or one cultural partner and an array of their relationships with different partners can be referred to and compared on the basis of the nature of interactions. I hesitate to refer to the use of symbiosis as offering categories for identification (as this implies bounded groups that are subject to stasis, miscategorisation and even discrimination); practically speaking, cultural symbiosis is a metaphorical provocation that reorientates discussions concerning the value of culture to be holistically expanded to also consider the efficacy of interactions amongst stakeholders during the course of cultural activity, rather than being outcomes-centric or disproportionately focused on the tangible results of cultural activity.

Fourth, for cultural diplomacy, international arts organisations and other stakeholders engaged in international arts practice, the use of cultural symbiosis also provides a more

practical means by which a variety of cultural activities across different regional programs might be able to be compared. In the case of DFAT, they are not typically examined in this manner. For cultural policy, comparisons might occur concerning areas such as cultural community engagement. Cultural symbiosis might be adopted as a means to identify similar or dissimilar relations across various geographic locations (for example a local council) that share similar cultural policy approaches.

Features of Symbiosis: Capabilities, Life Cycles and Dependant Relations and the Relationship to Culture

In the previous section above, I established the beginnings of how symbiosis might help us to approach the value of culture in a more relational manner, using symbiosis, as I outlined the key terms to conceive relations amongst cultural agents which articulate different types of value. There are, however, additional aspects of symbiosis that are also central to this discussion and which I will examine in this section; these include capabilities, life cycles and dependant relations and how they accumulatively contribute to the realisation of a 'typology' of cultural value.

A key feature of symbiosis is that organisms acquire new capabilities as a result of their interactions. In evolutionary terms, this could range from structural improvements at a molecular level, to the implications for diseases due to horizontal gene transfer leading to antibiotic resistance.⁵⁶ The principle of enhancement or gain can also be used if metaphorically applying symbiosis in a cultural context. When examining the

⁵⁶ Paracer & Ahmadjian, *Symbiosis: An Introduction to Biological Associations*, p. 4.

interactions that take place as a result of a cultural activity, thinking in terms of symbiosis encourages us to focus on what positive outcomes or openings occur.

In addition to new capabilities, cultural symbiosis's affinity with life cycles is a useful concept in the discussion of cultural value. For example, many plants and fungi go through at least one phase that is defined as parasitic. However, as plants go through stages of growth, reproduction, disease and decline, they are involved with a number of processes that assist or impede these stages. Therefore, they might even be simultaneously involved in parasitic, mutualistic and commensal relationships at any given time. For cultural symbiosis, this means that when considering an activity's cultural value, labelling certain events or stakeholders as problematic or beneficial, need not be a *static* categorisation. Cultural symbiosis, therefore, should be understood in terms of its ability to approach interdependencies at a given time, which, of course, can be subject to change. This indicates the need to periodically review and update understandings of relationships in order to take into account factors such as current geopolitical considerations, including elections, world events, global trends, and market fluctuations. The focus on life cycles also helps reflect the complexity of the environment in which cultural value operates. Instead of turning to generalisations that linger over longer time periods, such as the intrinsic 'good' of culture at the design stage of cultural policy, looking at outcomes in terms of benefit, harm or neutrality over specific intervals or cycles will provide a more nuanced means with which to articulate the terms of relations, in which good (and indeed, bad) outcomes occur and between whom.

Therefore, if using cultural symbiosis, even instances of neutralism should be periodically revisited as impact might be felt over time, albeit at a slower rate.

Although I have discussed earlier how metrics have been shown to be over-zealously applied in the cultural sector, the degree of 'measurement' made possible in cultural symbiosis is not a numerical cultural indicator in and of itself. Rather, it is a map towards understanding what configurations of cultural relations are the most successful and/or influential and where in an activity/policy/program's life cycle this is most likely to occur. By considering life cycles, certain relations might even be considered positive and negative (e.g. mutualistic and parasitic) over time, depending on the context. However, having a more specific way to articulate which aspects of a relationship are more beneficial or detrimental enables a more straightforward way in which to navigate the uncertain terrain that currently characterises Australian public diplomacy and cultural policy, as explored earlier.

In addition to life cycles, the notion of dependant relations, drawn from the field of symbiotic relationships, also enhances the discussion of cultural value. Dependant relations refer to the symbiotic distinction between obligatory and facultative interactions.⁵⁷ If a relationship is defined as obligatory, one or both of the symbionts will depend on each for survival, whereas facultative relationships can exist with both parties living independently, and often through choice. In cultural symbiosis, of course,

⁵⁷ Paracer & Ahmadjian, *Symbiosis: An Introduction to Biological Associations*, p. 12.

survival is not considered in the physiological sense in terms of life and death, but the ability of a person, organisation or perhaps even policy or diplomatic relation to continue to exist. This categorisation is an efficient way to begin to think about issues that impact upon developing long-lasting relationships, legacies, or dependence. In conjunction with the life cycle of a symbiotic interaction, facultative relationships also have the potential to evolve into those that are more obligatory. With regards to cultural diplomacy, an evolving relationship between stakeholders may mean a relationship's efficiency is enhanced or declines, which affects the achievement of public diplomacy goals. In terms of cultural policy, this distinction between facultative and obligatory assists to further explore the conditions of the relations between government agencies, funding bodies and cultural practitioners. In both instances, the distinction between obligatory and facultative provides further nuance with which to describe the nature of the value that occurs when considering the interactions formed through cultural activities. Therefore, it is another way in which to begin to reconceptualise the interactions that occur in these arenas.

For example, if an art exhibition was assessed as being able to develop several mutualistic relationships, such as a connection to an established, local gallery, it would be more likely to realise its potential of developing into a longer-term project. This is because, in this scenario, it will be typically less reliant on direct or ongoing funding from a government source in the future if a private gallery could assist with subsidies. Documenting this outcome in terms of being an individual event *and* more importantly, a process (or series of steps), allows stakeholders to draw on this experience and

potentially create other similarly viable projects. However, compared to a wholly or partly obligatory cultural activity, a categorisation such as this might mean that, in the longer term, ongoing investment is dependent on government budget cycles, indicating the need to source private/corporate partners to share the load if it were to continue. By considering a cultural project's status in terms of symbiotic language, cultural value can be examined comparatively across projects, such as which obligatory project resulted in the most mutualistic outcomes. A parasitic, obligatory event may be of much benefit in a one-off scenario, but not sustainable in the long term; hence, symbiosis may assist in deciding what projects/direction to better spend time and resources on at the next cultural policy design phase. This, again, is not to rely on a rudimentary counting or coding method of symbiotic outcomes to assess cultural value (how many mutual outcomes were obtained); rather, it provides the map that indicates where further investigation (to the causes and patterns of mutualism, for example) should occur.

In the age of evidence-based policymaking, cultural symbiosis can be used to shape the scope of a wider conversation concerning culture through a series of relationship-based provocations that help us to consider the value of culture differently, drawing upon symbiotic terminology. This difference means that the value of culture may be reconceived beyond an economic frame, using the consideration of relationships and symbiosis to provide a consistent vocabulary to describe these relations. My shift of the discussion of value is also useful, as it may address a gap that Dunphy notes in a review of Rosenberg and Galloway's work concerning cultural indicators: that there are few evaluations that 'critically consider the possibility of no change, negative change or

change that occurs that is not expected.’⁵⁸ Yet, for a field such as cultural diplomacy and international arts practice, such observations concerning the degree of change, harm and benefit are crucial to determining the reputation of a nation and the nature of ‘networks of influence’ that are formed at a given time. This is why thinking about relationships in more symbiotic terms provides a potential direction of travel: it encourages focus upon how interactions flourish, fail or remain neutral over various time periods. While cultural symbiosis is not intended to function as a policy evaluation tool on its own, it represents a proactive approach that might factor into a post-event debrief that feeds into both forward planning of arts and cultural programming and cultural policy evaluation.

Limitations of Symbiosis

Although the intention of using symbiosis as a conceptual metaphor is intended to provide an accessible means to review the nature of relationships over the course of cultural activities, it has limitations. In reality, it is difficult for individuals to describe relationships, even in intimate settings that contain fewer stakeholders. Therefore, in the review of cultural activities, rather than being a definitive method or framework of categorisation, cultural symbiosis functions best as a pivot point which highlights relationships that require further analysis. This is partly because cultural symbiosis requires individual judgements based on experience, and anecdotal input from those using cultural symbiosis, to determine what type of relationships are in operation. This

⁵⁸ These evaluations refer to the social impacts of the arts. See Dunphy, *Making Culture Count: The Politics of Cultural Measurement*, p. 250.

is not the preferred data type in a more traditionally analytical process. However, there are differences in motivations and values across stakeholders (such as states or between cultural bodies) in what they want to get out of the same cultural project. This factor is what also makes the 'subjectivity' of cultural symbiosis a valuable consideration, as it seeks to find a place for that *which is* subjective, based on emotion, or informed by aesthetic content, which is subject to judgement-based decisions. It seeks experiential data in the consideration of the value of culture. A subjective judgement from a person who is qualified to comment on a cultural activity (perhaps a coordinator of a cultural activity, or participants in a particular activity) is the logical starting point for symbiosis to be considered with regards to cultural activity. This taps into Meyrick et al.'s appeal that

We have to find a connection of feeling with the cultural artefact or event, a love of what it offers, or could offer. With this relationship, it is possible to make a judgement both meaningful and effective.⁵⁹

Individually, these types of (subjective) impressions and thoughts are difficult to make sense of in terms of wider cultural policy outcomes, and are thus often captured narratively through individual case studies.⁶⁰ The individual case study approach refers to the use of micro-examples of successful cultural activities that are discussed in the likes of DFAT, CoM and other cultural bodies' reporting documentation, especially annual reports in later chapters of this thesis. In this instance, case study examples are provided in addition to an organisation's achievement of a culturally specific KPI or

⁵⁹ Meyrick, Julian & Barnett, Tully, (2018) "After 'What Matters?': A reflection on the value of arts and culture and four 'lies' of data," *Australian Art Education*, Vol. 39, no. 3, pp. 413–426.

⁶⁰ For an example of this format, please refer to DFAT's 2016–17 and 2017–18 annual reports.

performance outcome. This is assumedly done to provide ‘evidence’ in support of the achievement of KPIs and outcomes, especially when the evaluation process of assessing said cultural activities is not methodologically explained with the report.

However, collecting knowledge cumulatively using symbiosis provides insight into the nature of how a cultural activity has functioned, even though it may not necessarily inform a complete, or absolute (symbiotic) outcome concerning a cultural activity. In fact, the use of ‘subjective’ knowledges may result in the opposite. As Meyrick et al. remind us, the *co-existence* of value relations in the assessment of cultural activities is a reality, rather than one position supplanting another.⁶¹ At a conceptual level, symbiosis’s focus on the feelings and impressions and opinions of people involved in a cultural activity provides a way for judgement to inform the understanding of how cultural activities function and what they achieve, particularly with regard to less tangible factors—such as the ever-coveted mutual understanding and collaborative relationships that cultural activities (in a policy and cultural diplomacy sense) aspire to facilitate. Cultural symbiosis is not another measurement method, but it contributes to cultural value in terms of what Meyrick et al. describe as a broader conversation concerning ‘...how culture is talked about and how it talks about itself.’⁶² Symbiosis provides a way to talk about the relationships within cultural activity that are complex to quantify, using cultural experience itself; or rather, the human experience of culture which is invariably left out of cultural assessments.⁶³ It provides a place for ‘judgement’

⁶¹ Meyrick, et al., *What Matters? Talking Value in Australian Culture*, p. 42.

⁶² Ibid., p. 20.

⁶³ Meyrick et al. note a series of difficulties in the valuation of culture in their research with Laboratory Adelaide. The first of these difficulties is ‘the fact that assessment processes claim to measure value but

that can contribute to cultural value, through the use of common language that is designed to prompt further in-depth discussion regarding the (perception of) relationships formed in the course of cultural activity. It does this by using the metaphorical imaginary that is not only intellectual and rational, but experiential and ‘felt,’ informed by the social dimension.

The branch of knowledge concerning symbiosis does not perfectly align with cultural value, in that I am not proposing that cultural value *is* symbiosis or vice versa. There is the potential for another binary type of understanding to be established where cultural outcomes are reductively considered purely in terms of benefit/ harm. Furthermore, symbiosis in biology is often taken to refer to the interactions between only two organisms, where cultural ecologies that are present in society contain a multitude of agents and therefore exude additional connections amongst relationships—making them more complex than a straightforward, pairwise symbiotic conceptualisation. This dichotomy has the potential to oversimplify many of the interactions and contexts in which cultural value occurs if it is not adaptive to the circumstances in which it operates. It is essential to be reminded that symbiosis is deployed with the understanding that it provides a broad overview of cultural activities a series of conceptual metaphors that assist with the narration of value, which is a part of an ordering of information that Meyrick et al. note, ‘...selects the relevant features of real-world activities and experiences and places them in a simplified model that is causally related.’⁶⁴ Symbiosis

leave out the human experience of culture, and turn it into a set of abstract, categorical traits.’ Ibid., p. xiv. Although cultural symbiosis does involve biological categories, their use is not abstract but, rather, representational and are firmly embedded in the human experience of relationships.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 102.

is thus provisional, and also resides alongside additional analysis that might then inform the assessment of cultural relationships, which is established in other literature that is gaining pace today in cultural institutions and for policymakers.⁶⁵

Furthermore, the pair-based conceptualisation of symbiosis itself rests within what environmental scientist David Secord describes as the traditional, reductionist approach to symbiosis that consists of the analysis of pairs and is laboratory-based.⁶⁶ Instead, our understanding should be based within *the in-field* understanding of symbiosis that is subject to ever-changing environments and considers complex matrices of species in order to investigate community structures of the 'real world.'⁶⁷ As Secord notes, 'ecological interaction webs' are where symbionts play a central, but underappreciated role. Therefore, a more open approach than laboratory-based symbiotic analysis includes considerations from field ecology to meet the variable nature of species interactions.⁶⁸ This conception of symbiosis is more based within community ecology where the classical symbiotic pair is incorporated into larger than pairwise communities of multiple species.⁶⁹ In terms of examining cultural relationships as a symbiotic, conceptual metaphor as means to reorientate discussions of cultural value, the use of symbiosis should also be approached in this open manner, rather than adhering to a

⁶⁵ For more information concerning additional methods of cultural evaluation such as my discussion in chapter two of Bjola & Holmes's work on theory of change, that draws upon the language of organisational behaviour.

⁶⁶ Secord, David, (2002) 'Symbioses and their Consequences for Community and Applied Ecology,' in Seckbach, Joseph, (ed.), *Symbiosis: Mechanisms and Model Systems*, Springer, Dordrecht, p. 50.

⁶⁷ Ibid., pp. 50–51.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 58.

⁶⁹ Secord also notes that symbiotic interactions are underappreciated in applied ecology as 'few ecologists really consider the richness of data on symbioses in understanding the structure of communities and in applied and conservation biology.' Ibid., p. 56.

static ‘laboratory’ definition of symbiosis. As in the community ecology definition of symbiosis, categories of relationships are not static and consider the dynamics and structure of communities. Therefore, if symbiotic language is used with regard to the valuing of culture, modifications to symbiotic classifications are appropriate, if necessary. This establishes the basis for ‘results’ to be revisited over specific time periods, which means the evolution of value in terms of cultural relationships in a specific context is possible to discern.⁷⁰ As discussed in chapter two, one of cultural diplomacy’s major challenges is the lack of a commonly adopted method to ascertain long term value that individual cultural projects can make in wider geopolitical relations. Cultural symbiosis begins to address this gap by proposing that all projects contain a variety of relationships and the discussion of the nature of these interactions using symbiotic terminology is possible. Accordingly, cultural symbiosis may also be a succinct and efficient means of triaging the priorities or outcomes resulting from relationships that occur over the course of various cultural activities.

A final limitation of cultural symbiosis is that it does not provide a definitive framework or model to be used—for example, by an arts institution to evaluate the success of a cultural activity. However, cultural symbiosis is not meant to provide a conclusive destination, but presents a recalibration of how to more holistically approach the

⁷⁰ Although cultural symbiosis is not a metric which can be measured or produce results to be discussed in quantitative terms, the proposition I make in this statement is that, by periodically revisiting relationships pertaining to the same cultural contexts which have been previously considered in terms of symbiosis, one can see the evolution of said relationships over certain points in time (or a life cycle). This has the potential to be the basis for a longitudinal examination into the dynamics of relationships evident over the course of cultural activities. However, that is the topic of future research and outside the scope of this thesis.

function of culture in the public realm. This recalibration has much to offer cultural diplomacy and broader areas of cultural policy that deal with the communication and interaction of disparate communities or individuals. A crucial part of this design is that it is adaptable and responsive to the information it collates and evolves to meet the needs of those who might use it (to evaluate and design policy within this area). Although it may not be an infallible approach to understand the creation and challenges of cultural value discourse encountered within the context of public policy discussed in chapter two, it provides some fundamental provocations with which to steer this debate down a more productive path, due to its focus on human experience (of cultural relationships and attention to aesthetic content). It is in this sense that cultural symbiosis is formative.⁷¹ This refocuses the evaluative process towards a revised, relational conception of cultural value, and away from mapping actual outcomes against broader strategic goals of the department and ‘proving’ if deliverables were achieved (or not). It first seeks to examine *what* activities and relationships occurred and how they might be conceptualised (as valuable in terms of symbiosis) in the short or long term, rather than whether or not predetermined policy objectives were met.

⁷¹ Formative evaluation with relation to arts and humanities research is described by Mollas-Gallart, who asserts that its usefulness lies in the pursuit of an improvement goal combined with a collaborative relationship between evaluator and evaluand. For more information, see Mollas-Gallart, *Research Evaluation and the Assessment of Public Value*, pp. 117–118. Cultural symbiosis can be understood as formative as it intends to provide a platform to discuss the types of knowledges (and data/information) that are typically downplayed within the policy and political space.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the context and features of cultural symbiosis. In terms of the political dimension, it repositions the articulation of culture, which is done through a metaphorical comparison with symbiotic relationships. In terms of cultural policy, it also provides a conceptual metaphor with which to provoke a consideration of the outcomes and connections that form in relation to cultural activities in certain communities. By understanding interactions in an ecological sense, I have offered a vocabulary to categorise and compare the relationships that occur in this field, which are the basis of the network-forming activities that are so relevant, yet under-theorised, in today's context of cultural diplomacy and cultural policy. I argued that this approach is also a formative activity which as Molas-Gallart asserts

...has to be aware of the context where knowledge is generated and applied, and it needs to focus on the processes that generate and are generated by the interactions between researchers and beneficiaries.⁷²

Cultural symbiosis is thus useful because it primarily encourages us to explore how relationships are operating and, by symbiotically exploring cultural relationships, the value of culture might be understood as relational, and in terms of productive and less productive interactions that occur as a result of cultural activities, rather than an overreliance on economic criteria. In this sense, its formative nature means that if one were to use cultural symbiosis as part of a wider evaluation of a cultural program, it would serve as a provocation to consider the relations that would benefit from further

⁷² Molas-Gallart, *Research Evaluation and the Assessment of Public Value*, p. 112.

evaluation and thus inform the scope to then conduct a structured review of the outcomes and achievements of a program.

Cultural symbiosis also allows for more nuanced enquiries into the nature of relationships concerning cultural activity to take place. One of its fundamental aspects is a grounding in ecology that places emphasis upon interactions between a variety of parties and the positive/negative/neutral effects that these relationships have on the generation of (cultural) value. As Meyrick et al. note

...in the end, value isn't really 'a problem' anyway but an aspect of being human.

Despite the fact that governments treat it as interchangeable with 'benefit' it is something deeper and more resonant. Value is constitutive. It not only *is* something but *does* something, leaving us changed as well as rewarded.⁷³

Cultural symbiosis is a means to describe *what has changed* in the relations amongst agents as a result of cultural activities, and does so in a way that turns attention towards better understanding the constitutive effect that Meyrick et al. mention in terms of what culture *does*. It is in this sense that cultural symbiosis allows for different types of cultural value to be articulated through the identification of the degrees of harm or benefit that relations in this field generate; but, it is also a way of thinking, rather than an evaluative criterion. My emphasis upon the creation or maintenance of relationships is a key factor of cultural symbiosis. Although they provide insight into actual outcomes,

⁷³ Meyrick, et al., *What Matters? Talking Value in Australian Culture*, p. xxvii.

cultural symbiosis also intends to highlight opportunities for longer-term collaborations, learning opportunities, and to provide a better understanding of instances where a project or event was impacted by unanticipated or unavoidable factors. Cull agrees that focusing on relationships is important when he notes that globalisation has impacted upon the space of public diplomacy. He declares that it should be embraced to understand how one might use it to their advantage in terms of policy

The rise of the network society creates more opportunities than it closes for public diplomacy especially if the public diplomat is mindful of the limitations of his or her craft and the necessity for thinking in terms of building relationships. These relationships, which transmit the ideas thought necessary for policy, must also carry back responses necessary to adjust that policy and steer towards a shared future.⁷⁴

The use of cultural symbiosis also enables a space for analysis of aesthetic content and its impact to occur alongside the more utilitarian concerns of cultural value, which is discussed further in chapter seven. This occurs by studying the links that individuals and institutions create through the process of producing, funding and consuming artistic endeavours. Here, singular experiences can be understood collectively using symbiotic language. This provides the common language that enables us to identify patterns and instances of best practice that might be replicated in future scenarios to more efficiently generate cultural conditions that contribute to the creation of public value. If relationships are holistically understood in this way, cultural value may also concern

⁷⁴ Cull, *Public Diplomacy: Taxonomies and Histories*, p. 53.

itself with the pursuit of coexistence amongst a multitude of realities rather than (in terms of politics) attempting to persuade and influence other parties who are categorised as either an adversary or ally, or (in the case of policy), the pursuit of pre-defined outcomes by governments or governing bodies of cultural institutions. It is in this sense that cultural symbiosis is a means to examine value in cultural diplomacy and cultural policy more meaningfully, based on the experience from past endeavours and to provide a better understanding of the types of engagement that are generated within or resulting from creative and aesthetic events.

The above discussion of symbiosis with regards to the value of culture proposed that the varying and evolving ways people and groups *relate* or *experience* their environments are the basis of a provocation to conceptualise relationships in discussions concerning cultural value. Considering the value of culture in this manner unashamedly places emphasis upon the experience of culture and how people experience cultural relationships, rather than the design and assessment of cultural events in intrinsic/instrumental terms. But how can this be applied to cases in Australia than concern cultural value? The next chapter introduces the methods and research questions surrounding my ecological examination of cultural relationships to highlight how this thesis will analyse the value of culture in Australia across examples that incorporate political, economic and social dimensions and apply cultural symbiosis to these cases.

Chapter 4 — Methodology, Research Questions and Methods

Earlier in this thesis, I have discussed how the non-linear trajectory of knowledge in the knowledge economy highlights how a wide-ranging examination into cultural value may be useful to overcome the narrow frame in which value is understood. The literature supports this proposition as it demonstrates that, when it comes to valuing culture, there is a tendency for public and arts institutions in countries such as the UK and Australia to rely on an overly economistic enunciation of what the arts and culture provide to contemporary societies. This economistic enunciation, as we recall, is rooted in governmental trends to adopt evidence-based policymaking techniques and is critiqued by a number of scholars, including Belfiore, Meyrick et al. and Walmsley as being restricted or problematic. Logically, if the current discussion of value is narrow, a wider discussion concerning value is necessary if problems of demonstrating value are to be meaningfully addressed and new ways to talk about value are to be developed.

The wider discussion in this thesis incorporates analyses involving political, economic and social contexts (which I refer to as dimensions) and requires a wide range of documentation and sources to achieve this aim. This focus means that the thesis straddles disciplines and discourses; cultural discourse as conceived in International Relations (public and cultural diplomacy and soft power); cultural discourse evident within public policy (informed by the knowledge and cultural economy); and cultural studies, arts and cultural discourse (in relation to Theatre Studies, participatory arts

practice). It is also concerned with the status of culture which is regularly diminished or instrumentally featured in policy, institutional and political environments.

By building inductively upon the theory from these disciplines, this thesis has the task of bringing together perspectives *across* disciplines to further the understanding of cultural value to answer the following research questions:

- How is the value of culture articulated and pursued by stakeholders in Australia today?
- How can the value of these connections (or relationships) between these stakeholders that occur over the course of cultural activity be better understood?

In doing so, a common connection that I explored in chapter three is the existence of a variety of relationships in which varying experiences of cultural value occur. The variety of relationships and disciplines demonstrates a need to horizontally examine cultural relationships of various kinds in varying contexts. To examine these relationships further, a transdisciplinary investigation of value involving case studies and discourse analysis is necessary, where value has the potential to be conceived in terms of ecological, rather than economic, terms and presents important findings that would not be discernible through the separate study of disciplines in this research.

There are a number of challenges with any transdisciplinary project that examines the discourse of cultural value, which are caused by the fluidity of culture itself.¹ Not only is the value of culture pursued and expressed across broad areas of politics and policymaking, there are also cultural producers and participants who create and experience cultural value differently and in different forms. Conceptually speaking, this demonstrates how cultural value is subjective and thus informed by a constructivist position, meaning that it is therefore reasonable to argue that cultural value is not singular in terms of its meaning or how 'it' is experienced.

In the constructivist paradigm, Braun and Clarke note, our ways of knowing of the world are tied to the social world we live in, and what we 'know' of the world, ourselves and objects in it are produced through the discourses and systems of meaning.² To better

¹ The impact of cultural flows and the context of the network society introduced in chapter one outlined how the value of culture is not linear in the sense that value progresses sequentially or accrues in a steady upward trend, nor is it restricted to any one dimension of certain stakeholder, although we can examine the value of culture in terms of the perspectives of various agents concerned with cultural activity.

² Braun & Clarke clarify that in a constructivist epistemology, instead of the pursuit of one truth, knowledge exists in the multiple, as knowledges. Braun, Virginia & Clarke, Victoria, (2013) *Successful Qualitative Research: A practical guide for beginners*, Sage, London, p. 31.

Amongst a vast array of definitions and types of constructivism (cognitive, critical, radical and social), constructivism is attributed to Jean Piaget's original thesis of cognitive constructivism which concludes that truth resides not in an external reality, but is truthful to the extent of its viability and adaptability. Some scholars, such as Boghossian, problematize constructivism literally, questioning how meaningful knowledge can be produced in fields such as education if knowledge is so influenced by beliefs and context, or as Boghossian notes, if propositions can be 'true for me and not true for you.' Boghossian, Peter, (2006) 'Behaviorism, Constructivism, and Socratic Pedagogy,' *Educational Philosophy & Theory*, Vol. 38, no. 6, pp. 713–722.

However, as Proulx notes, one does not create simply any meaning or reality that fits 'truth' because, in constructionism, the processes of interpretation, analysing and research occur to develop new knowledge structures... '[c]onstructivism, with its concept of viability and 'fitting' does not imply that anything goes but merely that theories or explanations construed have to fit and be compatible with experiences lived.' See Proulx, Jérôme, (2006) 'Constructivism: A re-equilibration and clarification of concepts, and some potential implications for teaching and pedagogy,' *Radical Pedagogy*, Vol. 8, no. 1, p. 5. <https://eds.a.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=3&sid=0a3fea4d-e60c-4b74-abe5-0fc935349d%40sdc-v-ssessmgr02&bdata=JkF1dGhUeXBIPXNzbyZzaXRIPWVkcyc1saXZlJnNjb3BIPXNpdGU%3d> [accessed 08 May 2020].

understand the value of culture, therefore, we must examine what we know of the social world in which it occurs and the discourses that cultural value draws upon. This notion of being tied to a social world is central in this research, as it also defines this thesis's objects of study: the relationships and relations that occur over the course of cultural activities. Understanding these is crucial in order to better know the 'world' of cultural value. Weber's discussion of *verstehen* and *erklären*, German words that refer to 'understanding' or 'explaining' humans and behaviour, provides a useful distinction that allows us to delineate between a constructivist and positivist approach to knowledge.³ Thus, drawing upon this distinction, constructivism may seek meaning or understanding (*verstehen*) of knowable things, which is in contrast to a positivist position that seeks explanation (*erfahrung* or *erklären*) of them, and draws from disciplines such as philosophy, sociology and psychology. The constructivist position frames the discussion of value of culture as a product of how we have come to understand it, in this instance, through an over-reliance on economic-based arguments.

Weber also states that understanding (*verstehen*) of human behaviour and relationships can be intelligibly interpreted. The interpretative (*verstehenden*) process is one of different degrees that considers the context in which internal and external human behaviour and relations occur and causal attribution.⁴ As a *verstehen* researcher associated with the constructivist paradigm and interpretative process, the study of cultural value must 'cover a wide variety of social and cultural manifestations of human

³ Weber, Max, (1981) 'Some Categories of Interpretive Sociology,' *The Sociological Quarterly*, Graber, Edith E (trans.) Vol. 22, Spring, p. 151.

⁴ Ibid.

life,’ to understand social phenomena.⁵ This establishes the need to examine cultural value through a cross-section of its social and cultural manifestations. These cross-sections are the framework of this thesis and the basis of the political, economic and social dimensions that I establish to investigate my research questions.

Accordingly, I recognise that cultural value may be encountered in myriad forms. In doing so, however, while there is definitional conjecture surrounding what cultural value ‘is,’ these debates are not the sole focus of this thesis. Yet, this definitional uncertainty does create methodological complexity as it requires a method of acknowledging the multiple understandings and experiences of cultural value in a structured, analytic manner. In response to this challenge, my strategy is to build theory using case studies as the most appropriate format to examine cultural value formation across a variety of different contexts informed by a transdisciplinary approach.

Introducing a Transdisciplinary Approach

This thesis considers scholarship across a wide variety of disciplines concerning the way in which culture and public value interact with various facets of contemporary society. However, as Pohl and Hadorn note, the transdisciplinary approach takes into consideration a large array of perspectives and paradigms and narrows down its focus to the most explicit for identifying and structuring problems.⁶ As a result, not all of the

⁵ Riazi, Mehdi A., (2016) *The Routledge Encyclopedia of research methods in applied linguistics: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods research*, Routledge, London and New York, p. 344.

⁶ Pohl, Christian & Hirsch Hadorn, Gertrude (2007) *Principles for Designing Transdisciplinary Research*, Oekom-Verlag, Munich, p. 37.

perspectives and paradigms that could be relevant to the topic of the value of culture appear in the scope of the literature review. However, the disciplines that are included in the examination of cultural value are guided by the three broad dimensions of the political, economic and social that are representative of the domains in which knowledge (surrounding cultural value) is socially produced in a constructivist sense, and also contain actors (relevant to cultural value) across three key groupings of governments, cultural policy and arts practitioners. I will provide further detail on these main groupings later in this chapter.

Following my initial enquiry into cultural value and then a more focused literature review surrounding the value of culture and research questions, what emerges is that, due to the complexity of culture and the nature of processes of value—especially when decoupled from the dominant economic frame—a research approach that ‘opened up’ thinking surrounding the fluidity of communities and confluences that operate across cultural value is necessary. Consequently, a transdisciplinary approach opens up thinking surrounding the value of culture and, as Klein notes, has the ability to leverage multiple types of expertise from a variety of disciplines, is trans-sector and involves a wide range of stakeholders.⁷

Once a focus on a variety of stakeholders from multiple disciplines is adopted to examine cultural value, the confluence of multiple perspectives on the topic of valuing culture is

⁷ See Klein, Julie T., (2018) ‘Evaluation of Interdisciplinary and Transdisciplinary Research: A Literature Review,’ *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, Vol. 35, no. 2, pp. S116–S123.

possible. Skinner describes this transdisciplinary process as one that transcends disciplinary boundaries to create novel ways of thinking about the topic of interest,⁸ or, as Stember explains, seeks a unity of intellectual frameworks beyond disciplinary perspectives.⁹ So, while this thesis is interdisciplinary in the sense that it draws upon literature from a variety of contexts, it more accurately resides within the tenets of transdisciplinarity as it shares the transdisciplinary context of deliberately operating within a state of knowledge production that Felt et al. argue 'is increasingly produced and validated in specific societal contexts also framed by extra-scientific rationales.'¹⁰ Thus, as a means to better examine issues in problem fields that have emerged within the context of today's diverse environment of knowledge production and the challenges of meaningfully valuing culture to wide spectrum of stakeholders for various purposes, this thesis is transdisciplinary.

Pohl and Hirsch Hadorn characterise the transdisciplinary orientation in light of knowledge production today by describing its aspiration as four fold: to grasp the relevant complexity of a problem; take into account the diverse perceptions of the problem; link theoretical and case-specific knowledge surrounding the problem; and 'to develop knowledge and practices that promote what is perceived to be the common good.'¹¹ The thesis adopts these aspirations as it examines the known knowledge

⁸ Skinner, Lisa, (2008) 'Interdisciplinary Research,' in Given, Lisa M. (ed.), *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods*, SAGE, London, p. 1.

⁹ Stember, Marilym L., (1999) 'Advancing the social sciences through the interdisciplinary enterprise,' *The Social Science Journal*, Vol. 28, no. 1, p. 4.

¹⁰ Felt, Ulrike, Igelsböck, Judith, Schikowitz, Andrea & Völker, Thomas, (2013) 'Growing into what? The (un-)disciplined socialisation of early stage researchers in transdisciplinary research,' *Higher Education*, Vol. 65, pp. 511–524.

¹¹ Pohl, & Hirsch Hadorn, *Principles for Designing Transdisciplinary Research*, pp. 431–32.

(literature) surrounding cultural value, the current shortcomings of the ways in which culture is valued, undertakes analysis of several cases in Australia in which the value of culture is pursued and articulated in different ways and then examines what these cases demonstrate to the discourse of cultural value with regard to how they value culture and approach cultural relations. This consideration of cultural value is the basis of the case study method used in this thesis, which I describe in detail in the next section.

Data and Methods

The case studies in this thesis, to be introduced in this chapter shortly, are seemingly disparate. However, they are intentionally so as they form the basis of an examination into how the value of culture might permeate across social and political contexts and beyond its traditional, economics-based articulation and thus widen the discussion of value due to its discussion of different examples in which the value of culture is pursued and realised. Drawing upon case-specific knowledge, in a transdisciplinary study that incorporates a variety of disciplines, is an appropriate means to explore the question of how the value of culture is articulated and pursued by stakeholders in Australia today.

Yin states that, in the case study method, the selection of cases is not done for the purposes of generalisability, nor are they randomly selected, but considered on the basis of a replication logic and where, as Tellis notes, '[t]he researcher is called upon with the situation [surrounding the value of culture] that presents itself in each case.'¹² In

¹² See Tellis, Winston, (1997) 'Introduction to Case Study,' *The Qualitative Report*, Vol. 3, no. 2, July. (<http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR3-2/tellis1.html>) [accessed 19 Apr 2018] and Yin, Robert K., (2009), *Case Study Research: design and methods* (4th Edition), SAGE, Thousand Oaks CA.

selecting case studies that were representative of the context and social world of the value of culture—as Braun and Clarke remind us is crucial to a constructivist positionality—the replication logic in the selection of cases for this thesis was not to find cases that would have similar outcomes, but rather, to find cases that contained contrasting results that would allow for a comparison amongst the varying approaches to value.

The case study, as Yin defines it, is ‘as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used.’¹³ Creswell notes that they involve multiple sources of information and detailed in-depth data collection.¹⁴ These parameters of the case study method make it suitable for this research, as there are many contexts in which the value of culture operates across society and are thus potentially suitable for analysis. However, aside from the analysis of individual cases in this thesis, my case studies (in a multiple-case method) also explore the broader context(s) or setting(s) within which cultural value is pursued and expressed. It is important to note that Yin’s social science-focused definition of the case study does not consider epistemological orientation, unlike Stake, who encourages the researcher to consider their positions on knowledge and reality.¹⁵ Given this thesis follows a constructivist position, I adopt Stake’s perspective on the qualitative case study as involved in knowledge construction through the researcher’s

¹³ Yin, Robert K., (1984) *Case Study Research: design and methods*, SAGE, Beverly Hills CA, p. 23.

¹⁴ Creswell, John, (2013). *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd. Edition), SAGE, Thousand Oaks CA, p. 97.

¹⁵ Stake, Robert E., (1995) *The Art of Case Study Research*, SAGE, Thousand Oaks, CA, p. 99.

interpretation of the case and multiple perspectives with which to explore.¹⁶ This perspective also means that the methods used to analyse the case studies need to be reflexive, versatile and not seek to develop a positivist ontology.¹⁷

To overcome the challenge of analysing somewhat disparate source data, I adopt multiple methods that allow for existing cultural stakeholders, and the relationships among them, to be studied in several ways (thematically and textually) within the case study format, using a variety of source material. A multi-method structure, as Brewer and Hunter note, allows for focus to be upon the particular problem (of cultural value) than on a particular set or combination of methods.¹⁸ Furthermore, they note that multi-method research data collection involves multiple data sets concerning the same research problem, with a diversity of data providing opportunities for comparison whose selection (controlled by the researcher's theoretical formulation of the problem), 'depends upon the information required to shed light on the problem being investigated.'¹⁹

The multiple case studies and data sets in this thesis deal with the Australian government, policymaking, artistic practice and members of the Australian public (who perform in a theatre production of *100% Melbourne*) and, therefore, required analysis

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 108.

¹⁷ This is especially given that my perspective maintains a constructivist point of view that there is no one truth surrounding the nature and definition of cultural value.

¹⁸ Brewer, John & Hunter, Albert, (2005) *Foundations of Multimethod Research [Electronic Resource]*, Sage, California and London, p. 11.

¹⁹ Brewer & Hunter, *Foundations of Multimethod Research*, p. 13.

of a range of different types of materials, as well as interrogation of a number of concepts with unique methodological concerns (cultural diplomacy, creative economy, participatory arts). As a result, the use of various data sets also required an approach to data analysis that allowed for the consideration of multiple perspectives. The analytical perspectives across this thesis include those from political science, economics, cultural studies, theatre studies and ecology, which I have discussed previously in this thesis across chapters two and three. It is in this sense that the case studies conduct multi-perspective analysis. Hocking defines the ‘... multi-perspectival approach [as] involv[ing] the collection and triangulation of discourse data generated from a variety of overlapping and mutually informing analytical perspectives within a specific discursive context.’²⁰ Tellis states that case studies are multi-perspectival because the perspectives of the actors are considered in addition to other relevant groups of actors and *the interactions between them*.²¹ The use of overlapping yet mutually informing analytical perspectives alongside the consideration of multiple perspectives, including those between actors, suits my transdisciplinary approach of examining the value of culture in terms of the relationships amongst stakeholders involved in cultural activity. However, there are challenges as a researcher when examining perspectives which, as Feagin, Orum and Sjoberg note, are at risk of being done from the viewpoint of the ‘elite.’²² Therefore, this attention to the perspective of the researcher led to my adoption of an interpretive approach, which understands that the meanings and

²⁰ Hocking, Darryl, (2016) ‘Motivation in the Tertiary Art and Design Studio: a multi-perspectival discourse analysis,’ *Talk and Text*, Vol. 36, no. 2, p. 159.

²¹ Tellis, *Introduction to Case Study*, p. 8.

²² Feagin, Joe, Orum, Anthoni & Sjoberg, Andree, (eds.), (1991) *A case for case study*, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, NC.

theories produced in this thesis are subjective, yet necessary, to a constructivist positionality.

There is also concern from some scholars who criticise the case study method due to its microscopic view or singularity of its object of study, which risks the case studies of this thesis being too discrete or one-off examples of how the value of culture is pursued in Australia.²³ However, Yin defends the perceived lack of generalisation to a wider population by countering that generalisation of results in cases is made to theory and not populations.²⁴ Similarly, this research aims to build theory surrounding the value of culture from a case study approach and provides a provocation to reorientate how we might conceive of cultural relationships differently when it comes to the discussion of value, rather than inferring that the case studies represent Australian cultural value in its entirety.

The texts, or sources, that map Australian approaches to cultural value include annual reports, strategic planning documents, policy documentation, government press releases and transcripts, media coverage, analysis of a theatre performance and reference to existing scholarly resources and qualitative methods concerning the

²³ See this discussion which considers Giddens' critique of the case study but encourages the case study to be repositioned as examining a transformation from the local to the global, or, rather a case study as a concentration of the global within the local. Hamel, Jaques, Dufour, Stéphan & Fortin, Dominic, (1993) *Case Study Methods*, SAGE, Newbury Park, CA.

²⁴ Yin, Robert K., (2009) *Case Study Research: design and methods* (4th Edition), SAGE, Thousand Oaks CA, p. 15.

current measurement of the value of culture. The key sources are outlined in the table below:

Case study 1: Political Value of culture	Case study 2: Economic Value of Culture	Case study 3: Social Value of Culture
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade departmental publications, including: - 2012–13 Annual Report - 2013–14 Annual Report - 2014–15 Annual Report - 2015 –16 Annual Report - 2016–17 Annual Report - 2017–18 Annual Report - 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper - Australia in the Asian Century White Paper - Corporate Plan 2016–2020 - Public Diplomacy Strategy 2014–2016 - Departmental website information	City of Melbourne departmental publications, including: - 2011–12 Annual Report - 2012–13 Annual Report - 2014–15 Annual Report - 2016–17 Annual Report - 2017–18 Annual Report - A Creative City 2017–21 - Council Plan 2009–2013 - Council Plan 2013–17 - Council Plan 2017–21 - Future Melbourne 2026 - Departmental website information	Rimini Protokoll information, including: - 100% City: A Statistical Chain Reaction (Rimini Protokoll) - Performance of <i>100% Melbourne</i>, at Melbourne Town Hall, 4–6 May 2012. - <i>100% Melbourne</i> show program - The Making of <i>100% Melbourne</i> (The City of Melbourne)
Australia Council for the Arts agency publications, including: - <i>Australia Council Act 2013</i> (Cth) - Australia Council 2012–13 Annual Report - Australia Council Budget Report 2014–15 - Review of the Australia Council 2012 - Agency website information	Scholarly publications concerning the knowledge economy, creative economy and soft power	Various media coverage and scholarly publications concerning Rimini Protokoll, <i>100% Melbourne</i> and participatory arts practice generally.
Ministry for the Arts publications, including:		

- NPEA Guidelines [Draft],'		
Attorney-General's Department - Portfolio Budget Measures 2015–16		
Various media coverage and scholarly publications concerning the NPEA		

Figure 3: Key data sources in this thesis

In this thesis, I consider my sources of data as ‘texts,’ which refers to different kinds of literature that allow a wider variety of conceptual insights and circumstances concerning the consideration of cultural value discourse to be obtained. As my cases necessitated a variety of research material, Jaipal-Jamani provides a useful way to describe their interrelation in her reminder that a theoretically informed, transdisciplinary approach to data selection in discourse analysis relies on construction from *different disciplines* to analyse ‘texts.’²⁵

Although the source data indicates that they are very different case studies, the cases are connected as all three demonstrate attempts to use culture to generate value—albeit value of various types—and the cases often interrelate; for example, cases two and three are linked as the City of Melbourne produced the theatre performance by

²⁵ ‘[T]ext [is used] in a broad sense to include written and verbal language, as well as images, pictures, graphs, and other artefacts.’ Furthermore, the use of critical theory approach allows ‘Text/discourse [to be] analyzed for the types of power relations within groups and how the discourse serves to legitimize certain dominant ways of doing or being by concealing power relations and perpetuating inequities.’ Jaipal-Jamani, Kamini, (2014) *Discourse Analysis: A Transdisciplinary Approach to Interpreting Text Data*, Sage, London, DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/978144627305014526824>, p. 2.

Rimini Protokoll.²⁶ On a broad level, the texts demonstrate not only that varying types of cultural value exist, but also how these approaches to value are realised in Australia. However, the 'separation' of my exploration of the value of culture into representative dimensions is not done to suggest these dimensions are disparate categories with unconnected or distinct characteristics. Rather, the term dimension is deployed to organise the case studies. For example, the first case study examines how the value of culture is predominantly pursued at the level of the Australian federal bureaucracy and is referred to as the political dimension due to its close connection to the governance of Australia as a nation and the political manoeuvres that occur in this context. In this political dimension, at the federal level, the value of culture is overtly pursued through DFAT's cultural diplomacy measures, and related to this, is my consideration of a federal arts policy, the NPEA. In this case study, politics, as the activities associated with the governance of Australia, frames the discussion of the value of culture, with consideration of cultural diplomacy literature. The relationships examined in this case study, therefore, concern stakeholders that are involved with how culture is valued at a federal level with specific relation to the NPEA cultural policy and the politics that informed its inception. Therefore, the relations considered in this case study are on the basis of politics.

²⁶ This selection also followed Yin's theory of case study selection discussed earlier in this chapter and Eisenhart's discussion of theoretical sampling in qualitative research, in which the aim is to select cases that are likely to, as Meyer paraphrases, 'replicate or extend the emergent theory or to fill theoretical categories and provide examples of polar types.' Eisenhart as cited in Meyer, Christine Benedict, (2001) 'A Case in Case Study Methodology,' *Field Methods*, Vol. 13, no. 4, p. 333.

The second case study considers how the value of culture is pursued when economics frames the examination of value. Using the basis of the creative economy model, introduced in chapter two, this case study explores how the economic dimension is applied to realise the value of culture in an Australian city, Melbourne. To do so, it analyses the cultural policy of another government entity, the City of Melbourne, and how its strategic thinking aligns with cultural economics as a means to articulate the value of culture. The relationships examined in this case study, therefore, concern stakeholders that are involved with how culture is valued with regard to economic arts policy (such as arts practitioners) and, therefore, the relations considered in this case study are on the basis of economics (with regards to the Melbourne arts sector).

The third case study considers how the value of culture is pursued when the cultural activity itself is the basis for the discussion of value. This involves an aesthetic consideration of the content of a theatrical performance of *100% Melbourne* and uses participatory arts practice, introduced in chapter two, as the basis for this discussion. What emerges from the example of theatrical practice in this case study is an emphasis on interactions that are highly social, and the depiction and reconfiguration (on stage) of what a modern society consists of. For this reason, this case study explores a social dimension of cultural value as it involves the aesthetic exploration of relationships and consists of a different 'text' that is not bureaucracy-focused, but rather, uses an example of community-based creative practice to provide alternative conceptualisations of the value of culture than that explored in the previous case studies of the thesis. Although the theatre performance *100% Melbourne* was workshopped under the direction of a

European theatre company, Rimini Protokoll, it is directly relevant to the discussion of the value of culture in Australia. It was produced locally using the Australian general public as ‘performers,’ Australian content and themes, and played to a predominantly Australian public, making the aesthetic context, content and reception Australian-based. The relationships in this case study, therefore, concern stakeholders associated with the performance of *100% Melbourne*, and are relations that occur on a social basis, linked to (theatrical) configurations of society and how the value of culture might be realised in terms of this context.

The processing of data uses a combination of qualitative analyses including document analysis, textual analysis and performance analysis. These cases and their data are then discussed in terms of their complementarity, as I examine the interconnected and diverse aspects of their connection in terms of their approaches to, or articulation of, cultural value. The transdisciplinary nature of this thesis is designed to allow for a convergence of findings which, as Jaipal-Jamani notes, ‘provide[s] a broader perspective on how to analyse discourse,’—in this instance, cultural value.²⁷

Ultimately, the case studies in this thesis are the basis for discourse analysis of culture which occurs according to Waring’s definition of discourse analysis as ‘the close reading of actual use of language along with other multimodal resources for the purpose of dissecting its structures and devising its meanings.’²⁸ Accordingly, this thesis’s textual

²⁷ Jaipal-Jamani, *Discourse Analysis: A Transdisciplinary Approach to Interpreting Text Data*, p. 5.

²⁸ Waring, Hansun Zhang, (2017) *Discourse Analysis*, Routledge, New York, p. 9.

analysis dissects the structures and meanings of cultural value via the close reading of the language used to describe examples of how culture is valued in action and the use of language within sources themselves. The examination of language in this thesis's source material predominantly involves the textual analysis of official government sources, such as departmental/council annual reports, strategic plans and government press releases and policy proposal guidelines. This language is, understandably, formal and (in the case of annual reports which are a large proportion of my source data) has a business-like purpose that reports on activities of government departments. From this formal language, a clear narrative concerning the instrumentality of culture in Australia is discernible. It is through the examination of how culture is valued in theory and practice that I provide my own contributions concerning the connections and relationships in this field.²⁹ Discourse analysis frames this research as it encourages an examination of the *structure* of cultural value as the basis for then understanding the social actions, identities and ideological constructions that are negotiated in the wider discourse.³⁰

²⁹ The theoretical aspects of the value of culture are not definitional categories pertaining to cultural value discourse, but refer to my discussion concerning the concepts such as cultural diplomacy, the cultural economy and participatory arts practice. Similarly, the practical examples of how culture is valued are explored across my case studies concerning the Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade & *National Program for Excellence in the Arts*, the City of Melbourne and Rimini Protokoll's participatory theatre production of *100% Melbourne*.

³⁰ Waring notes that the analysis within discourse analysis is when '...you look closely, you make observations, you ask questions, you pull things apart, you make connections, you uncover meanings, you conduct evaluations, or you identify problems and devise solutions.' Waring also notes four jointly elaborative questions may be asked in the conduct of discourse analysis: '(1) how is discourse structured (e.g., what are the components of X?), and how does such structuring contribute to meaning making? (2) how are social actions (e.g., build rapport, manage conflict, balance work and play) accomplished in discourse, (3) how are identities (e.g., survivor, concerned parent, novice teacher) negotiated in discourse, and (4) how are ideologies (e.g., heteronormativity, gender discrimination, racial ideologies) constructed in discourse?' Waring, (2017) *Discourse Analysis*, pp. 9–10.

Cultural symbiosis, introduced in detail in chapter three, establishes a vocabulary that will be exercised across the case studies that allows aspects of them to be contrasted in terms of their ability to present value and inform the overall conceptual contribution that I make to cultural value discourse. Building upon Lisa Marx's call for more systematic approaches to study cultural policies and actors in a meso-level of abstraction,³¹ my use of cultural symbiosis focuses on elements of benefit and harm between stakeholders, policies and the national interest in Australia.³² It allows for examination of cultural activities not only in terms of outcomes and networks that form as a result of projects in this space, but also their connection to the Australian objectives of cultural power today expressed in their policies and annual reporting.

³¹ Sallum Jr. clarifies between the levels of abstraction in social analysis by defining 'the micro-level – which refers to individual agents and interactive processes – the meso-level – which regards movements, associations, groups, formal organisations (workplaces, unions, churches, etc.) and social institutions – and the macro-sociological level – which concerns the processes of differentiation, stratification and social integration at the national and global level.' Sallum Jr., Brasilio, (2005) 'The Future of Social Sciences. Sociology in question,' *Sociologia, Problemas e Práticas*, Vol. 48, p. 23. pp. 19–26.

³² In the analysis of Swiss regional cultural policy, Marx notes that a meso-level of abstraction is particularly suited to cultural policy analysis because, generally speaking, cultural policy and its transformations '...are generally studied either on a very abstract level or in highly detailed case studies. I argue, however, that a meso-level of abstraction is particularly suited to the analysis of policies and policy change and speaks to the very issue of power in cultural policy: Who gets to decide and define culture?' Marx, *Who Governs Culture? Actors, federalism and expertise in Swiss regional cultural policy*, p. 1. In keeping with Marx, this thesis focuses its analyses at the meso-level. Fine, Gary Alan, (2012), 'Group culture and the interaction order: Local Sociology on the meso-level,' *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 38, no. 1, p. 159. Fine's emphasis upon conducting analysis at the group level (which might include primary and secondary groups) to explore how social structures shape individuals, underpins the emphasis on relationships in this thesis, except that 'groups' in this thesis are referred to as relationships and relations between stakeholders relevant to activities and circumstances in which the value of culture is being explored, asserted or challenged. Furthermore, while this thesis focuses on relationships and relations in the context of cultural value, the concept of the meso-level is also useful because it may also function, as Serpa and Ferreira describe, as 'an intermediate bridge between the other two levels of analysis.' Therefore, the meso-level also describes the scope of the scale that this thesis operates on, as its case studies consider levels of social relationships across macro and micro contexts, and I conduct analysis into how they interact with each other with regards to their integration into the wider context of cultural value. For more information, see Serpe and Ferreira's work on the micro, meso and macro levels of social analysis. Serpa, Sandro & Ferreira, Carlos, (2019) 'Micro, Meso and Macro Levels of Social Analysis,' *International Journal of Social Science Studies*, Vol. 7, no. 3, p. 123.

As mentioned above, each of the case studies uses symbiotic language to explore the different relationships and interactions. Thus, each case study chapter is also a case study in cultural symbiosis, with parasitism and antagonism explored in chapter five, commensalism and parasitism in chapter six and mutualism in chapter seven. The symbiotic language helps us understand more about the cultural contexts in which relationships are produced and provides insight into cultural value, especially in terms of new networks and the cooperative or competitive nature of these interactions. Cultural symbiosis highlights how culture involves a series of interrelationships across different arenas. Understanding these interactions in a relational capacity offers insight into the outcomes of cultural projects. To, as Brewer and Hunter note, 'shed light' on cultural value by way of a multi-method research design, the information I examined would not only be diverse, but require a means to be corralled and analysed. The comparison of relationships, therefore, is the constant in which cultural value might be examined across various examples. While symbiosis is a thread that runs through this thesis, it is not the sole focus. The concluding results chapter of this thesis brings together an array of insights gained across the three case studies, allowing the potential for a more integrated discussion, rather than the siloed consideration, of cultural value in three different contexts in conjunction with a discussion of the significance of cultural symbiosis.

Conceptual Structure of Case Studies

Across the political, economic and social dimensions examined in this thesis, a number of key concepts that directly relate to cultural value require exploration. In terms of the political dimension, these are cultural diplomacy, soft power and public diplomacy. In the economic dimension, they are the creative economy and its influence upon cultural policy, and in the social dimension, they are participatory arts and performance studies. However, to consider these concepts with regard to cultural value and the case study, multi-method approach outlined above, each case addresses three key focus areas which structure each case study chapter:

Focus area 1: maps the nature and analyses each dimension of cultural value in the Australian context.

Focus area 2: conducts a symbiotic analysis of each of the case studies found across the three dimensions of cultural value.

Focus area 3: studies the nature of Australian cultural value through analysis of the case studies and considers implications for the way cultural value is conceived within the relevant discourse(s).

The following methodological summary is provided to concisely outline the approach used in chapters five, six and seven:

Criteria	Selection
1. Philosophy/Theoretical perspective	Constructivist/Interpretivism. Acknowledgment that there is no one 'true' cultural value and that multiple iterations of it exist, which can be learned through the interpretation and analysis of the various contexts in which it operates.
2. Approach	Inductive and abductive reasoning is also deployed. Inductively uses existing theory surrounding cultural value and the information observed and developed through the case studies to search for patterns and themes common to the practices surrounding cultural value. However, the conclusions reached in this research are not proved in a positivist manner and culture is an inherently fluid concept, meaning that approaches used to address the challenges of cultural value are constructed in an abductive manner. This is with the understanding that knowledge in this area will continue to evolve and that additional, relevant resources in the three cases studies may exist that could further the insight into the value of their relevant relationships.
3. Micro Analysis - Focus Area 1	Case study that represents a dimension of cultural value (political, economic, social).
4. Meso analysis - Focus Area 2	Analysis using qualitative techniques of theme and narrative identification of annual reports, strategic planning documents, policy documentation and live

	performance analysis to gain conceptual insight of cultural value in Australia. Textual analysis is also deployed.
5. Macro analysis - Focus Area 3	Transdisciplinary approach to discourse analysis occurs as data is used to explore the phenomenon, themes and patterns of cultural value, if any, alongside the conceptual context of cultural symbiosis.
6. Time Horizon	Cross-sectional with some historical perspective to current time.

Figure 4: Selected combination of approaches adapted from Saunders & Thornhill's

*Research Onion.*³³

The result of this transdisciplinary approach to examine the value of culture using a multi-method, case study research design, is that a more in-depth examination of the relationships within the political, economic and social domains concerning the value of culture is conducted. This is the basis of a response to the gap in the literature concerning the lack of a consistent approach to relations-based inquiries evident in cultural value discourse. The use of political, economic and the social as identifying dimensions to structure the discussion within each case study also allows for comparisons between these dimensions and reflection upon the experiences examined within them, which more comprehensively investigates how culture is valued in Australia in bureaucratic and political contexts. Combined, this research design provides a structure that is holistic, empirical, interpretive and emphatic—which meets Stake's

³³ As cited and applied in Mitchell, *A Review of Mixed Methods, Pragmatism and Abduction Techniques*, p. 110.

defining characteristics of qualitative case studies—thus conducting an exploration of the challenge(s) of cultural value.³⁴

However, as identified in a constructivist position, this approach has implications for the research findings as an alternative researcher may choose to focus on other themes and contexts relevant to cultural value. What follows, therefore, is an interpretation of the data drawing on the literature examined in chapter two, which is reflexively deployed to consider how information from across the disciplinary boundaries of cultural studies, ecology, economics, theatre studies and political science could be united to address the wider problem of valuing culture.

The chapter to follow is the first case study of cultural value. It focuses on the political dimension of cultural value in Australia. The ‘fine analysis’ of the cultural activities and intended cultural activities of DFAT and the NPEA provides an insight into how cultural value is pursued in a top-down manner in Australia, while also considering how relationships with other stakeholders impact upon this instrumental approach.

³⁴ A concise summary of the holistic, empirical, interpretive and empathic characteristics: ‘Holistic means that researchers should consider the interrelationship between the phenomenon and its contexts...Empirical means that researchers base the study on their observations in the field. Interpretive means that researchers rest upon their intuition and see research basically as a researcher subject interaction, which is compatible with the constructivist epistemology. Lastly, empathic means that researchers reflect the vicarious experiences of the subjects in an emic perspective. See Yazan, Bedrettin, (2015) Three Approaches to Case study Methods in Education: Yin, Merriam, and Stake,’ *The Qualitative Report*, Vol. 20, no. 2, p. 139.

Chapter 5 — The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), the National Programme for Excellence in the Arts (NPEA) and Commensal and Parasitic Political Cultural Value in Australia

Australian cultural policy is in a state of flux. In addition to a national interest in investing in cultural power, as seen in the review of DFAT's public diplomacy and soft power, there are fragmenting scenarios—such as the abandonment of the national cultural policy, *Creative Australia*, that 'slipped into obscurity,' and the controversial NPEA that made way for Catalyst arts funding (which concluded in 2018).¹ Gilfillan and Morrow describe the conditions post-NPEA as 'the most turbulent arts funding environment in Australia since the formation of the Australia Council [in 1975].'² The state's intervention in the cultural sector has an added layer of complexity, as former Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull made moves towards a 'funding mix.'³ Following much Australian public policy, cultural policy's state of flux is marked by attempts to maximise the instrumentality of its policy objectives, outcomes and evaluative criteria. DFAT and the NPEA pursue value through the use of culture to achieve different and specific objectives, yet they share the motivation to harness culture to achieve instrumental policy objectives and thus a common political core.

¹ Daniel, Ryan, Fleischmann, Katja & Welters, Riccardo, (2018) "Creativity in the 'Torrid' Zone: policy, creative industries and the vision for Northern Australia," *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, Vol. 24, no. 4, p. 451.

² Gilfillan & Morrow, *Sustaining Artistic Practices Post George Brandis's Controversial Australia Council Arts Funding Changes*, p. 187.

³ Ibid.

The use of utilitarian vocabulary affects the description of how culture adds value across political, economic and social dimensions. As I have argued in chapter two, this language is incomplete as it narrowly emphasises political or economic utility. It is this same language that shapes the scope of policy itself, rather than being a neutral or evidence-based means to approach the issue of value within cultural policy. If we accept that the way culture's value is described emphasises certain political or economic approaches to value, there are grounds to argue that adopting similar language in the articulation of the value of culture in Australian cultural policy means we may not have yet realised the wider potential of value in terms of how culture is created, funded and accessed. The discussions earlier in this thesis have broadened the discourse of cultural value beyond the relatively narrow political or economic perspective and argued that it can be conceptually reappraised using the ecological terms of symbiosis. This approach encourages us to think of culture (especially as expressed at a bureaucratic level of cultural policy and reporting) more dynamically in terms of its interactions and relationships, and less in terms of outcomes and political/economic utility. The next step is to apply the principles of symbiosis to a sample.

This chapter focuses on how cultural value is *politically* articulated and pursued within an Australian context. To examine this, I begin by analysing DFAT and its pursuit and subsidy of cultural diplomacy to address my research question about how cultural value is articulated and pursued by various agents in Australia today. As the primary source of official cultural diplomacy in Australia, DFAT is a key stakeholder in the creation of value through the use of culture. However, its notion of value is very specific and targeted.

The first section of this chapter examines DFAT's pursuit and measurement of its version of cultural value through its cultural diplomacy programming and analyses the initiatives and resources currently devoted to this task. By analysing key performance reporting documentation, I discuss how the evaluation of Australian cultural diplomacy contains specific descriptions of value. I also outline the limitations of the current evaluative framework's ability to articulate a meaningful understanding of cultural value. However, DFAT is not the only Australian government department with a vested interest in maximising the value of culture, or even more specifically, cultural diplomacy activity.

The second section of this chapter considers another example from the Australian federal government that overtly sought to maximise the value of Australian culture in the form of a policy proposal from the Ministry of Arts. This funding proposal concerned the redirection of arts funding, moving away from Australia's long-standing, 'arms-length' funding principle, toward a more partisan set of preferences. The *National Programme for Excellence in the Arts* (NPEA) was the full name of this policy proposal.⁴ While public and industry outcry meant that the NPEA did not progress beyond the proposal stage, I argue that this policy attempt appeared, in part, to more rigorously align arts practice with the instrumentalist perspectives of the Australian government, especially through its pursuit of artistic 'excellence.' Ultimately, this controversy represents the clashes in competing conceptions of value between political operatives, artists and Australian arts and cultural institutions, as it attempted to subjugate the

⁴ The spelling of the NPEA was originally recorded in the copy from George Brandis' press releases and information as using the traditional spelling 'programme.' The more commonly used spelling of 'program' is used in this thesis.

‘purpose’ of Australian arts practice to serve the strategic aims of domestic and international cultural policy. A symbiotic overview of the key relationships relevant to the NPEA highlights the tensions and connections between the stakeholders in this case study and it is in this sense that it is a case study in cultural symbiosis. Analysing the relationships in this example offers insight into both antagonistic and parasitic interactions between stakeholders and the nature of various power relations and exchanges of sentiments between the Australian government, the Australia Council and Australian arts practitioners. It also highlights the challenges of a balance within the delicate and complex ecology of the Australian arts sector when perspectives of public value, artistic merit and cultural policy clash. This example demonstrates how culture (in this example referring to the cultural expression of arts practice) on a macro level can clash with the instrumentalist concerns of cultural policy and is, therefore, a symbiotic case study of the political struggles that occur when circumstances and relationships are not aligned in their pursuit of value.

The Political Value of Culture in Australia Today

The arts are more than a cultural export. Collaboration on cultural projects helps build influence and partnerships internationally and creates shared understanding.⁵

⁵ ‘2017 Foreign Policy White Paper,’ *DFAT*, p. 114.

The above excerpt from DFAT's 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper directly acknowledges the dual economic and political benefits that cultural projects and the arts provide to Australia. It also shows interest in harnessing the influence that cultural projects provide to the nation. This translates to an agenda that seeks to maximise engagement with projects and initiatives that generate soft power. DFAT's current review of soft power aims to be '...a whole-of-government effort to ensure Australia continues to build soft power and exercise influence effectively.'⁶ These factors are further indication that, while culture can be valuable to Australia, the government itself recognises that additional work needs to be done to realise a more sophisticated response and strategic deployment of its potential value. As I have outlined previously, value in this regard is articulated predominately in terms of utility and what culture does for the causes of public diplomacy and the creative economy. I explore this claim further in the chapter below thorough an analysis of DFAT's departmental performance reporting. To begin to understand how this type of value is pursued at a national level, one must first examine how cultural diplomacy currently operates in Australia under DFAT's supervision and what it seeks to achieve. Staffed by Australian public servants, DFAT articulates its purpose as

help[ing] make Australia stronger, safer and more prosperous by promoting and protecting our interests internationally and contributing to global stability and economic growth. The department provides foreign, trade and development policy advice to the government. We work with other government agencies to

⁶ 'Soft Power Review,' *DFAT*.

ensure that Australia's pursuit of its global, regional and bilateral interests is coordinated effectively.⁷

This scope makes DFAT the leading agency to manage Australia's international presence, with one hundred overseas posts across five continents and over 6,000 domestic and internationally located staff.⁸ In DFAT, cultural diplomacy falls under the umbrella activity of public diplomacy, which aims to enhance Australia's influence and further Australia's interests.⁹ The practice of public diplomacy varies depending on the nation (and the 'receiving' nation), but is geared, in general, towards the promotion of a nation on behalf of its assets which will pave the way for other agendas. So, while both cultural and public diplomacy are concerned with the cultivation of perceptions, image-making and influencing attitudes of the public, and of people at institutional levels, public diplomacy is not always culturally specific in content or purpose. It is also a lot clearer in its intent and function than cultural diplomacy. For example, in Australia, public diplomacy is conducted today to promote

economic, creative and cultural, sporting, innovation and science, and education assets to underline Australia's credentials as a destination for innovation, business, investment, tourism and study, and emphasise Australia's engagement with the Indo-Pacific region.¹⁰

⁷ 'About Us,' DFAT, <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/Pages/about-us.aspx> [accessed 14 Mar 2018].

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ '2016–17 Annual Report,' DFAT, p. 76.

¹⁰ 'Public diplomacy,' DFAT, <http://dfat.gov.au/people-to-people/public-diplomacy/Pages/public-diplomacy-strategy.aspx#ftn1> [accessed 11 Jan 2018].

This quote from DFAT describes how Australian public diplomacy is concerned with direct methods of image cultivation, through raising awareness of Australian education, science or tourism, leveraging strategic international partnerships to advance trade agendas or more broadly promoting peace and democratic principles of governance in order to enhance regional security. Accordingly, public diplomacy is traditionally skewed towards the propaganda end of the diplomatic spectrum as it advocates for a state's modern international policy agenda.¹¹ So, while cultural diplomacy might ultimately contribute to the aims of public diplomacy and/or public diplomacy may incorporate cultural diplomacy activities to achieve these aims, in examples such as Australia, cultural diplomacy, as I introduced in the discussion of the literature in chapter two, is more geared toward relationship- and network-building, rather than the material or dominant 'hard' power tenets of economics, national sovereignty and state aspirations.¹² Linked with relationships, the themes of authenticity and cultural actors are also fundamental concerns in cultural diplomacy. A central aspect to the creation of dialogue (and indeed diplomacy) through culture, therefore, involves a particular audience that is less often interrogated in International Relations—the public, even though this is where cultural and public diplomacy efforts are directed.

DFAT pursues the enhancement of influence and furthering of relationships and networks through a variety of projects/initiatives across the fields of culture, sport,

¹¹ A spectrum of diplomatic activity that has cultural relations and propaganda at opposite ends. Modern iterations of this scale incorporate notions of soft power and branding. These concepts are discussed later in this chapter. Goff, Patricia, M., (2013) 'Cultural Diplomacy,' in *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Diplomacy*.

¹² And hard power is prioritised in (the dominant) realist and liberal perspectives within International Relations. Byrne, *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*, p. 178.

innovation, science and education. Like other countries, these activities are primarily undertaken to strengthen Australia's international policy agenda as well as its reputation globally. DFAT's most recent public diplomacy strategy articulates cultural diplomacy as one approach that will help the department reach five key goals related to economic achievement, regional engagement, as well as aid and security affairs.¹³ At a strategic level, therefore, this demonstrates that the public value of Australian culture is understood as based upon political and economic benefits, largely concerning the nation's foreign affairs agenda. But how is this achieved in practice and what do successful cultural diplomacy outcomes actually consist of?

The best way to examine how culture is valued within Australian government policy today is by examining how it is articulated across a range of policy documents. Therefore, the case study below begins by outlining the four core elements of Australian cultural diplomacy. These initiatives are *Australia Now*, the *Australian Cultural Diplomacy Grants*, the *International Cultural Visits Program* and general post activities. The intended aims of these initiatives articulate many claims of value across DFAT's cultural diplomacy programs. In analysing these claims, I examine how value is measured in practice through a review of DFAT's current reporting documentation to uncover what

¹³ These goals include:

1. Promote Australia's economic credentials and support for economic diplomacy objectives.
2. Underline Australia's deep engagement with the indo-pacific region.
3. Advocate Australia's vision for the international policy agenda.
4. Promote Australia's development credentials.
5. Champion Australia as an open, innovative, democratic and diverse nation. Public Diplomacy Strategy 2014–2016,' *DFAT*, pp. 2–4.

types of themes or narratives are discernible that characterise the type of cultural value that the department articulates in its self-assessment of its cultural diplomacy activities.

Introducing DFAT's Cultural Diplomacy Initiatives and its Claims of Value

Australia Now is one of the major programs in which Australian cultural diplomacy outcomes are pursued by DFAT, and is also known as a focus country program. *Australia Now* is representative of a public-facing style of cultural diplomacy and is an annual arts and cultural festival that aims to raise Australia's profile in specific regions, build relationships and networks for the future and promote Australia's diversity, creative excellence and innovation.¹⁴ Referred to as a 'cultural promotion program,' this event is held over the course of a year in a country determined to have strategic significance.¹⁵ Amongst cultural exchanges, creative exports and publicly orientated, education-based initiatives that promote Australian values and products, *Australia Now* primarily aims to build future relationships.¹⁶ An emphasis on a variety of relationships (between Australian stakeholders such as industry-based or cultural practitioners with a host country's similar counterparts as well as the public and the media) directly links to the

¹⁴ These contributions to Australia's cultural diplomacy agenda are coordinated by DFAT embassy staff alongside creative and production contractors from Australia and the festival's host nation. 'Australia Now,' DFAT, <http://dfat.gov.au/people-to-people/public-diplomacy/Pages/focus-country-program.aspx> [accessed 09 May 2018].

¹⁵ In recent years, the program has been held in Japan (2018), Germany (2017), Brazil (2016), Turkey (2015) and Indonesia (2014). The focus-country program has been in operation since 2001 and was rebranded to *Australia Now* in 2015, with host country, Turkey, as the first location to hold this reimagined festival. See 'Australia Now,' DFAT and 'Public Diplomacy Strategy 2014–2016,' DFAT, p. 14.

¹⁶ Many of the festival events are offerings that are open to the public and involve music, theatre, circus, puppetry, film, dance and art, as well as ticketed and VIP events that host Australian artists across many genres and collaborations with local creative practitioners. Artistic collaborations as a part of previous *Australia Now* festivals include: Sydney Youth Orchestra and Junges Ensemble Berlin (Germany, 2017), Pipa Social and June Smith/Audrey Napanangka fashion collaboration (Brazil, 2016) and an Artist-in-Residence program (Turkey 2015).

priority in DFAT's public diplomacy strategy to build networks of influence.¹⁷ In a country that hosts this program, the embassy post is able to leverage its existing activities alongside a further budget allocation for additional *Australia Now* festival activities. This concentrated focus leads to increased economic outcomes as well as enhanced cultural relations and networks, which ideally continue past the calendar year that the focus country hosts the festival.

Another core public diplomacy activity administered by DFAT is the *Australian Cultural Diplomacy Grants Program (ACDGP)*.¹⁸ Similar to *Australia Now*, grants are awarded up to the value of \$60 000 in priority regions where DFAT wishes to promote Australia's creativity and openness as a nation, as well as the values of innovation, dialogue and exchange. Alongside academic, scientific and technology funding, cultural grants are expected to enhance awareness of Australia more broadly, but do so in 'support of our international policy objectives.'¹⁹ The grants encourage support for other cultural

¹⁷ 'Public Diplomacy Strategy 2014–2016,' *DFAT*, p. 9. Relationships in *Australia Now* involve a wide array of partners as additional creative producers and stakeholders are engaged to assist in delivering the festival; in 2016, for example, Brazil's *Australia Now* Program was curated by independent Australian producer, Mark Bromilow. See 'About the Festival,' *Australia Now*, <http://australianow2016.com/en/about/> [accessed 15 Mar 2018].

¹⁸ ACDG replaced the Australian International Culture Council (AICC) Grants program. The AICC was abolished in the 2014–15 Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook, much of the activity that the Council previously coordinated was also to be absorbed by the arts portfolio. However, one of its key programs, the focus-country program remains within DFAT's portfolio as the *Australia Now* program. See 'Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook 2014–15,' *Australian Government Department of the Treasury* http://www.budget.gov.au/2014-15/content/myefo/download/MYEFO_2014-15.pdf [accessed 25 Mar 2018], p. 123 and Dennett, Harley, (2014) 'Budget Axe: the small government agencies abolished by Abbott,' *The Mandarin*, Dec, <https://www.themandarin.com.au/14353-myefo-axed-agency-hit-list/?pgnc=1?pgnc=1> [accessed 25 Mar 2018].

The AICC grants program supported 16 projects across Asia, Europe and the Americas across the life of the program. See 'Public Diplomacy and Communications,' *DFAT*, <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/corporate/annual-reports/annual-report-2014-2015/home/section-2/outcome-1/public-diplomacy-and-communications/index.html> [accessed 25 Mar 2018].

¹⁹ '2016–17 Annual Report,' *DFAT*, p. 82.

diplomacy initiatives such as *Australia Now*. For example, an Australian musician coordinating an overseas tour may receive ACDGP funding, part of which contributes to their performance as a part of an *Australia Now* festival. As I introduced earlier, the 2014–16 Public Diplomacy Strategy and the 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper articulate that the aim of subsidising activities such as these is to establish people-to-people and institutional networks alongside the development of foreign audiences and markets in terms of expanding the Australian creative economy.²⁰

The *International Cultural Visits Program* varies slightly in its intended focus, as it places more emphasis upon the improvement of Australian cultural industries. It particularly aims to improve commercial opportunities for the Australian arts sector.²¹ The program enables participants to attend arts and cultural events organised by major Australian organisations, and often collaborates with other Australian agencies such as the

²⁰ '2017 Foreign Policy White Paper,' *DFAT*, p. 114. It is also of note that in Australia, the pursuit of people-to-people relations (sometimes referred to as cultural relations in IR literature) is a cornerstone of DFAT's most recent Public Diplomacy strategic policy. This is evident as these relations are explicitly mentioned as part of one of five strategic goals set by the Department. Goal five is to 'champion Australia as an open, innovative, democratic and diverse nation.' As a means to contribute to the aims of this goal, people-to-people relations are mentioned and defined as '[f]oster[ing] enduring people-to-people ties and institutional links across all levels of government and civil society.' Cultural relations per se is not terminology that is featured in this strategy. This demonstrates that, while International Relations literature surrounding the varying types of ties and relationship-building endeavours does differentiate between cultural relations and public diplomacy (explored earlier in this thesis), in practice, they are closely linked and can appear almost interchangeable in the sense that the explicit purpose of people-to-people ties in Australia is to achieve public diplomacy outcomes (rather than the less tangible cultural diplomacy outcomes of fostering mutual understanding.) See 'Public Diplomacy Strategy 2014–2016,' *DFAT*, p. 3.

²¹ This program is similar in nature to, but distinct from, DFAT's International Media Program that funds journalists to visit Australia in order to advance the specific DFAT Public Diplomacy Strategy objectives. Sometimes reciprocal arrangements with outgoing Australian journalists are also facilitated in conjunction with other partners. Themes of democracy, sustainability, trade and investment reform, gender equality and general tourism activities are frequently incorporated into this program, which encourages journalists to publish Australian-centric articles upon their return to their home country. In 2016–17, for example, it is noted that 'The articles published as a result of the visits presented Australia as an innovative, open and highly productive country.' See, '2016–17 Annual Report,' *DFAT*, p. 82.

Australia Council and Artspace. It is also designed to support outbound visits to further this engagement. This is a means to foster institutional and professional networks in this sector, as well as to lay the foundation for future commercial activities involving the Australian cultural industries.²² Like other initiatives, priority countries are identified as target markets and may tie in to other programs such as *Australia Now* or the *ACDGP*.

Aside from the above department-wide initiatives, DFAT also provides an individual budget to each embassy post for the purposes of funding public diplomacy activities. These vary from more traditional high-level ambassadorial functions and long-standing events, such as *G'Day USA*, to high profile occasions, such as Eurovision.²³ There are also what the Department refers to as 'smart outcomes,' which are typically pursued by smaller posts; these include alumni events and promotional collaborations with local partners, such as an opening night function to mark the first performance of a touring Australian theatre performance.²⁴ Each budget cycle, posts will provide budget requests for specific activities and, based on the allocation granted, will conduct various public diplomacy activities that suit the local context.

²² 'Public Diplomacy Strategy 2014–2016,' *DFAT*, p. 105.

²³ In its 14th year, *G'Day USA* is the flagship public and economic diplomacy program managed by DFAT in the USA. A variety of activities across major capitals are held to 'promote Australia as a successful economy, influential global player and natural partner for the United States.' See, '2016–17 Annual Report,' *DFAT*, p. 75. Also consult online for information on public events and further details about the program. 'G'day USA,' *G'Day USA Steering Committee and the Australian Government* <http://www.gdayusa.org/> [accessed 25 Mar 18].

²⁴ Smart outcomes are what DFAT refers to as achieving the same brief of influencing governments and communities to benefit Australia when you might be a smaller post in terms of staff/reach or run on a 'lean' budget, '2015–16 Annual Report,' *DFAT*, <https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/corporate/annual-reports/Pages/department-of-foreign-affairs-and-trade-annual-report-2015-2016.aspx> [accessed 25 Mar 2018], p. 73. Smaller posts are in areas that typically have smaller operating budgets, and also reflect a location that has less strategic value to Australia (or that sufficient embassy post infrastructure and services are already delivered through or shared with other partners).

The above activities occur in both ongoing and in one-off capacities and are designed to engage with Australian cultural diplomacy goals and objectives. This engagement is primarily understood (by the department) in terms of how an activity correlates with DFAT's public diplomacy strategic plan. I note that cultural elements exist within other DFAT or government activities, and there are many other internal and external programs and initiatives that operate within this space.²⁵ However, the research scope of this thesis deals with a cross-section of the value-generating activities that the government articulates as major sources of Australian cultural diplomacy linked to the official, strategic objectives of the nation. The blurring of official and unofficial sources of cultural diplomacy serves to highlight one of the major challenges in this sector: despite the wide purview of cultural or soft power 'assets' in a country like Australia, tracking its influence is complex and dependant on what types of value the government of the day is seeking. For example, the New Colombo Plan (NCP) and Australia Awards are linked to cultural diplomacy activity and coordinated by DFAT, but are not principally categorised as cultural diplomacy by the Department.

Yet at times, and in practical terms, the blending of terminology and program objectives occur where the NCP and the Australia Awards are mentioned alongside cultural diplomacy, implying a close relationship either in terms of policy or in their actual

²⁵ This is seen in the work of agencies such as the Australia Council, Tourism Australia, Austrade, Asialink, major Australian performing arts companies, a myriad of smaller companies and individual practitioners and a variety of DFAT-hosted Foundations, Councils and Institutes (FCIs), such as the Australia-China Council, Australia-India Council and Australia-Japan Foundation.

execution and use of resources.²⁶ Each program's outcomes and features are treated individually in annual reports and in terms of staffing/portfolios across the Department, but they articulate similar value propositions to cultural diplomacy in terms of what they achieve when promoting 'Brand Australia.' The benefits or limitations of the NCP and Australia Awards in relation to the exercise of Australian cultural diplomacy appear to be under-interrogated by the Department as they are not explicitly categorised as cultural diplomacy 'proper.'

The complexity of tracking the value of cultural diplomacy is increased by the Department's reporting mechanisms that focus on specific feedback collated by each post, and this feedback primarily deals with cultural diplomacy activities on a case-by-case basis. *Australia Now* reporting, for example, is completed individually via a series of post-event reporting cables sent to Canberra, as are reports for other events coordinated by embassy posts. These are supported by a summative end-of-year report, that includes brief assessments of major cultural diplomacy initiatives conducted by the embassy post.²⁷ However, as a high-level overview, there is little scope for in-depth analysis of the cumulative effects of these activities. This leaves limited opportunity for a holistic assessment of how these activities all contribute to value for the nation, and if, and how, they are related (amongst countries or by activity, for example). This

²⁶ For more information on these education mobility grant and scholarship programs, please refer to DFAT's website and Byrne, Caitlin, (2016) 'Australia's New Colombo Plan: Enhancing regional soft power through student mobility,' *International Journal: Sage Publications*, Vol. 71, no. 1, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020702015617786> pp. 107–128.

²⁷ Although not accessible public documents, this researcher has consulted for DFAT and analysed this material as part of an internal Public Diplomacy project. Coles, Amanda, Glow, Hilary, Johanson, Katya, Vincent, Jordan, Boots, Tim, Howard, Jane, Reddan, Clare, Vincent, Caitlyn, (2017) '*Public Diplomacy Evaluation, 2014–2016*,' pp. 1–72.

example of the individual or siloed approach to cultural diplomacy evaluation in practice is indicative of one of the key challenges of cultural value discourse that I introduced earlier: how to best measure the value of culture given the vast networks and influences that today's cultural products and activities are enmeshed in, and that competing conceptions of value exist in the public domain. Recalling this challenge strengthens the argument for a holistic approach to examining the state of 'Brand Australia,' in that if we can better understand who is contributing what to cultural diplomacy and Australia's international reputation more widely, this has a flow-on effect as a means to understand the political value of culture and cultural value discourse.

A further theme common across DFAT's cultural diplomacy programs is that, despite the coordination of numerous events by the Department and its affiliated partners, there is very little publicly available information that articulates what ongoing effects they have, especially in terms of post-event evaluation or case-by-case scenarios. This is at odds with the emphasis on the justification of public value that is present in the current evidence-based approach to policymaking.²⁸ The next section of this chapter discusses the significance of this void and the obstacles that are faced when attempting to gauge the effects of cultural activity in terms of benefit/harm to the State.

²⁸ Although assumedly, at times, such information may not be suitable for public consumption, there is, perhaps more importantly, a lack of methodology or explanation of how Australia's cultural diplomacy efforts have improved the state of affairs in Australia (beyond the KPIs discussed over the next few pages).

The Value Propositions of Cultural Diplomacy in Departmental Performance Reporting

Measuring outcomes in public and cultural diplomacy is a multifaceted undertaking, due to factors such as multiple stakeholders (from those coordinating events/initiatives, hosting events/initiatives, performing or facilitating events/initiatives, attending events/initiatives and reporting on these events/initiatives), wider geopolitical contexts and time frames. In Australia, this variability is enhanced by the bureaucratic, ad-hoc approach which might be attributed to the nature of changing circumstances, but also restricts meaningful and sustained evaluation of public diplomacy activity even on a year-to-year basis. This is demonstrated in the below analysis of recent departmental assessment techniques, that examines the claims to value with regards to cultural activity in DFAT public diplomacy programming. Symbiotically, I propose, this represents a commensal relationship between the intended outcomes of government policy and the emphasis on the value of cultural activity itself that is used to achieve said outcomes. In 2014–15, performance reporting in the area of public diplomacy and communications sat underneath Outcome One of three key outcomes that the DFAT had outlined for the fiscal year. Outcome One was expressed as:

The advancement of Australia's international strategic, security and economic interests including through bilateral, regional and multilateral engagement on Australian Government foreign, trade and international development policy priorities.²⁹

²⁹ '2014–2015 Annual Report,' DFAT, <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/corporate/annual-reports/annual-report-2014-2015/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/DFAT-43566-AR1415.pdf> [accessed 25 Mar 2018], p. 14.

This goal highlights that, during the 2014–15 period, cultural diplomacy was not an overt priority—at least from a performance reporting perspective—in comparison to other departmental objectives. This is identified through an absence of language that references culture, public diplomacy or even common terminology related to this field. Therefore, the role of official cultural diplomacy at this time was (presumably) to offer strategic value to the nation by fostering engagement surrounding a broader policy priority, which aligned with traditional understandings of public diplomacy.

To meet Outcome One, one program (out of fourteen in total) was described as involved with public diplomacy.³⁰ To measure its performance in this area, two deliverables and one key performance indicator (KPI) were outlined and deemed to have been met successfully. They were:

- promotion of high-quality public diplomacy, international media and cultural visit programs which improve understanding of Australia and Australian Government foreign and trade policies.
- Promotion of people-to-people links and a contemporary and positive image of Australia as a destination for business, investment, tourism and study and support for the government's international policy goals, including through grants and

³⁰ This is Program 1.3: Public information services and public diplomacy. Its purpose is: 'To project a positive and contemporary image of Australia and promote a clear understanding of government policies and objectives and engagement with the Indian Ocean Asia Pacific region through the department's public diplomacy, cultural and media activities.' Ibid., p. 19. As a side note, the emphasis on the Indian Ocean Asia Pacific region is curious, given that public diplomacy activity occurred globally, such as Australia's guest participation in Eurovision in May 2015. Ibid., p. 86.

other support to bilateral foundations, councils, institutes, alumni and diaspora community engagement and leadership dialogue.

- An understanding of contemporary Australia and the government's foreign, trade, investment and development credentials, and strengthened people-to-people and institutional links and trade, economic and cultural ties.³¹

Although these deliverables and the KPI engage more with the tenets of public diplomacy in their reference to 'high-quality public diplomacy,' 'people-to-people links' and 'cultural ties,' there are no indicators or further information that helps to define what a high-quality standard is or what the successful achievement of these deliverables and KPIs are actually defined as. An additional page of this report gives more descriptive information as it overviews the Department's public diplomacy activities, but focuses on the existence (and amount) of programs rather than evaluative summaries.³² There is not, therefore, a strong connection between the cultural diplomacy events I outlined above and any related commentary concerning their performance as a typical annual report might be expected to feature. Given the emphasis on financial reporting, infrastructure and security measures discussed within the rest of the report, the attention to cultural and public diplomacy is superficial.

The report notes that KPIs are determined via the Foreign Affairs and Trade Portfolio Budget Statements (PBS), yet this document only restates these deliverables and KPIs

³¹ Ibid., p. 142.

³² Ibid., p. 143.

with no discussion of how they are formulated or can be measured.³³ As shown, or rather not shown, the value of culture in this performance reporting is predominantly understood via a commensal relationship—that the Government and nation gains from cultural activity (+) but that value of the public diplomacy activity is not as relevant in this connection (neutral). Although the term ‘high-quality’ is used to describe public diplomacy, the value judgement surrounding quality is determined by the activity’s ability to ‘improve understanding of Australia and Australian Government foreign and trade policies.’ Therefore, commensal (+/0) cultural value is evident as positive benefit to the nation is pursued, but the cultural content itself is unacknowledged—or neutral in terms of the value it may offer.

In 2015–16 this pattern continued, and in terms of evaluation, KPIs are reduced to a single indicator, retained from 2014–15:

An understanding of contemporary Australia and the government’s foreign, trade, investment and development credentials, and strengthened people-to-people and institutional links and trade, economic and cultural ties.³⁴

This is supplemented by a qualitative summary that notes that the 2014–16 Public Diplomacy Strategy had been updated that year in light of commissioned research surrounding soft power. It mentions, however, the new evaluation system for public

³³ For more information see ‘Budget Portfolio Statements 2014–15,’ *DFAT*, http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/corporate/portfolio-budget-statements/Documents/2014-15_DFAT_PBS_Complete.pdf [accessed 26 Mar 18], p. 37.

³⁴ ‘2014–15 Annual Report,’ *DFAT*, p. 142.

diplomacy that is being developed in the following financial year, subject to staff consultation.³⁵

At this point, despite the clear, albeit broad, overview that DFAT articulates in its 2014–2016 Public Diplomacy Strategy and its annual reporting, little is published regarding its evaluation of public diplomacy efforts overall. Deductively, this is because assessing the outcomes of these programs is problematic using the current performance reporting framework. Perhaps this is unsurprising given that, as Broinowski notes, Australia has historically had comparatively limited engagement with public diplomacy, at least in official and academic capacities, compared to other nations.³⁶ Furthermore, as Mar notes, Australia’s cultural diplomacy is dispersed, residing partly within DFAT, partly across other government agencies and partly non-government cultural organisations, and this remains the case today.³⁷

DFAT pragmatically reports and deals with the outcomes of its programs and activities, despite the reality that relevant influences may be determined from other sources which, in turn, affect the operation of ‘official’ cultural diplomacy activity. Anecdotally,

³⁵ ‘2015–16 Annual Report,’ *DFAT*, p. 154.

³⁶ ‘Th[e] concept [public diplomacy] remained so new that an Australian Senate inquiry in 2007 found little understanding of it in Australia, limited academic research and minimal public discussion. Sydney’s Lowy Institute for International Policy in 2009 reported that public diplomacy, by whatever name, has long been on the far margins of Australian official policy. In 2010, Lowy’s Fergus Hanson pointed to the slow uptake by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) of new technology and social networking as public diplomacy tools. In June 2011, a public forum of the Australian Institute of International Affairs (AIIA) confirmed that Australia lags behind other countries in public diplomacy.’ Broinowski, Alison, (2012) ‘Soft Power, Smart Power or Public Diplomacy? Australia Fumbles,’ *Global Asia Journal*, Vol .7, no. 3, Fall.

³⁷ Mar, Philip, (2014) ‘Australia’s Approaches to Cultural Diplomacy With/in Asia: An Overview,’ *Australia Council of Learned Academies*, <https://acola.org.au/wp/PDF/SAF03/2%20cultural%20diplomacy.pdf> [accessed 25 Mar 2018], p. 5.

cultural practitioners and public diplomacy staff rely on their current knowledge and contacts throughout the sector, which play a vital role in the coordination of cultural diplomacy programs. Yet, from a policy perspective, this means much of this process and experience of the relationships between entities and people operating within this area is not captured, hence value is not fully realised. This problem is not unique to Australia. It represents a further issue in evaluating cultural (and more broadly, public) value. Sources and outcomes may be intertwined, yet impact is typically restricted to direct outcomes reported by individual organisations, stakeholders or artists themselves. This represents another challenge in enhancing Australia's political cultural value, the question of where the analysis begins and ends.

In 2019, the new evaluative system anticipated by DFAT is still in development. A corporate plan covering 2016–20 has been released, that indicates that this new evaluative direction will be based within a soft-power context. The plan mentions making use of 'new public diplomacy tools in every aspect of our operations,' alongside mentions of digital engagement and strategic communications.³⁸ Given the context of soft power, it would seem that valuing culture in any upcoming evaluative system is unlikely to depart from an instrumentalised approach that establishes a commensal connection between cultural activities and the government. However, these developments signal DFAT's awareness of the challenges that are expressed surrounding the evaluation and development of public and cultural diplomacy and

³⁸ 'Corporate Plan 2016–2020,' DFAT, <http://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/Documents/dfat-corporate-plan-2016-20.pdf> [accessed 26 Mar 2018].

indicate a strong, but evolving, interest in overhauling its programming process. A dramatic step was made in this direction by the Australian government several years earlier but, as my next case study illustrates, it was highly problematic in its delivery and planning.

The National Programme for Excellence in the Arts (NPEA): Tensions between the National Cultural Interest and those who make Art

There was really nothing for the arts minister to do as a result of the arrangements left to us by the Labor Party ... What that means in a practical sense is that the government isn't in control of its own policy.³⁹

The instrumentalisation of culture as a mechanism of political ideology also plays out through the example of the NPEA. The following case study considers a recent confrontation between the arts and the Australian government that demonstrates how the claim to culture value in the public realm is complex, strategically designed and, at times, controversial. This controversy is explored beyond the notion of mere differences of opinion by symbiotically considering aspects of the most fraught relationships—namely, the parasitic and antagonistic interactions between the Arts Ministry, its arts portfolio agency, the Australia Council, and the Australian arts and cultural sector. In an attempt to overhaul current Australian arts funding policy, the issue of government involvement in the arts became a public battleground in 2015, as artists fought to retain

³⁹ George Brandis as quoted in Neill, Rosemary, (2015) 'Culture Shock: George Brandis defends arts funding changes,' *The Australian*, 01 Aug, <https://www.theaustralian.com.au/arts/review/culture-shock-george-brandis-defends-arts-funding-changes/news-story/3e2ecf28e62090ffe3d95afc0e124878> [accessed 01 Feb 2018].

an arms-length funding arrangement, while the Arts Minister at the time, George Brandis articulated a desire to be more actively involved in the funding allocation and promotion of Australian arts, domestically and internationally. For cultural diplomacy, this may have represented a new and interesting chapter concerning how Australia might generate, and then exercise, soft power abroad—with more direct political involvement. For many producing art, it had the potential for undue bias to be inserted into an already competitive funding environment. The struggles over Australian arts funding in this example were very passionate, public and represented a precarious set of circumstances for many artistic practitioners across the nation. They are also the basis of a case study into how the struggle over cultural value can manifest, symbiotically, as a series of negatively experienced relationships.

On Budget night, 12 May 2015, the then Australian Minister for the Arts and Attorney-General, George Brandis announced a \$110 million redistribution of federal arts funding, the primary outcome of which was to establish a *National Programme for Excellence in the Arts* (the Program, or NPEA).⁴⁰ This Program was to be overseen and administered by the Ministry for the Arts and funded by a budget reduction to the national arts funding and advisory body, Australia Council for the Arts, often referred to as the Australia Council (the Council). What followed was much media coverage, critical commentary and public backlash by high-profile figures and organisations operating

⁴⁰ 'Australia Council Outlines 2015–16 Budget Impact,' *Australia Council for the Arts Media Release*, 21 May 2015, <http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/news/media-centre/media-releases/australia-council-outlines-2015-16-budget-impact/> [accessed 02 Feb 2018]. Note: The \$110 million figure was the amount initially reported by the Australia Council that would be redirected over the course of four years. As the matter progressed, the actual figure would become \$104.7 million See Meyrick & Barnett, *Culture without 'world': Australian cultural policy in the age of stupid*, p. 114.

within this sector and some notable silences from some, such as Australia's major performing arts companies.⁴¹ It also became the subject of a Senate inquiry.⁴² Several factors that would come to capture the public's attention included allegations of a lack of consultation or any evidence-based research to support creating the Program, perceptions of bias and reduction of independence regarding future arts funding, and future, negative implications for individual artists and the small-to-medium arts sector.⁴³ Supplementary arguments surrounding this controversy and part of the debate included, who is the most qualified to, or should, dispense government funding for the arts? Did the Council fail to advocate for the arts effectively? What is excellence in the arts? To what degree should governments shape artistic practice? Is funding reallocation about shaping a cultural message, or is it about risk aversion? Did this reform aim to promote private and corporate arts funding for reasons beyond mere dollars? Was there

⁴¹ Despite the widespread criticism of the NPEA, notable silence refers to the majority of major performing arts companies who did not publicly declare their position on the new funding proposal. Various media sources reported that this was apparently due to various reasons, such as funding for major organisations being secure in the new NPEA, fear for their future funding opportunities, if they were to speak against the NPEA, or for their reputation as relatively apolitical arts organisations. See (2015) 'Major Arts Companies Reportedly Told Not to Criticise Brandis' Australia Council Cuts,' *Daily Review*, 29 May, <http://dailyreview.com.au/major-arts-companies-reportedly-told-not-to-criticise-brandis-australia-council-cuts/24724/> [accessed 02 Feb 2018] and Eltham, Ben, (2015) "Brandis adviser reveals secret 'tantalising details' of new arts slush fund," 26 June, *Crikey*, <https://www.crikey.com.au/2015/06/26/brandis-adviser-reveals-secret-tantalising-details-of-new-arts-slush-fund/> [accessed 02 Feb 2018].

⁴² For details of the Senate inquiry, please see: The 'Impact of the 2014 and 2015 Commonwealth Budget decisions on the Arts,' referred to the Legal and Constitutional Affairs References Committee for inquiry and the final report was released 02 Dec 2015. It can be found at: https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Legal_and_Constitutional_Affairs/Arts_Funding/Report.

⁴³ Brandis states in the Senate estimates, 'I advised the Australia Council what the government was proposing to do late on the afternoon of budget day. From 'Budget Estimates 2015–16,' Official Committee Hansard Transcripts, Senate, Legal and Constitutional Affairs Legislation Committee, *Commonwealth of Australia*, 27 May 2015, https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Senate_Estimates/legconctte/estimates/bud1516/index [accessed 02 Feb 2018], p. 11.

a longer-term strategy to privatise the arts sector, reduce arts funding or reallocate it towards activity that is more beneficial to the national interest?

Overall, these questions are linked by central themes concerning how culture is, and should be, valued today and who gets to decide the terms of cultural value. The conflict between the Arts Minister, opposition and voices from within, and in support of, the Australian arts sector was not only eventful, but operated on a macro level. Accordingly, the broader context of the NPEA is an ideological clash of perspectives surrounding the perceived politicisation of the arts and their value in the Australian public realm, which connects to the wider theme of cultural politics in Australian society. By furthering the understanding of a recent episode in which cultural expression was hotly contested, therefore, the examination of the NPEA allows for specific insight into the tensions surrounding the politicisation of Australian cultural value. To do so, the following discussion introduces the NPEA and the circumstances of its announcement, protest and demise. I then explore the tensions between the various ways in which the value of culture was articulated across stakeholders from the Arts Ministry and arts industry. Examining the key relationships and using symbiotic terminology, I propose that the disconnection between these stakeholders represents the differing perceptions concerning the role of artists, their cultural output and the nation, which concerns any attempt to revise or better understand (Australian) cultural value. These findings, along with those from the first section of this chapter involving DFAT, are comparatively analysed. I argue that the Arts Minister's attempts to generate outcomes-focused

cultural policies highlight how the concept of culture struggles to find value in a governmental context.

As an arts portfolio agency of the Australian Government, the Council was initially founded as an independent statutory body via the *Australia Council Act 1975* (Cth). The *Australia Council Act 2013* (Cth) articulates the Council's current mandate as a government agency that is accountable to the parliament and the Minister for the Arts, and therefore to the government of the day.⁴⁴ The Council, however, is not categorised as an Australian Public Service (APS) agency. The mission statement from the Australia Council's 2012–2013 annual report (unchanged from 2011–2012) states that:

The Australia Council's mission is to support the creation, presentation and appreciation of *distinctive cultural works* by providing assistance to *Australian artists* and making their works accessible *to the public*.⁴⁵ [Emphasis added]

The equivalent paragraph in the following year's report for 2013–2014 states:

The Council's purpose is to *champion* and invest in Australian arts. We do this by supporting *excellence* across all art forms and leveraging our investment in the arts to support and build a vibrant arts ecology. The Council is a national

⁴⁴ 'About Us,' *Australia Council for the Arts*, <http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/about/> [accessed 26 Oct 2014].

⁴⁵ 'Australia Council 2012–13 Annual Report,' *Australia Council for the Arts*, http://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/workspace/uploads/files/news/australia_council_annual_report_2012-13.pdf [accessed 02 Feb 2018], p. 4.

advocate for the arts and works to increase *national and international engagement*.⁴⁶ [Emphasis added]

The equivalent paragraph in 2015–16 Budget Report:

The Council's purpose is to *champion* and invest in Australian arts. The Council has a national leadership role in supporting and building Australia's arts ecology by fostering *excellence* in the arts and increasing national and international engagement with Australian art and artists. The Council focuses on one outcome in fulfilling its purpose: supporting *Australian artists and arts organisations* to create and present excellent art that is accessed by *audiences across Australia and abroad*.⁴⁷ [Emphasis added]

The above passages are quoted to highlight a perceptible shift in the articulation of the Council's purpose which coincided with the change of government that occurred between the publishing of the first two excerpts. Between 2012–13 and 2013–14, the phrase 'distinctive cultural work' was replaced with 'excellent art,' and 'to the public' was replaced with 'national and international engagement.' These somewhat subtle changes indicate a shift towards a managerialist framework that is concerned with notions of accountability, economics (investing), and hierarchies between the (arts) organisation and individuals (artists) and, as Eltham argues, an unsurprising result of the

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 3.

⁴⁷ 'Australia Council Budget Report 2014–15,' *Australia Council for the Arts*, <http://www.ag.gov.au/publications/budgets/budget2014-15/documents/05%20pbs%202014-15%20australia%20council.pdf> [accessed 02 Feb 2018].

2012 Review of the Australia Council.⁴⁸ Eltham also highlights the link between excellence and the business, corporate world, noting that ‘excellence is a code word...equated to an unashamedly ‘high art’ view of culture [which] in policy terms means support for the major performing arts sector,’ and thus a code word for a certain set of funding priorities.⁴⁹

The conception of value evolves from an emphasis upon uniqueness, to one that focuses upon achievement (through excellence). It also indicates an internal reorientation towards international cultural branding (forms of cultural diplomacy and relations) in its use of language that highlights ‘international engagement’ (2013–14) and work being shown ‘abroad’ (15–16). Therefore, there is an assumption of value in the subsidy of international cultural activity. So while these changes were explicitly articulated by the Arts Ministry in its announcement of the NPEA, less publicised adjustments to the function and purpose of the Australia Council, as conceived through the Australia Council Review and the Australia Council Act in 2013, were put into motion prior to the Program’s launch.⁵⁰ The review of the Australia Council sought to clearly

⁴⁸ Eltham, Ben (2016) ‘When the Goal Posts Move,’ *Platform Papers no. 48*, Currency House, August, p. 7. Amongst eighteen recommendations in six key areas, the review noted that “there was almost universal support [emerging from the consultation undertaken for the review] for the view that the Council should primarily work to support ‘excellence’ in all its guises.” (p. 9) With ‘excellence’ as its remit, Recommendation 1 of the Review urged the council to adopt a new purpose (as follows): ‘to support and promote vibrant and distinctively Australian creative arts practice that is recognised nationally and internationally as excellent in its field.’ (p. 14). See Trainor & James, *Review of the Australia Council*.

⁴⁹ Furthermore, Eltham argues that it is unsurprising that this review developed a focus on excellence and adopted the logic of the wealthy elite and the market as it was authored by merchant banker (and deputy chair of the Australian Chamber Orchestra) Angus James and company director (former Sydney Symphony board member) Gabrielle Trainor. Eltham, *When the Goal Posts Move*, p. 20.

⁵⁰ A detailed discussion of the changes between the Australia Council Act of 1975 and 2013 are outside the scope of this case study, as it is primarily concerned with the perception of value that the NPEA attributed to Australian culture. However, the notable changes between the two Acts confirm Eltham’s argument that the conception of excellence adopted by the Council and revised governance structure is less about the arts and geared towards a more business-like purpose and neo-liberal sentiments. Three examples are the addition of a function of the Council ‘to support and promote the development of

express a new mandate for the Council that would allow it to be ‘responsive, innovative and relevant in the 21st Century,’ and sought to establish a more strategic relationship between excellence, funding decisions and high-level goals.⁵¹

Following the budget night announcement, the office of Attorney-General and Minister for the Arts issued a press release that outlined the Attorney-General's Portfolio Budget measures for 2015–16. It provided further details of the NPEA which noted that there would be:

[an] investment of \$104.8 million over four years to establish a National Programme for Excellence in the Arts to support endowments, international touring and strategic projects, with an emphasis on attracting private sector support...The [NPEA] will allow for a *truly national approach to arts funding* and *will deliver on a number of Government priorities* including national access to high quality arts and cultural experiences...Arts funding has until now been limited almost exclusively to projects favoured by the Australia Council. The [NPEA] will *make funding available to a wider range of arts companies and arts practitioners*, while at the same time respecting the preferences and tastes of Australia's audiences.⁵² [Emphasis added]

markets and audiences for the arts,’ indicating the shift towards a more business-like purpose, the establishment of a governing board and CEO, the members of which are appointed by the Arts Minister and the requirement for the preparation of an annual corporate plan and reporting. See ‘Part 2 – The Australia Council, Section 09: Functions,’ *Australia Council Act 2013*, p. 6.

Coombs, Moira (2013) *Australia Council Bill 2013*, Bills Digest no. 145, 2012–13, 19 Jun, https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Bills_Legislation/bd/bd1213a/13bd145 [accessed 11 Apr 2020].

⁵¹ Trainor & James, *Review of the Australia Council*, p. 3.

⁵² ‘Portfolio Budget Measures 2015–16,’ *Australian Government Attorney-General's Department*, 12 May 2015, <http://www.attorneygeneral.gov.au/Mediareleases/Pages/2015/SecondQuarter/12-May-2015-Attorney-General%27s-Portfolio-Budget-measures-2015-16.aspx> [accessed 15 Oct 2015].

The second substantial announcement was the release of draft guidelines regarding the NPEA. A part of this process invited public feedback until 21 October 2015. In this brief document, the Ministry for the Arts states that the objectives of NPEA were to:

- establish networks and promote collaboration and exchange between Australian artists/arts organisations and their international partners;
- expand audiences and markets for Australian artistic work and creative products;
- promote Australian expertise in arts production and management;
- leverage public-private partnerships;
- recognise the role of cultural actors as authentic and accessible barometers and agents of social change; and
- influence perceptions of Australia at home and abroad.⁵³

The Program would meet these objectives by subsidising three funding streams: endowment incentives; international and cultural diplomacy; and strategic initiatives. This announcement also meant that the previous funding arrangements for Australian artists would be dramatically altered, as \$23 million from the Council's annual budget was requisitioned to fund the NPEA. The institutional implications of this funding redistribution would mean that a variety of the Council's initiatives were suspended

⁵³ 'NPEA Guidelines [Draft],' *Australian Government Ministry for the Arts*, <https://www.arts.gov.au/nationalexcellenceprogram> [accessed 15 Oct 2015], p. 3.

immediately or put on hold, including *ArtStart*, *Creative Communities Partnerships Initiative* and *Artists-in-Residence* programs.⁵⁴

For artists themselves, individual creative practitioners were excluded from the NPEA's eligibility criteria and therefore were unable to access NPEA funding; organisations could not apply for core funding through the NPEA, either. As a result, many more Australian artists would be competing for much smaller amounts of the Council's funding, while those who would be subsidised by the NPEA would be subjected to government oversight. The government noted they would retain the ability to withhold the details of NPEA grant recipients, which presented a dramatic departure from the Council's long established, peer-reviewed selection process that is designed to operate with an arms-length principle.

The Price of Excellence: The NPEA's Political and Economic Implications

The pushback from the arts sector was substantial, from a #freethearts online initiative, Australian Charter for the Arts group, satirical artistic responses such as a *George Brandis Live Art Experience* and @artofbrandis, a 'counter-factual' NPEA wiki, numerous petitions, high-profile arts industry meetings, and a national day of action and protest in all major Australian capitals and many regional centres on 22 May 2015.⁵⁵ Politically

⁵⁴ Other modifications to the Council's spending allocation included a suspension of six-year funding for arts organisations and cancellation of the upcoming June arts grants allocation. For more details, see 'Australia Council Outlines 2015–16 Budget Impact,' *Australia Council for the Arts Media Release*.

⁵⁵ For details of the sector's resistance to the NPEA, see sources such as: *Freethearts2015* - 4,100 members as at 25 Oct 2015 and *The George Brandis Live Art Experience*, where images of predominantly Brandis'

geared responses followed, such as shadow minister Mark Dreyfus's characterisation of the NPEA as a 'slush fund'.⁵⁶ Queensland Theatre Company Artistic Director, Wesley Enoch, penned an open letter to the Arts Minister warning that the NPEA would put an already strained cultural ecology in jeopardy.⁵⁷ By mid-June, these protests culminated in the announcement of an 'Impact of the 2014 and 2015 Commonwealth Budget decisions on the Arts' Senate inquiry, confirming an antagonistic state of affairs (-/-) amongst the arts sector, Brandis himself, and pundits of the program. *The Australian* newspaper reported the Senate inquiry heard that '[t]he announcement [of the NPEA] took the industry by surprise and resulted in immediate funding cuts and job losses.'⁵⁸ Australian Senator Catryna Bilyk accused the NPEA of potential political bias in its funding allocations when she stated that:

head are photo-shopped onto various famous classical paintings – first post 16 May 2015, 487 likes as at June 3, 7,400 likes as at 28 Oct 2015.

Free the Arts, (2015) Available at <https://www.facebook.com/freethearts2015/> [accessed 28 Oct 2015] and *The George Brandis Live Art Experience*, (2015) Available at <https://www.facebook.com/TheGeorgeBrandisLiveArtExperience> [accessed 28 Oct 2015].

Petitions can be found at 'Stop Brandis Gutting our National Arts Petition,' *Community Run*, <https://www.communityrun.org/petitions/stop-brandis-gutting-our-national-arts> [accessed 25 Oct 2015]. This petition had 3,000+ signatures as at 25 Oct 2015. Also see: 'Australians for Artistic Freedom Petition,' *Australian Unions*, http://www.australianunions.org.au/australians_for_artistic_freedom [accessed 25 Oct 2015]. This petition had 12,375 signatures as at 25 Oct 2015.

For details on arts sector meetings and protests see: 'Arts Sector Gathers in Sydney to Protest and Plan,' *Theatre Network Victoria*, July 2015, <http://tnv.net.au/arts-sector-gathers-in-sydney-to-protest-cuts-and-plan-for-the-future/> [accessed 03 Feb 2018] and 'Media Release – Free the Arts,' *Theatre Network Victoria*, 06 Jul 2015, <http://tnv.net.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Free-the-Arts-Sydney-press-release.pdf> [accessed 03 Feb 2018]. For video footage recap, see Walsh, Dean, 'Freethearts National Action,' *Vimeo*, <https://vimeo.com/129727464> [accessed 03 Feb 2018].

⁵⁶ Dreyfus, Mark, (2015) 'Fifield Must Abandon Brandis Arts Slush Fund,' *Mark Dreyfus QC MP Media*, 21 Sep, http://markdreyfus.nationbuilder.com/fifield_must_abandon_brandis_arts_slush_fund [accessed 15 Oct 2015].

⁵⁷ *Currency House Australia*, (2015) Available at <https://www.facebook.com/currencyhouseaus/posts/380693758782900:0> [accessed 15 Oct 2015].

⁵⁸ "Grant Failure 'Sparked Rethink on Funding,'" *The Australian*, 28 Oct 2015, <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/grant-failure-sparked-rethink-on-funding/story-fn59niix-1227584638150> [accessed 03 Feb 2018].

There are no artistic criteria in the guidelines. These guidelines have been designed to ensure that the Minister has the widest possible discretion, allowing political interference in arts funding decisions. Under the guidelines, the Minister can even choose not to disclose the funding grants he makes.⁵⁹

A large portion of discontent was directed towards Brandis himself, with numerous commentators suggesting that his historically combative relationship with the Council and the Australian arts sector impacted on his decision to slash their budget.⁶⁰ As a result, many felt Brandis's sudden and assertive move to announce the Program was not out of character, given his demeanour when facing previous controversies in the arts sector, such as the 2014 Sydney Biennale controversy.⁶¹ While the question of the impact of previous history upon Brandis's decision to establish the NPEA remains speculative, what is most relevant to this thesis are the tactics that he employed when announcing the program.

⁵⁹ Dreyfus, Mark, (2015) 'Arts Sector Blasts Abbott Government Budget Cuts,' *Mark Dreyfus QC MP Media*, 05 Aug, http://markdreyfus.nationbuilder.com/arts_sector_blasts_abbott_government_budget_cuts [accessed 15 Oct 2015].

⁶⁰ In Feb 2014, the Council-funded Sydney Biennale was boycotted by artists who were protesting the sponsorship of Transfield Holdings, whose funding agreement was eventually terminated as a result of the protests. Brandis responded strongly, threatening to force the Council to develop policy and withhold funding from organisations that refused corporate sponsorship. The Council did not publicly reject this threat from Brandis, but no policies to this effect were developed. For general overviews of the issue, refer to Tregar, Peter, (2014) 'The Art of Being Awkward: Brandis Wrong about the Biennale,' *The Conversation*, 13 Mar, <https://theconversation.com/the-art-of-being-awkward-brandis-is-wrong-about-the-biennale-24336> [accessed 03 Feb 2018] and Razer, Helen, (2014) 'Sydney Biennale: Artists Divide over Dirty Money,' *Daily Review*, 20 Feb, <http://dailyreview.com.au/sydney-biennale-artists-divide-over-dirty-money/3219> [accessed 03 Feb 2018] and 'Biennale Boycott,' *Biennale of Sydney*, 03 Mar 2014, <https://www.biennaleofsydney.com.au/blog/2014/03/03/related-links-biennale-boycott/> [accessed 03 Feb 2018].

⁶¹ The aforementioned artist boycott of the Sydney Biennale in 2014.

Brandis's approach was to apply a hard-power directive that was perceived in the media and arts industry as win-lose for the Liberal Government vs the Council, although publicly an adversarial stance was not officially articulated by either party. The parasitic nature of relations (+/-) between the Ministry and industry were demonstrated, for example, through the Minister's use of provocative statements to justify the Program, when he noted that, '[t]he only people who have anything to fear from this program, frankly, are the mediocre, because they're not going to be beneficiaries of it.'⁶² Adding to this provocation, Brandis commented that the Council was not spending money in the best way when he highlighted instances where he thought the Council had outright failed.⁶³ The example below refers to the funding of a transfer of an opera piece to appear at the Brisbane Baroque festival in April 2015. The performance went on to win five Helpmann Awards that recognise achievement in Australian live performance, including Best Opera. Brandis notes:

Faramondo couldn't get Australia Council funding because the funding guidelines just didn't allow for them so they were funded through the Ministry of the Arts. So there you have a perfect example of what I'm trying to make people appreciate - that some of the best of our art, in this case performance art, judged by the industry and by peers, couldn't even get Australia Council funding and had I not funded it through the Ministry for the Arts and had the

⁶² Neill, *Culture Shock: George Brandis defends arts funding changes*.

⁶³ The NPEA press release also encouraged the perception of the Council's inadequacy through the use of language that implied that it was exclusive and showed favouritism, '[a]rts funding has until now been limited almost exclusively to projects favoured by the Australia Council. The [NPEA] will *make* funding available to a wider range of arts companies and arts practitioners.' See 'Portfolio Budget Measures 2015–16,' *Australian Government Attorney-General's Department*.

former Queensland Government, Ian Walker the Arts Minister, not funded it through Arts Queensland it wouldn't have happened.⁶⁴

A third example of the strategy Brandis deployed to respond to criticism regarding his creation of the Program also engaged the rhetoric of excellence and elitism:

the problem here is that people get wedded to the status quo and they become so wedded to the status quo that they find it impossible to think that things could be done better. This is the problem with any reform in public policy; you always have to overcome the understandably human fear of people with a vested interest in the status quo – the fear of change.⁶⁵

These quotes from the Minister for the Arts first highlight a calculated and specific use of language. The branding of the NPEA pursued a line of thought which argued in favour of reform to improve standards of 'excellence.' Although appeals to excellence may be interpreted as mere altruism, it was simultaneously combined with a shrewd politicking tactic that attempted to link the Council with indications of inefficiency or inadequacy, although substantial evidence, such as any references to failures to meet determined benchmarks or other accountability measures, were not presented as evidence to support such inferences. Brandis also presented the NPEA as breaking out of a status quo, and being on the side of innovation and progress amongst those who are elite.

⁶⁴ 'Arts Minister Brandis Responds to Feedback on National Program,' *Australian Broadcasting Company: Transcript*, 28 Jul 2015, <http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/booksandarts/arts-minister-brandis-responds-to-feedback-on-national-program/6651316> [accessed 03 Feb 2018].

⁶⁵ Ibid. Note the doublespeak surrounding the use of the term 'status quo.' Rather than acknowledging the substantial day-to-day ramifications of the NPEA's funding reallocation (like people's employment and livelihoods), he characterises the pushback to the program as merely a fear of change itself.

Arguing that those who do not agree with the NPEA fear change and are somehow less excellent in their artistic standards is another intentionally divisive statement. Brandis was again taking a strong stance by appealing to people's sense of wanting to be, and see, the best. In summary, Brandis's communication technique appealed to us to support excellence, and to do so, we would need to be on the side of reform and embrace the NPEA.

The rhetoric of excellence, used by Brandis and documentation surrounding the Program, also encouraged the pursuit of greatness in the arts, and communicating and exporting this distinction to the world at large. There was a prioritisation of corporatisation (through the push for endowment incentives), globalisation (through an emphasis on international and cultural diplomacy) and managerialism (with funding being only available to organisations and a strategic initiative that required organisations to deliver outcomes against planned and developing priorities). Yet, these outcomes could be conceivably pursued by the body previously responsible for arts funding, the Council. As pundits challenged the logic behind the NPEA by asking what could the arts deliver that would necessitate revising Australia's previous pattern of 'arm's length' arts funding, back to a more elite-orientated perception of arts funding that aligns with the Arnoldian definition of culture as civilising and seeking perfection, the political conception of cultural value was also modified in the NPEA to suggest a need for direct ministerial oversight in order to realise effective (and instrumental) cultural policy. Was this an attempt by Brandis to forge his own cultural legacy? More conceptually, is culture only valuable now if it is 'excellent'? And who decides what

excellence looks like? Eltham provides further insight when he argues that excellence is an 'elastic and useful word,' but that the excellence narrative is not an artistic point and signifies a 'code word for a certain set of funding priorities.'⁶⁶

If the NPEA was facilitated in its original form, the most overt relations between the government (politics) and the arts sector would be, as stated in the guidelines themselves, through the concepts of cultural diplomacy and also the creative economy. This means that by seeking to boost Australia's international credibility via the arts, the NPEA shared another purpose: to increase Australia's international power and economic status. As we know, this is an aim of Australian public diplomacy today and was at the time of the announcement of the Program. Therefore, the NPEA, in the absence of an abandoned Labor Party National Cultural Policy from 2013 called *Creative Australia*, but following the new 2013 Australia Council Act, was an assertive move by Brandis to focus Australia's cultural industries on producing better quality and presumably higher outputs of artistic work *and* to have strategic gain such as boosting cultural imports and exports.⁶⁷ This is demonstrated even in the mere notion of a 'program for excellence,' which prioritises a standard of superiority and enrichment rather than on creativity or inherent value of the culture itself. It also neatly aligns with the central principles of the creative economy rhetoric, which, in the main, rely on market forces in the form of

⁶⁶ These priorities in the context of Australian arts funding, argues Eltham, mean the performance of the Western canon by performing arts companies, that favour the dead, the white and the male. He notes "so perhaps 'excellence' means something after all. It means privilege: the privilege of a wealthy and influential elite to manage the allocation of cultural dollars." Eltham, Ben, (2015) 'The Excellence Criterion,' *Overland Magazine*, no. 221, Summer, <https://overland.org.au/previous-issues/issue-221/feature-ben-eltham/> [accessed 11 Apr 2020].

⁶⁷ For information on *Creative Australia*, see Eltham, Ben, (2013) 'Arts Policy: where do Labor, the Coalition and the Greens stand?' *The Guardian*, 03 Sep, <http://www.theguardian.com/culture/australia-culture-blog/2013/sep/02/arts-policy-neglected-election> [accessed 02 Feb 2018].

supply and demand to generate the most capital through creative enterprise. The value of culture (as articulated in the NPEA) therefore echoed the economic conception of wealth accumulation—in monetary terms and political capital.

To analyse this further, we should look beyond the short term political dimensions of this policy proposal to the thematic underpinnings of the NPEA. They, in fact, share the same strategic use of culture that both cultural diplomacy and cultural policy aim to maximise. Cultural theorist Raymond Williams' distinction between cultural policy 'as display' and cultural policy 'proper' provides a useful theoretical context that allows us to better understand the interactions between culture and strategic desires of a state in general. This context is directly applicable to the example of the NPEA. Cultural policy as display, Williams notes, refers to how the State functions in a double sense, as a central organ of power and that 'of display – indeed often specifically the public pomp of a particular social order.'⁶⁸ In this case study, the NPEA may be understood as a type of cultural policy as display, especially when combined with the rhetoric of excellence and its aim of influencing domestic and international perceptions (as stated in its draft guidelines). In this sense, it also functions as a type of 'arts as business entertainment,' which Williams asserts is 'not a policy *for* the arts but a policy for embellishing, representing, making more effective *a particular social order* or certain preferred features of it.'⁶⁹ [Emphasis added]. Here, the link between the NPEA and cultural diplomacy is strengthened, as is the link between the NPEA and the creative economy

⁶⁸ Williams, Raymond, (1984) 'State Culture and Beyond,' in Apignanesi, Lisa (ed.), *Culture and the State*, Conference Proceedings, Institute of Contemporary Art, London, p. 3.

⁶⁹ Williams, Raymond as cited in McGuigan, Jim, (2003) *Rethinking Cultural Policy*, Open University Press, Buckingham, p. 62.

model. When understood (and funded) through the rubric of endowments and cultural diplomacy, the arts become a much more accessible tool with which to achieve public diplomacy outcomes and supplement other domestic and foreign policy objectives. It also indicates the move towards a more specific framework that rationalises Australia's investment in culture. This is shown in the emphasis on NPEA guidelines upon endowment incentives as a means to boost public-private arts sponsorship and to improve the reputation of Australia (domestically and abroad) as a 'sophisticated and artistic nation with an outward-focused arts sector.'⁷⁰

As a further means to emphasise the involvement of state power and the economy, Williams also breaks down his notion of cultural policy as display into two further subcategories. The first of these is national aggrandisement and the second is economic reductionism, which is focused on leveraging (culture) for economic growth. The NPEA exhibits both of these in its draft guidelines and the rhetoric surrounding its announcement and justification as a new policy proposal. However, the notion of Williams' national aggrandisement would not be acknowledged by Brandis as a cornerstone of the NPEA. The Arts Minister stated that establishing the program was purely based upon a reform of public spending, rather than an attempt to steer cultural narratives of the nation. In a July 2015 *ABC* interview, he explicitly stated that he was not politicising the arts but that:

⁷⁰ 'NPEA Guidelines [Draft],' *Australian Government Ministry for the Arts*, p. 3.

[the NPEA] is about the best allocation of public money. Every dollar that the Commonwealth spends on arts funding is public money and governments, whatever their political persuasion ... have a responsibility to ensure that that money is spent where it is best spent. That is a responsibility that lies in every area of government and the arts are no different.⁷¹

What was unsaid in this statement was that, from the perspective of his Ministry, this reform was initiated because the Council was failing to allocate public money to an acceptable, or 'the best' standard, referred to above. The value of culture, therefore, was not being sufficiently leveraged in the eyes of his Ministry. As a result, alongside Brandis's discussions of standards and excellence as the cornerstone of the Program, there was a deliberate engagement with competitive rhetoric. Despite Brandis's comments, this engagement was a highly political manoeuvre to influence public opinion (justifying public funds) whilst aligning with the principles of a neo-liberal economy, where Australian arts are primed to excel as superior products. The nod towards the market is also seen in the logic of the NPEA, in which its guidelines noted that the best, most excellent arts would receive funding, at the discretion of the Ministry. The NPEA also concerned itself with maximising productivity. This was made explicit within the NPEA guidelines, in the section which noted that funding applications must meet the objectives of being an endowment incentive, strategic incentive or engage with international touring or importing (which is considered the cultural diplomacy funding stream).

⁷¹ 'Arts Minister Brandis Responds to Feedback on National Program,' *The Australian*.

Also politically significant was the discouragement of an established organisation, the Council, whose 'arms-length' funding of 'distinctive' creative practice was reduced, in favour of a separate program that enjoyed direct ministerial/government oversight. This is assumedly the context within which Brandis had noted, in hindsight, that the government was not in control of its own cultural policy. Brandis would justify his proposal of the NPEA at a 2015 Senate estimates hearing by proclaiming:

What does an applicant with a worthy, supportable and publicly well-accepted policy do if the Australia Council says no? Well, under the previous arrangements, there was nowhere else to go, at least within the Commonwealth; now there is.⁷²

This statement recognises a desire for increased control over, or at least involvement in, the Australian cultural agenda. Without it being possible to precisely determine what it would have meant specifically for Australia and the types of arts practice in the long term, the reassertion of a portion of direct control over artistic production is a hard line strategy.⁷³ Although controversial to the arts sector, from a political perspective, this was not such an astonishing strategy by a centre-right politician such as Brandis, but was somewhat curious given the moves towards privatisation underway in other publicly affiliated sectors in Australia.⁷⁴ Could this have been an indication that (via Brandis's

⁷² 'Budget Estimates 2015–16,' *Commonwealth of Australia*, p. 18.

⁷³ Although the 28 major arts companies in Australia were informed by the Ministry for the Arts that they would be quarantined from the Council's budget cuts.

⁷⁴ Medibank Private, originally a government-established, not-for-profit health insurer incorporated in 1997, and privatised in 2014, with ASX listing in November. See 'Company Overview: History,' *Medibank Private Limited*, <https://www.medibank.com.au/about/company/overview/history/>. Australia Post and

NPEA) the government was interested in investing in its soft-power capacity, or was it a more short-term response to tensions between the government and the Council's leadership?

Either way, the offensive use of culture, whilst aimed at increasing the nation's soft power and economic prospects, widely aggravated the very people who produce cultural content, hence the antagonistic relations. Brandis was not able to successfully negotiate the same double bind that is theoretically encountered in cultural diplomacy scholarship: that is, the NPEA ultimately failed not only because of the controversial requisition of the Council's funding, but also due to its top-down and draconian attempt to modify the arts funding landscape in Australia. This 'power grab' overshadowed or neglected questions of aesthetics and artistic freedoms, even if in practice this would not have been the case once the policy was implemented. For many Australian artists, this did not represent a cultural ecology they wished to operate in, due to the risk of influence or even censorship of their artistic visions, alongside the inequality of the policy itself in terms of eligibility criteria. Therefore, the question of *who* was driving the cultural agenda was the real battleground and could explain some of the true motivations behind the development of, and resistance to, the NPEA. The legacy that the NPEA would leave in its wake was that it treated culture as a political pawn that culminated in an antagonistic outcome (-/-), where the engagement with cultural value

the Royal Australian Mint have also been scoped along with others to be privatised see 'Market Based Solutions: 10.1 Privatisations,' *National Commission of Audit*, <http://www.ncoa.gov.au/report/phase-one/part-b/10-1-privatisations.html> for details.

was limited, mass protest ensued, the program was rescinded and a Senate inquiry called.

DFAT and the NPEA: Findings in Terms of Cultural Value

The above case studies have provided insight into some of the relations between culture, policy and politics in Australia. When considered in terms of the political domain, and more specifically within the context of public and cultural diplomacy, the NPEA demonstrated an interesting attempt by Brandis to increase government involvement in cultural policy via the direct oversight of his ministry and of the output of the cultural industry. From one perspective, its creation might be read as an attempt to provide infrastructure to engage with soft-power and cultural initiatives in a more targeted way. These may have been used to support or smooth the way for future foreign affairs manoeuvres from the Australian government. It certainly was intended, for example, to enhance trade relations for the Australian cultural industry and private sector. Despite this economic benefit to the nation via the use of culture (which is a key objective in DFAT's public diplomacy strategy), its attempt at implementation alienated the individuals who were responsible for the production of this cultural capital. This serves as a reminder that, although cultural diplomacy efforts are primarily geared towards the international domain, their successful execution lies with the (domestic) output of a nation's own citizens—even if this occurs abroad. Furthermore, the tense interactions between the stakeholders in this exchange highlight how productive and collaborative relationships are also essential to enacting cultural policy change.

As a symbiotic case study examining the NPEA's various relations, the challenges of culture's participation in the political realm (discussed in chapter two) are highlighted further. Activities involving the arts and the national interest may seek the coveted mutual understanding of cultural diplomacy, and yet also need to elicit interactions of negotiation and relationship building. And despite its connection with cultural diplomacy, the NPEA was unveiled by Brandis in a thoroughly undiplomatic manner, especially as it was seen to bypass any consultation process with major arts institutions and the Council itself, which was given mere hours' notice of the program's existence before it was publically announced. The NPEA case study demonstrates the antagonistic outcomes (-/-) that occur by pursuing an agenda in a manner that lacked industry consultation and resulted in budget reductions for major existing cultural institutions. Despite being partially geared towards cultural diplomacy outcomes and 'improving' the way the value of Australian arts would be exercised, the policy was at odds with the proclamation from its own foreign affairs department, which emphasises the creation of new networks and relationships in the pursuit of public diplomacy outcomes.

By bypassing these aspects at the planning stages, the NPEA example highlights how attempts to enhance the way the value of culture operates in theory as versus practice may encounter substantial challenges, and even resistance. This raises the question of whether this is due to a politicisation of the arts, or is it indicative of the more complex challenges when cultural policy is deliberately geared towards the accrual of soft

power?⁷⁵ Although, on paper, there are calls to examine the various relationships that are in place in public and cultural diplomacy scenarios, it is not clear how this might be achieved given the interrelation between domestic and international stakeholders as well as government and non-government agents. The degree to which the NPEA could have improved Australian cultural value in practice would be, therefore, speculative. However, despite the attempt to generate more mutualistic outcomes between the state and the cultural sector (+/+), we are left with statements that emphasise and are interested in achieving national outcomes and increasing the export of Australian arts content overseas—but with no policy to support these intentions.

Existing programs in Australia's cultural diplomacy environment also appear to lack critical feedback as current practice focusses on quantifying the sheer output of international arts collaborations or imports, as in DFAT reporting documentation. This generates measurable results in the short term, but does not give an indication of the type of relationships that are created and how they enhance the cultural branding of Australia. Across both DFAT and the NPEA, despite the attempts to orientate arts practice towards soft power, there is a thin articulation of positive cultural value in DFAT's current reporting practices (and negative 'value' was a major outcome of the NPEA). The broad task of value-creation sought by public diplomacy therefore lacks a clear methodology with which to analyse its interrelations. This task, if undertaken, is

⁷⁵ In this case study, the NPEA at the strategic policy level is shown to be geared towards the accrual of soft power to better showcase the Australian arts industry to both domestic and international audiences and enhance collaboration in this field. Yet, at the level of implementation, it was pursued through Ministerial fiat in a manner that is akin to a hard power manoeuvre through its sweeping economic measures and lack of industry consultation.

done on a case-by-case basis with varying standards of interrogation and depth. This means that, despite various programs operating within both ongoing and one-off capacities, there is difficulty in cumulatively summarising their impact. This feeds back into one of the challenges in cultural value discourse discussed previously: that there is uncertainty due to varying conceptions of value, which impedes efforts to understand the effectiveness of culture in terms of strategic gain—especially given the wide variety of actors that are present in the global cultural context. This poses the question: how can what a nation does culturally be better valued, given that what is still lacking on a macro level is an overt and accepted place for the arts and culture within the political realm that transcends a traditional, instrumental proposition of value?

The example of the NPEA demonstrates that, to be more efficacious when it comes to questions of culture and the nation, not only does the nation itself (or relevant stakeholders) need to be in support of these initiatives, but that we must develop a more unified, and sophisticated, manner of cultural competence with which to value activities and, most importantly, their interactions in this arena. Comprehending the value of relationships found in cultural activities that operate in a global environment, however, is complex. It involves estimating the amount of goodwill/damage that occurs in response to specific geopolitical issues, market forces or over a certain passage of time.

The DFAT and NPEA case studies also show that the federal government and Brandis, respectively, projected a calculated and strategic pathway for the future of the arts and culture in Australia that was outcomes-driven, rather than based on the subsidy of

aesthetic initiatives as works of art in themselves as a form of public good. Artistic output could ideally be capable of achieving both under a robust arts policy, yet due to the vocabulary used by Brandis, a rhetoric of excellence, and what the Program sought to prioritise at the time of its announcement, these factors made art appear as the mere vehicle to achieve other means. This is also shared in the current approach to cultural and public diplomacy in DFAT's reporting documentation, such as its aforementioned annual reports and internal reporting. While this is ideologically a utilitarian perspective on the value of art, this context also engages with Williams' categorisation of cultural policy as display. This qualification allows us to dissect the NPEA as a mechanism that advocates for a social order that serves a higher purpose, especially that of the 'free' market.⁷⁶ This, as discussed, was demonstrated in the emphasis that the Program placed on expanding private-sector revenue streams and the diplomatically geared objective of influencing perceptions of Australia at home and abroad. This example also demonstrates the uneasiness that culture can have in relation to policy objectives, especially the realm of foreign cultural policy where, as Woddis notes, '...there is a scarcity of sustained or in-depth discussion of arts organisations and artists as participants in the policy process.'⁷⁷ In the NPEA, the role of the arts was defined predominantly by those who are not practitioners of it and its value, therefore, was circumscribed to political understandings of utility. It was little surprise that the resulting tension was felt on an immediate level and more broadly within the context of a national cultural conversation, or lack thereof.

⁷⁶ Even though 'market forces' such as Brandis's ability to exercise oversight into funding allocations were a possible scenario.

⁷⁷ Woddis, Jane, (2014) 'Arts Practitioners in the Cultural Policy Process: spear-carriers or speaking parts?' *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, Vol. 20, no. 4, p. 496.

Moreover, the NPEA would have partly served Australia's efforts to capitalise on the value of its culture. This would have been achieved via a contribution to the growth of the arts sector through international arts imports and exports and a boost to Australia's artistic reputation worldwide. This analysis has not proved otherwise. However, if the development, articulation and branding of the NPEA had been different, perhaps a more positive response may have been elicited from the arts industry and public at large. It also highlights the issues of cultural policy appearing to be primarily geared towards the creation of economic value and exploiting of cultural assets and capital of a nation and its people. Furthermore, it also demonstrates the obligatory nature of interactions between the Department and the Council and the precarious terrain that arts funding operates within, because it involves public money. What remains of the NPEA's legacy is a Senate inquiry and controversy surrounding a lack of evidence-based planning, perceptions of 'high art' bias, potential fears of cultural propaganda and frustration at an infrastructure that was perceived to provide the possibility of politically motivated funding choices for the arts.⁷⁸ For now, this indicates that an overwhelmingly managerialist outlook toward the creation of art in Australia was unrealistic and, as such, a fluctuating relationship between arts and politics continues.

⁷⁸ The NPEA was replaced without dispensing any funding grants by a rebranded arts funding program called Catalyst, which was itself abolished entirely in 2017. It funded 203 arts projects. For more information, see: 'Catalyst – Australian Arts and Culture Fund,' *Australian Government Department of Communications and the Arts*, <https://www.arts.gov.au/what-we-do/performing-arts/catalyst-australian-arts-and-culture-fund> [accessed 02 Feb 2018].

Comparatively, the above discussion reveals that DFAT's pursuit of public (and cultural) value is designed around public diplomacy, which identifies priority regions where Australia wishes to exert influence (largely to educate publics about Australia, promote democracy or enhance relations between nations). This is in contrast to the NPEA, which sought to improve public value via a strengthening of the cultural industries and the theme of cultural legacy through its articulation of 'excellence' in the arts. Although both the NPEA and DFAT shared, at a broad level, a desire to maximise value for Australia and create networks through the use of cultural assets, the means by which they pursued and pursue this objective are varied. A comparison of the approaches to cultural value between DFAT and the NPEA exposes various patterns in terms of the political value: first, as demonstrated in the case of DFAT, value is commensal where benefits to the state are articulated as generating value, but actual cultural content is absent in this discussion. Second, as demonstrated in the NPEA, the argument in favour of financial subsidies is made in order to increase sources of soft power, and this consequently positions culture's value in terms of a return on investment to the nation and expansion of the sector. As the analysis and symbiotic overview has shown, this approach was unsuccessful and antagonistic. What both of these cases ultimately have in common is the absence of a proactive cultural perspective at an official (government) level. When redefining the concept of value to maximise the use of culture in the political realm, this indicates the need for a strategic planning, design and deployment process at the cultural policy level that collaborates with the sources of cultural value themselves: the artists and cultural practitioners.

The case study's identification of parasitic and antagonistic relationships, in particular, highlights the nature of the dynamics between stakeholders in a cultural activity that contained elements of harm. By incorporating symbiosis into the analysis of the NPEA, parasitism serves to further characterise the breakdown in conversation between arts and politics, beyond the label of 'conflict' or tension between artists and the government. Symbiosis, therefore, allows us to more clearly identify the *unequal* degree of harm/benefit between stakeholders as a result of the NPEA, where the government stood to benefit (+ proposed policy direction) at the expense of artistic sector and its practitioners (- arts funding).

On a conceptual level, this indicates that parasitism can be used to focus attention on harmful relationship dynamics in cultural scenarios. Doing so helps to map how and where, in a cultural ecology, relations-based interactions break down or experience inequalities when stakeholders benefit at the expense of others. It also focuses where attention might be paid, for example by the government, to *address* degrees of harm. For example, as a means to mitigate the effects of the NPEA, a symbiotic consideration of the immediate negative responses and interactions facilitated by the initial proposal could have been an initial 'warning sign' to Brandis that a volatile situation would ensue following the initial policy announcement. However, the 'harm' caused to the sector was widely dismissed by his Ministry, until the state of affairs deteriorated into an antagonistic situation with a Senate Inquiry and eventual retraction of the proposal. Symbiosis does not attempt to change these relationships, but is useful in that it can indicate where stakeholders could have devoted resources to evolve a potentially

negative situation, providing precedent for any future scenarios involving Australian arts funding and the government.

However, harm minimisation may not be the only 'outcome' of cultural symbiosis. Just as parasitic relations are a natural part of ecological relationships, the use of parasitism in a cultural sense may also help us to think about relationships in a way that is not normally anticipated in the existing literature: that some cultural relationships with harmful elements may indeed be an inevitable, even organic, part of an overall cultural ecology. In the case of the NPEA, a symbiotic consideration of the state of affairs summarises the outcomes of its controversial policy proposal, but also highlights how these stakeholders are in a relationship that is unavoidable, or in symbiotic terms, obligatory. This obligatory relationship is evident as the government depends on creative practitioners to produce content to suit the aims of its cultural policy, and creative practitioners in the current funding climate are largely dependent on grants, such as those from the Council or potentially the NPEA. Acknowledging asymmetrical interactions, like those facilitated by the NPEA, as parasitic and obligatory, highlights how symbiosis adds to the conversation by providing a way to talk about differences instead of seeking to minimise them in the pursuit of cultural policy goals. In fact, better cultural policy might be developed from paying attention to the asymmetries and types of harm (or disadvantage) that occur amongst the interactions of cultural stakeholders.

Whilst policymakers may be hesitant to adopt language that might portray stakeholders as 'damaging' forces if they parasitically 'benefit' at the expense of others like in the NPEA, symbiosis also represents an opportunity for those who have relationships (with

the government) on the basis of culture to be present in the consideration of value. Furthermore, the identification of parasitism as a less-desirable relationship configuration represents an opportunity to identify how a relationship is leveraged in a particular way in terms of who benefits and who is harmed and, consequently, presents an opportunity to amend, repair, or rebalance less productive aspects of the relationship. Therefore, the perception of parasitism can but need not damage the reputation of the stakeholder that benefits at the expense of another but, rather, can indicate a relational configuration in which there is an imbalance of 'power.' In the above case study of parasitic, antagonistic and commensal relationships, incorporating symbiotic language is useful because it helps us to better understand the tensions and obligatory status in the relationships of the NPEA stakeholders, who will need to continue to work closely together. Although 'painful,' acknowledging these fault lines is highly valuable as it might inform how we can approach cultural value in terms of the calibration of benefit and harm to stakeholders as a result of cultural activities.

The next chapter considers the conception of value in cultural policy in a manner that is related to the political domain, but emanates from an economic perspective. When altruistic national benefit is not the main focus of cultural policy, I examine the impact of the knowledge and creative industries in the case of the City of Melbourne and its desire to be known as a Creative City. Although this example measures the value of culture in terms of its ability to increase capital, it, too, privileges the value of cultural activity in terms of generating positive quantitative outcomes rather than focussing on the aesthetic implications of creative expression. This raises the question of whether

aspects of cultural value go unnoticed. To answer this, I analyse the gaps in creative economy discourse to uncover what is missing from Melbourne's Creative City strategy in terms of a holistic understanding of the city's cultural value.

Chapter 6 — The Economic Value of Culture, the City of Melbourne and its Commensal Focus on Size

The new spirit of capitalism has put to good use the artistic critique that was supposed to destroy it.

– Chiapello and Boltanski¹

Today, politicians, economists and industry leaders tout innovation and knowledge-based economies as the producers of the jobs of the future, as well as a model that harnesses the rapidly evolving technology that infiltrates the everyday lives of a nation's citizens. Introduced earlier in this thesis, the knowledge-based economy informs many policies and strategies in operation today. At a federal level in Australia, the government's current emphasis on innovation positions it as a vital factor in the expansion of Australia's economy, and the knowledge-based economy is pursued at a governmental level through an innovation agenda that was announced in 2015. The National Innovation and Science Agenda (NISA) urges Australians to embrace new ideas and 'harness new sources of growth to deliver the next age of economic prosperity in Australia.'² What does this mean for the value of Australian culture? According to the

¹ Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello as cited in Latour, Bruno, (2004) 'Why Has Critique Run Out of Steam? From Matters of Fact to Matters of Concern,' *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 30, no. 2, p. 231.

<http://www.bruno-latour.fr/sites/default/files/89-CRITICAL-INQUIRY-GB.pdf> [accessed 26 Jan 2018].

² See 'The Agenda,' *National Innovation and Science Agenda*, <http://www.innovation.gov.au/page/agenda> [accessed 01 May 2018]. Confirming an ongoing interest in this direction, in 2018 the government also released Australia 2030: Prosperity through Innovation, prepared by Innovation and Science Australia (ISA). Touted as building on the NISA, ISA makes 30 recommendations to accelerate Australia's performance within the global innovation race. Full report available from 'Australia 2030: Prosperity through Innovation,' *Innovation and Science Australia*, <https://industry.gov.au/Innovation-and-Science-Australia/Documents/Australia-2030-Prosperity-through-Innovation-Full-Report.pdf> [accessed 01 May 2018].

Department of Industry, Innovation and Science (DIIS), culture is central to the innovation agenda because it shapes 'how we see our world and what we believe is possible through the way we view opportunity, failure and risk.'³ Informed by anthropologist Geertz, DIIS understands culture as 'the national stories we tell about ourselves.'⁴ In practice, the Department adopts a focus upon innovation and infrastructure to promote the creation of new knowledge and opportunities that harness knowledge creation, the generation of which is a much sought-after policy outcome in similar innovation-based agendas. This is evident in the Creative City ethos that the Victorian state capital's city council, the City of Melbourne, had adopted. In this example, the City of Melbourne (CoM) articulates the value of 'its' culture through the ethos of the creative economy as a means to further its creative capital and to inspire experimentation, innovation and creativity.⁵ The following discussion considers the Creative City perspective as it examines the conditions of arts and cultural policy in Melbourne today. It analyses how, at a municipal level, Melbourne's cultural value is 'economised,' and looks at the challenges of overcoming the reliance on numbers in a political, bureaucratic context. This analysis includes cultural symbiosis to enhance the understanding of the conceptual dimensions that the CoM policies espouse to learn

³ 'Australia 2030: Prosperity through Innovation,' *Innovation and Science Australia*, p. 85.

⁴ Ibid. This report cites Geertz's 1973 anthropological publication, in which he makes the observation regarding culture in reference to a Balinese reading of Balinese experience as '...a story they tell themselves about themselves.' See Geertz, Clifford, (1973) *The Interpretation of Cultures*, Hutchinson, London, p. 448.

⁵ The 2017–18 CoM Annual Report highlights the link to the nation-wide innovation agenda, as it articulates that 'Melbourne will be a place that inspires experimentation, innovation and creativity and fosters leaders of ideas and courage... Melbourne's reputation will attract and retain pioneers in the creative arts and innovation sector and enable them to contribute to the city's prosperity.' 'Annual Report 2017–2018,' *City of Melbourne*, <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/annual-report-2017-18.pdf> [accessed 20 Jan 2019], p. 52.

more about the commensal and parasitic interactions that occur in the pursuit of a specific, economically orientated, type of value.

To conduct this analysis, a close reading of a series of council documents, including council plans, annual reports and strategic documentation from 2009 to 2019, was necessary to examine how the CoM communicates the way it pursues and articulates the value of its culture. I argue that the CoM overlooks many aspects of cultural value in its Creative City reporting outcomes. In this case, the value of culture is defined predominantly through quantitative means: how much cultural activity, degrees of growth and proportions of participation in the cultural sector. I argue that its oversight is indicative of the wider constraints upon cultural value which, in this instance, are the pre-existing reporting frameworks within a governmental context. It is also indicative of the wider limitations of a creative economy model: that there are substantial problems measuring its own success. Individually, while this means that those at a municipal level may overlook elements of cultural activities (such as potential benefits), at a macro level, it also demonstrates the limitation of compelling culture to deliver measurable 'outcomes' in relation to the community, city or nation. Therefore, there is a disconnect between what is happening on the ground as a result of cultural policy (in the delivery and execution of cultural activities) versus what official annual reports and documentation report, and communicate, back.

In this case study, I also argue that there is a clear link to politics and economics-based conceptions of the value with regard to culture in the council's very specific engagement

of global narratives, such as the Creative City. There are also direct links with concepts of soft power and cultural diplomacy, which culturally brand Melbourne as a cosmopolitan, creative city of the *world*. Therefore, the closing section of the chapter considers how the creative economy is linked with political concerns when it comes to valuing culture and what the political and economic relations in this case study offer to the discussion of cultural value. These relations include (CoM's) projection of a specific, culturally-based identity that enhances the attractiveness of a place (city or nation), and the emphasis upon culture as a means to produce favourable outcomes for the government (at various levels). To support my claim that these relations are important in the context of the value of culture, I discuss aspects of the CoM's cultural policy that contribute to political goals (such as cultural diplomacy outcomes) and the promotion of the city as a creative, tourist destination. The below analysis of the CoM's cultural policy also considers the council's desire to foster its own creative economy and this allows for further analysis into how it values culture in the context of economics.

Although this analysis indicates how the CoM might direct its future reporting efforts to better enunciate how it values the city's culture, analysing aspects of cultural value where politics and economics intersect with the aim of improving reporting, or measuring, the value of culture is complex. Rather, I conclude with a more conceptual contribution that, while Melbourne's Creative City policy direction is grounded in the creation of 'new knowledge' through the promotion and growth (especially the scale) of its cultural industries, it promotes a commensal narrative surrounding creativity.

Consequently, it leaves us with the provocation of whether we can ultimately value arts and culture.

The Creative Economy in Practice - Culture and Policy in the City of Melbourne

The CoM's staff of approximately 1,300 oversee a range of local government services such as urban planning, capital works and maintenance, recycling and waste management, as well as its dedicated tourism and arts and culture programs. As a local government authority, its organisational structure consists of a Council of elected officials—Lord Mayor, Deputy Lord Mayor and Councillors—who oversee six core groups: Executive Services, City and Design Projects, City Strategy and Place, City Communities, City Operations, Customer and Business Information and City Economy and Activation.⁶ As the central business district of Victoria, the municipal area of Melbourne may only cover 36 square kilometres, but the council considers the city a major global hub, a view bolstered by the achievement of a series of worldwide accolades in areas such as liveability, building energy efficiency, community engagement, sports and knowledge and innovation.⁷ Given this prestige, it is perhaps unsurprising that 'culture' is also positioned as an asset of the city that enables Melbourne to distinguish itself from other Australian cities and other cosmopolitan locales around the world. The council's pursuit of value in terms of achieving

⁶ 'City of Melbourne Structure,' *City of Melbourne*, <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/organisational-structure.pdf> [accessed 19 Apr 2019].

⁷ 'Accolades,' *City of Melbourne*, <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/about-melbourne/celebrating-melbourne/Pages/accolades.aspx> [accessed 03 Jan 2019].

international recognition and being at the forefront of innovation contains a political dimension. This political dimension concerns how a nation's cultural branding can become a key strategic focus of policy that concerns arts and cultural funding and infrastructure provision. In this case study, I examine Melbourne's branding as a global city, rather than as an Australian city from the state of Victoria, and how the CoM's arts and cultural policies describe and evaluate the value of its culture.

Aside from the CoM, the creative economy and the growth of its many cultural industries and assets is appealing to a wide variety of stakeholders. Companies, governments, arts organisations and artists all engage, in some way, with this neoliberal articulation of the arts, which is characterised by cultural products and their subsequent markets. Although it is an emerging topic within global politics, countless consultations and dialogues occur worldwide where culture increasingly forges a space on the agenda of nations, institutions, NGOs, the private sector and other organisations, including the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA).⁸ The outcome of this attention is the rise of governmental cultural policy that gives consideration to the development of trade and economic relationships alongside discourses of soft power and diplomacy. The economic development of 'culture' also manifests, in practice, as a part of the wider strategic planning of councils and governments.

⁸ The International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies (IFACCA) culture is just one example of global network that works within this space. See <http://www.ifacca.org/> for more information.

In the CoM, cultural ‘assets’ are commonly involved in a variety of outcomes, from health and wellbeing goals, tourism agendas and an outward projection of a country or region’s values alongside the rhetoric of the creative economy. The innovation economy is also a key aspect of the council’s strategic planning. One of the key themes in the CoM’s 2017–21 strategic vision is to be known as ‘a knowledge city,’ and a ‘prosperous city’ that is well regarded in terms of highly skilled and talented workforces, and businesses that produce cultures of innovation and a city that is a destination of choice for visiting, living and studying in, with national and international connections.⁹ Another key theme of the CoM is its focus on cultural relations, which it strategically articulates through the overt pursuit of being a Creative City. The CoM understands Melbourne as a Creative City that is:

...a place that inspires experimentation, innovation and creativity and fosters leaders of ideas and courage. It supports and values its artists and broader creative community. It will invest in the creativity of people of all backgrounds and ability in all pursuits. Melbourne’s reputation will attract and retain pioneers in the creative arts and innovation sector and enable them to contribute to the city’s prosperity.¹⁰

The CoM’s *Council Plan 2009–2013* (goal number two), its successor *Council Plan 2013–2017* (goal number two) and its most recent plan covering 2017–2021 (goal number

⁹ Aside from being a Creative City, the 2017-21 CoM’s strategic vision is to also be known as ‘a knowledge city,’ and a ‘prosperous city’ that is well regarded in terms of highly skilled and talented workforces, and business that produce cultures of innovation and a city that is a destination of choice for visiting, living and studying with national and international connections. See, ‘Council Plan 2017-21,’ *City of Melbourne*, pp. 28-34.

¹⁰ ‘A Creative City,’ *City of Melbourne 2017-21*, <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/about-council/vision-goals/Pages/creative-city.aspx> [23 Mar 2018].

three), cite being a Creative City as a long-term goal.¹¹ In practice, however, what does being a creative city mean for Melbourne?

The CoM's 2009–2013 plan cites two outcomes that will assist in achieving the creative city goal: '2.1 Having more artistic and creative enterprises in the city [and] 2.2 Recognition of Melbourne as a creative city.'¹² In 2010 and again in 2011, its annual report used a single strategic indicator to measure performance in this area, by simply tallying the number of new artists and arts organisations within the Melbourne municipality.¹³ This solo indicator also remained in place for the CoM's *Annual Report 2012–13*.¹⁴ Interestingly, the council's *Annual Plan and Budget 2012–13* omits the term 'creative city' altogether, but does mention an outcome of having 'more artistic and creative enterprises in the city', which again demonstrates a focus on language within economic terminology.¹⁵ This language very specifically articulates that, at this time, the criteria to be a creative city considered the mere presence and expansion of the industry in terms of *size*.

¹¹ 'Council Plan 2017–21, pp. 28–34.

¹² 'Council Plan 2009–2013,' *City of Melbourne*, http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/AboutCouncil/PlansandPublications/Documents/Council_Plan_2009_2013_updated.pdf, [accessed 20 Jul 2015], p. 34.

¹³ 'Annual Report 2011–12,' *City of Melbourne*, https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/AboutCouncil/PlansandPublications/AnnualReport/Documents/Annual_Report_2011_12.pdf [accessed 20 Jul 2015], p. 29.

¹⁴ 'Annual Report 2012–13,' *City of Melbourne*, https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/AboutCouncil/PlansandPublications/AnnualReport/Documents/Annual_Report_2012_13.pdf [accessed 20 Jul 2015], p. 42.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 30.

The attention to size means that the CoM conceives cultural relations in more conservative terms that are based on a growth model. This adheres to an economic framework which particularly focuses on increasing the amount of cultural relations that are occurring as a result of its cultural policies.¹⁶ An emphasis on scale is further supported by the *Melbourne City Council: Council Plan 2013–17*, which outlined that over the next four years the creative city measurable outcome would remain in essence, but be more specifically articulated, as ‘the size of the creative sector: people employed in the creative industries as a proportion of total employment in the municipality.’¹⁷ It also notes that, over the next four years, progress indicators would include tracking the proportion of:

- people participating in CoM arts and culture activities for the first time;
- survey respondents who agree Melbourne is an artistic and cultural city;
- increases in the number of trees in the Exceptional Tree Register; and
- increases in the number of structures with statutory heritage protection.¹⁸

According to CoM’s 2016–17 Annual Report, these progress indicators were all met and exceeded expectations, except for the addition of new trees to the Exceptional Tree Register.¹⁹ Despite these statistical increases, which by CoM’s own metrics define

¹⁶ This conservatism refers to CoM’s conceptualisation of cultural relations that relies on economics-based methods, which are traditionally geared towards growth, rather than the actual cultural relations between stakeholders being conservative themselves.

¹⁷ ‘Council Plan 2013–17,’ *City of Melbourne*, <http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/AboutCouncil/PlansandPublications/CouncilPlan/Documents/CouncilPlan201317Goal2.pdf> [accessed 21 Jul 2015], p. 20.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ The annual report notes that, ‘[i]n terms of our performance:

- The number of artists looking to work or base themselves in the municipality who sought our support increased significantly by 230 per cent, mainly due to the inclusion of the triennial arts grants applications for 2018–20.

success in this area, the overall size of the creative sector declined slightly, to 7.7 per cent from 7.8 per cent in 2015, despite a 230 per cent increase in artists and creative enterprises seeking CoM support.²⁰ CoM's attention to statistics is significant as it demonstrates how it outlines the terms of success (of being a Creative City) by adhering to the growth model that seeks an increase in the amount of cultural activity as the most important evaluative criteria.

At this point in time, analysis of the numerical metrics from the successive annual reports (and absence of any qualitative criteria) also indicates that the council was *solely* reliant on quantifiable data to evaluate its achievement of being a creative city. Although a convenient form of measurement, I note its strategic plans lack qualitative feedback into the quality and delivery of its programs. This is despite CoM consistently hosting an eclectic array of cultural events. From 2011–2018, for example, a small sample of these includes the *Community Cultural Fair* (2012–13), *Intergenerational Music Playgroup* (2014–15), *Spring Fling Street Festival* (2015–16), *Docklands Harvest Festival* (2016–17), and the *Malaysia Street Festival* (2017–18). CoM also hosts a number of ongoing cultural initiatives. With regards to the arts and creative practice, this includes offerings such as:

- More than 51 per cent of all surveyed participants in arts and cultural programs reported engaging in our programs for the first time – notably up from last year.
- 90 per cent of respondents said Melbourne is an artistic and cultural city – an increase from last year.
- Due to the approval of Amendment C207 – The Arden Macaulay Heritage Review 2012 – a total of 47 properties and structures were added to the Heritage Register, representing a 0.7 per cent increase on last year. No trees were added to the Exceptional Tree Register.'

'Annual Report 2016–17,' *City of Melbourne*,
<https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/sitecollectiondocuments/annual-report-2016-17.pdf> [accessed 19 Mar 2018], p. 7.

²⁰ This increase was attributed to the inclusion of triennial arts grants applications for 2018–20. Minus this contribution, the number of artists and creative enterprises seeking support rose by 32.53 per cent. Ibid., p. 43.

Dance Massive, Culture LAB, Artplay, 1st Friday Dance Club, Festival of Live Art, Melbourne Indigenous Arts Festival, Melbourne International Comedy Festival, Melbourne International Film Festival, Melbourne Festival, White Night, Melbourne Music Week, as well as free arts exhibitions at the City Gallery.²¹ While they are promoted by the council as important events, their actual execution and the experience are not a component of the CoM's formal evaluation of its annual performance. Therefore, despite the diverse array of cultural and arts offerings within the city, the attention to sheer size or the numbers surrounding participation reflects how the emphasis upon quantitative measurement can restrict cultural policy. As Belfiore notes, there are problems considering the arts' socio-economic impacts because the issue is rooted '...in the need to instrumentally comply with public audit practices to garner legitimacy for demands over the public purse.'²²

It should be noted that in CoM's 2017–2021 Council Plan, the predominantly quantitative understanding of the creative city partially evolves. Compared to previous years, this plan elaborates in more detail the benefits of being a creative city, including a stronger articulation of being a society that is innovative, diverse, secure and therefore contributing to the city's overall prosperity.²³ An emphasis upon being unique is also expressed, with creativity articulated as the shared language with which to connect to

²¹ In fact, CoM's cultural programming is so extensive that the city is frequently referred to as the 'cultural capital of Australia.' See 'Melbourne' *World Cities Culture Forum*, <http://www.worldcitiescultureforum.com/cities/melbourne> [accessed 19 Apr 2019]. For details of these events, please refer to 'What's On,' *City of Melbourne*, <https://whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au> [accessed 19 Apr 2019].

²² Belfiore, 'Impact', 'Value' and 'Bad Economics', p. 96.

²³ 'Council Plan 2017-21,' *City of Melbourne*, p. 24.

others and participate in conversation. The CoM sees itself realising these goals through the provision of infrastructure to support the creative sector and to enable artists to make their contributions. Despite this rhetoric, however, success in this area is still restricted to a numerical description of the sector. Four CoM indicators demonstrate this as they count the number of artists, creative spaces, co-working spaces and people who participate in arts and cultural events sponsored by CoM.²⁴ The inclusion of a tally of co-working/incubator spaces was new to the 2017–20 plan. In Melbourne, the attention to scale shows that merely measuring the size and growth of the cultural sector implies that ‘bigger is better,’ yet, as discussed in chapter two with respect to cultural diplomacy, the size or growth of a network is less informative than an examination of how, where and what it consists of and whom interactions occur between. Therefore, the activities such as film festivals, food and wine events, architecture open days, family events and street festivals celebrating the various migrant cultures that make up the city have their value reduced in CoM’s reporting, that focuses only on quantitative evaluation. However, as Belfiore, Meyrick, and Crossick and Kaszynska have noted, value is not only that of measurable, quantitative impact as it lies in people’s (qualitative) experience of a range of cultural interactions.

²⁴ Similar to previous years, the indicators relate to the size of the sector. They are:

- The number of creative spaces made available for artists by the City of Melbourne.
- The number of co-working and incubator spaces for creative industry practitioners provided by the City of Melbourne.
- The number of artists supported by the City of Melbourne.
- The number of people who participate in selected arts and cultural events sponsored by the City of Melbourne.

‘A Creative City,’ *City of Melbourne 2017–21*.

Beyond the adherence to a managerialist and economistic style of performance reporting, there are potential indications as to why the CoM structures the evaluation of its cultural programming in this manner. This is related to *Future Melbourne (FM)*, the city's long-term plan until 2020, which was refreshed in 2016 to reach 2026. FM, as a longer-term plan developed in consultation with community leaders and the public, informs the CoM's strategic overview including the aforementioned 2009–2013, 2013–17 and 2017–21 plans. Like the council plans, the reference to the creative economy is primarily through the creative city goal and it also emphasises the important role that creative practice and culture has in defining the future of Melbourne.²⁵ There is even a priority area dedicated to the consideration of the value of creative practice and the city, referred to as '3.2: Valu[ing] the Creative Community.'²⁶ As the following discussion will show, these priorities in FM became the basis of CoM's annual reporting requirements. It also raises the question of *how* these priorities translated into practice.

Originally in FM, there were nineteen indicators across four areas identified as contributing to a creative city. Only four were developed, and only one made it into the CoM's 2012–13 annual report and operated as a measurable strategic indicator.²⁷ This

²⁵ It notes that investing in the creativity of people is vital to ensure that 'Melbourne's reputation will attract and retain pioneers in the creative arts and innovation, and enable them to contribute to the city's prosperity.' 'Goal 3: A Creative City,' *Future Melbourne 2026*, <https://participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/future/goal-3-creative-city> [accessed 19 Apr 2019].

²⁶ Ibid. N.B. the four priority areas are discussed below.

²⁷ *Future Melbourne* lists its goals to be a creative city as:

1. Creative risk-taking
2. Vibrant, creative community
3. Celebrating diversity
4. Prosperity through creativity

'Future Melbourne Plan,' *S2G5Creative*,

<http://www.futuremelbourne.com.au/wiki/view/FMPlan/S2G5Creative> [accessed 16 Feb 2012].

indicator was 'The number of new artist/arts organisations located within the municipality linked to the City of Melbourne's Housing of the Arts Strategy'.²⁸ This single indicator that links FM and CoM council plans remained similar up to 2016–17, which the annual report for that financial year expresses as '[t]he size of the creative sector: people employed in the creative industries as a proportion of total employment in the municipality'.²⁹ Despite being one of six key goals that the CoM identifies as reflecting community aspirations and part of CoM's mission, actually becoming a creative city was only pursued (in accountability terms) via a very narrow metric. By way of comparison, each of the other five goals were measured by at least four strategic indicators, meaning that creativity is proportionately underrepresented at the reporting level. This disproportion might indicate an over-emphasis, perhaps idealistic focus on becoming a creative city in the first instance, or a lack of vocabulary to accurately measure such a goal or translate 'creativity' into practice. Overall, in this example, the disproportionate representation of creativity presents a disconnect between the theory and practice of the creative economy model at this moment in time.

In FM 2026 (published in 2016), this approach was superseded and replaced by nine key goals that measure the success of the city (up from six in the 2020 version). Being a creative city is cited as goal number three and FM 2026 articulates four priorities for the CoM to realise, including: '3.1: Foster creativity; 3.2: Value the creative community; 3.3:

²⁸ 'Annual Report 2012–13,' *City of Melbourne*, p. 42.

²⁹ 'Annual Report 2016–17,' *City of Melbourne*, p. 41.

Celebrate creative diversity; and 3.4: Prosper by investing.³⁰ The disconnect between theory and practice of creative economy rhetoric is addressed in the CoM 2017–21 plan, as it references FM 2026 priorities in its planning documentation. These references note how the proposed activities of the council correlate with the aims of FM.³¹ The table below provides an overview

WE WILL PROVIDE	RELATED FM 2026 PRIORITIES
Resources for artists to develop new ideas.	3.2 Value the creative community
Opportunities for the public to experience and participate in art.*	3.1 Foster creativity 3.3 Celebrate creative diversity
Public and purpose-built spaces for community arts and performing arts.*	3.2 Value the creative community
A completed plan for the renewal of the North Melbourne performing arts precinct.	3.2 Value the creative community
Co-working and incubator spaces for creative industry practitioners.	3.4 Prosper by investing in creativity

Figure 5: Melbourne City Council, Council Plan 2017–21, p. 26.

Despite this synergy between CoM and the FM plans, CoM still retains its four quantitative metrics that measure its accountability in being a creative city in terms of the number of artists, creative/co-working spaces and people who participate in CoM-sponsored arts and cultural events.³² Taking this all into account, across the strategic

³⁰ 'Future Melbourne 2026,' *City of Melbourne*, https://participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/application/files/6814/7027/1508/Future_Melbourne_2026_Plan.pdf [accessed 23 Mar 2018], p. 13.

³¹ 'Council Plan 2017–21,' *City of Melbourne*, p. 26.

³² 'A Creative City,' *City of Melbourne 2017–21*, p. 26.

plans and FM, CoM clearly projects that on an ongoing basis, the value of the Creative City remains linked to the amount of arts and cultural activity, where size defines value.

When the FM priorities come to the point of articulation in a clear framework and/or arrive at the implementation stage, they either do not feature or very marginally make it into CoM planning documents. The overall vision of creativity in FM is largely neglected in CoM's overall strategic plans for 2009–13 and 2013–17, suggesting that while the creative economy may have been a buzzword of the times, it was not yet at the stage of practically redefining a post-industrial economic model.³³ However, while FM's vision may struggle to be tangibly realised in CoM's planning documents, its longer-term outlook impacts the CoM strategic planning process on an ongoing basis. It adds a layer of complexity through its stipulation of a series of priorities for CoM to address annually through to 2026, which restricts how CoM can pursue its Creative City goal. The issue arises, therefore, that should the impetus exist to evolve CoM's annual reporting in the area of cultural evaluation to move away from the narrow, economic metrics discussed above, there would need to be some sort of flow-on effect to the role that FM plays in this process. As it stands, CoM is yet to radically depart from the scale and size-based parameters established in FM. This reality has important ramifications for the discourse of cultural value.

The Commensal Value of Size: Culture in the City of Melbourne and Future Melbourne

³³ Atkinson and Easthope note that around the same time in Brisbane, Australia, there was also interest in the rhetoric of the creative economy, yet a similar disconnect in realising it within a city's strategic planning. See Atkinson & Easthope, *Consequences of the Creative Class*, p. 68.

What these three, consecutive council plans and FM plans demonstrate is a reliance upon key performance indicators that are output-focused in terms of size and reach. In these examples, there is an implicit assumption that values 'more' arts and culture over quality or efficacy. While this may be indicative of a lack of resources or inclination to conduct in-depth assessments into the broader value of cultural expression within a municipal area, it also demonstrates the very essence of Belfiore's proposition that the terms of debate are exceedingly narrow when it comes to properly ascertaining what cultural value involves today. This point is consistent with the broader argument within this thesis: that cultural value is limited when stakeholders neglect a variety of potentially valuable and alternative viewpoints surrounding its operation (such as a consideration of aesthetics). In the case of CoM in particular, the following section discusses the limits of a commensal (+/0) approach to the valuation of culture, and then considers the interrelation with political dimensions of cultural value through CoM's cosmopolitan construction of place and inwardly focused soft power.

Although the discussion of CoM has focused on the limitations in the way it values 'its' cultural output, some of the vocabulary surrounding the theme of the creative economy evolved between 2009 and the present day. This indicates that, at a bureaucratic level at least, there is some ongoing attention to the conception of the creative economy. While earlier iterations of the creative city exclusively focused on the amount of 'artistic and creative enterprises' in the city, the 2017–21 Council Plan refers to these activities as 'arts and cultural events,' a slight shift away from the commercial implications of the term enterprise. However, despite the CoM's 2017–21 Council Plan acknowledging that

culture and the arts contribute to the intrinsic nature of humanity, which in turn gives Melbourne its strong identity in terms of liveability, its indicators of success in this area are still based on numbers (of arts participation and artistic output).³⁴ This indicates that quantity is again positioned as more valuable than quality. Significantly, this means the CoM only holds itself *publicly* accountable in terms of a quantitative scale. Thus, despite an updated and more nuanced preamble to CoM's strategic planning in the area of cultural policy, not much is actually evolving in terms of how it practically pursued a creative-economy based, Creative City objective. Again, the creative economy model appears weaker in terms of meeting the challenges of measuring its own success. It has a reliance on quantifiable methods that concentrate predominantly on the volume or sheer output to capture the achievements of the arts and the creative city. The strategic indicators in the CoM's Annual Reports highlight this, as they merely count the number of artists and organisations in order to define the municipality as a creative city.

Secondly, and perhaps more concerning, is that it lacks reflection on the effects of the objectives it has set for itself. That is to say that there was not a clear articulation in earlier documentation of *why* the value of making (Melbourne) a place of 'experimentation, innovation and creativity' is a worthwhile endeavour.³⁵ This, as noted, improved in the 2017–21 Council Plan. Perhaps this is why the sole strategic indicator is so bland. Overall, however, it supports a conception that in Melbourne, despite more

³⁴ 'Council Plan 2017–21,' *City of Melbourne*, p. 24.

³⁵ 'Melbourne Arts Strategy Fact Sheet 2014–17,' *City of Melbourne*, https://participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/application/files/5214/1215/0139/Arts_Strategy_2014-17_FACTSHEET.pdf [accessed 04 Feb 2018], p. 1.

academic interest in these topics, there is a lack of creativity surrounding creativity.³⁶ Elsewhere in council documentation, such as CoM's *Arts Strategy 2010–13*, a better job is done of articulating the council's role in this area through the provision of commentary that links artistic and cultural actions with contributions that have been made to the city, and it describes how CoM objectives relate to the achievements that are produced. However, the CoM's annual reports' strategic indicators did not continue this emphasis on cultural 'action' and consequent attention to benefits for the city, despite the annual occurrence of CoM arts initiatives reviews. This supports Atkinson and Easthope's observation that qualitative discussions concerning the contributions of arts and culture are largely contained within the arena of the arts. This observation appears to explain why the value of culture is reduced to economistic parameters in CoM reporting, as it is not common practice to incorporate indicators that are designed to capture qualitative information. The reporting structure relation between the government and the arts is commensal (+/0) in the sense that the government reports positive outcomes in terms of increasing the size of the cultural industries, but the sector itself (actual artistic content) is less relevant in these parameters. The value of culture, therefore, is not fully realised in CoM's evaluation systems.

This rhetoric of indifference to the arts is also evident through instances such as a state government official's comments that the arts are too often considered as:

³⁶ Atkinson, Rowland & Easthope, Hazel, (2009) 'Consequences of the Creative Class: the pursuit of creative strategies in Australia's cities,' *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, Vol. 33, no. 1, March, p. 69.

the 'airy-fairy stuff', like let them do this and let them do that. We'll do some public art and that'll make the place nice as opposed to ...how do you facilitate that critical mass of people and ideas so that will create artistic projects, *that* sort of thing is not necessarily catered for.³⁷

This is not to say that the relationship of the arts between the creative economy and economic growth is not multifaceted and complicated, even when using symbiotic terminology, and there is still an overarching consensus that the arts have an important role in growth as this case study has described. Yet the existence of an organisational hierarchy in terms of the official articulation and measurement of cultural value is evident, and it is skewed toward the government's perspective, while the arts sector is less present and therefore not visibly valued in this relationship. So, while this is not a zero-sum (antagonistic) situation, nor is it a win-win (mutualistic) scenario in terms of collaborative relations. Not everyone's interests overlap, as the rhetoric of the creative economy would have us believe. This is a realisation that:

ideas about the importance of 'creativity' are strongly embedded in ideas of economic development and advantage across Australia's eastern seaboard ... these 'strategies' and policies are unevenly expressed, are frequently ad hoc and often rely on the actions of charismatic individuals.³⁸

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 75.

Perhaps the commensal (+/0) asymmetry of value in this context is ideologically determined where the creative economy largely confines the arts to an economic value/social value binary, privileging the first and cleverly gearing both toward the accumulation of profit and economic utility as the absolute gain. The commensal importance of economic growth also means a relegation of the social value (of the arts) in normative public discourse. For example, in 2017–18 CoM focuses on cultural participation through the means of an indicator which showed that 4,836,825 people attended CoM-sponsored cultural events in 2017–18. This number, however, sheds little light on the social (positive, negative or ambivalent) experiences of the attendees across a broad array of Melbourne’s cultural events including Moomba, Melbourne Town Hall concerts and Melbourne Fashion Week.³⁹ While the annual report asserts that people’s participation in cultural life is linked to wellbeing because it provides authentic experiences, the actual cultural relations in question are not part of this dialogue.⁴⁰ The attention to the ‘reach’ of culture, therefore, echoes the aims of much public and cultural diplomacy policy that curates events to achieve outcomes on behalf of the nation. In terms of CoM, its position echoes the longer-term national approach to cultural value which, in Australia, was succinctly summarised in 2013 by then Minister for the Arts Simon Crean’s emphasis upon the monetary benefits, in anticipation of the release of a national cultural policy for Australia:

[i]n a global economy the competitive advantage is going to go to the creative societies and anything we can do to invest better in that which underpins

³⁹ ‘Annual Report 2017–2018,’ *City of Melbourne*, p. 55.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

creativity I think is going to have an economic, not *just* a social spin-off.⁴¹

[Emphasis added]

Following a change in Australian government in 2013, the next Minister for the Arts George Brandis echoed similar sentiments in his opening address, when he noted:

For a modern economy, creativity is no longer something that is *nice* to have – it is essential to our continued prosperity. For these reasons the creative industries are clearly an area the Government will continue to support.⁴² [emphasis added]

Three years later, in 2016, then-federal Arts Minister Mitch Fifield reconfirmed the government's commitment to align the arts with the advancement of Australia society, when he noted that:

the arts are the beating heart of an important part of the Australian economy, the creative economy and creative industries...[they should be brought] to the centre of our innovation agenda.⁴³

⁴¹ 'National Cultural Policy will Drive Economy: says Simon Crean,' *The Australian*, AAP Australian National News Wire, 23 Jan 2013, <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/arts/cultural-policy-will-drive-economy-says-simon-crean/story-e6frg8n6-1226559886678?sv=99c005ed5a44b19e5ef7ae31dd6db1bf> [accessed 04 Mar 2014].

⁴² 'A Practical Look at Copyright Reform Forum,' *Australian Government Attorney-General's Department*, Australian Digital Alliance Fair Use for the Future Opening Address, 14 Feb 2014, <http://www.attorneygeneral.gov.au/Speeches/Pages/2014/14February2014-openingoftheAustralianDigitalAllianceForum.aspx> [accessed Aug 10 2015].

⁴³ 'National Arts Election Debate: Transcript,' *ArtSpeak!* 08 Jun 2016, <http://artspeak.net.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/National-Arts-Election-Debate-%E2%80%93-2016.pdf> [accessed 23 Mar 2018], 16–17 min mark.

These descriptions by various head arts representatives in the Australian government illustrate the incomplete perception of the creative and creativity, in their use of soft terminology such as ‘nice’ and ‘socially beneficial’ as the less important benefit of arts in comparison to the (more important) economic outcomes of creative practice. This is the context in which CoM’s Creative City was designed. It also informs the continued trajectory in which the various levels of government articulate the economic value of culture (even through the creative economy ‘lens’) as the most beneficial outcome of arts and cultural activity. By accepting that this approach to creativity at the policy level is a commensal (+/0) perspective, it helps to understand the creative economy as a framework that not only promotes an economistic consideration of culture, but one that also has the potential to mould public opinion as it serves up selected cultural events and performances that are carefully curated for specific audiences and are orientated towards market logic or at least geared towards maximal public consumption.⁴⁴

Furthermore, the notion of moulding public opinion through the consumption of selective cultural programming in the creative economy model has a direct link to the political dimension of value, indicating there are many other outcomes and interrelations of cultural value that are relevant to the creative economy discussion. In the case of CoM, while an economistic perspective is central to its definition of a creative city, its desire for inclusion within a global network of liveable cities directly engages with the soft-power ethos that underpins Australian cultural diplomacy activity.

⁴⁴ As discussed earlier in the chapter, maximal public consumption (attendance) and amount of art being produced are key themes of CoM’s Creative City strategy, alongside the size of the creative sector.

However, what is different about the CoM's politicisation of culture is its emphasis and cultivation of a local, place-based construction of identity. Melbourne's 'Melbourneness' not only resides in its unique assets and lifestyle (infrastructure, food, culture etc.) compared to other cities around the world, but also is geographically specific to its concrete location as the capital city of Victoria. The attention to the local as a source of soft power represents a reversal of the flows of cultural diplomacy which are typically outwardly focused. As a creative city, the articulation of Melbourne's council strategies are in terms of generating *incoming* attention that increases tourism, attendance at sports and arts events and encouraging investment within the city. Accordingly, the people then visiting Melbourne experience the city firsthand (if it is a positive experience), enhance Melbourne's global standing and soft power in a more *outwardly* focused manner. Here a mutualistic (+/+) dimension of cultural value is realised in Melbourne as the domestic benefit of tourism, and international increase in reputation, characterises the positive relations amongst Melbourne, people (tourists) and the world. Cultural diplomacy, however, is traditional outwardly focused as it primarily occurs offshore in order to generate goodwill or enhance a nation's reputation, which then flows back into the Australian economy or assists with achieving soft-power objectives.

The CoM, or the creative city narrative more broadly, demonstrates how cultural value also contains a local (or inwardly focused) context. In terms of enhancing the understanding of the value of culture, therefore, looking to relations in terms of their direction of 'flow' is a way to more meaningfully calibrate the creative economy to cater

to interests that are beyond an economic understanding of the arts/culture. For the CoM, it provides an interesting, yet largely unexamined aspect of its cultural activities and represents an opportunity for it to potentially garner further national support for its cultural activities, should it articulate its cultural policy in this way. Therefore, even though it is a city-based council, I argue that the CoM contributes to national policy objectives. It does so, however, in contrast to much official cultural diplomacy activity as CoM leverages the value of the culture via a local, place-based construction of cultural identity which is then 'exported' to the world.⁴⁵ This enhances its soft power and ultimately encourages more people to invest (physically and financially) in Melbourne.

This is almost the inverse of how cultural diplomacy operates at a federal level in Australia, which largely consists of the sponsorship of Australian cultural events and assets to occur around the world, making it outwardly focused. Despite this link, the contributions such as those of the CoM, are not typically acknowledged in the more restricted, traditional pursuit of culturally based strategies in International Relations, such as cultural diplomacy. This example illustrates how cultural value is under-interrogated in terms of benefit to the nation when it occurs away from the official diplomatic stage. Given that Melbourne was also considered by the Economist

⁴⁵ Traditionally, cultural diplomacy is pursued in Australia via activities that occur *outside* of Australia and which aim to foster mutual understanding between stakeholders (Australian stakeholders and foreign stakeholders). Currently, DFAT's Public Diplomacy Strategy describes Australia's *major* cultural diplomacy programs (outlined in chapter five) as consisting of the focus-country program, *Australia Now*, the *Australian Cultural Diplomacy Grants Program*, as well as film and visual arts programs (promoting Australian content overseas). The strategy also defines cultural diplomacy as strengthening Australia's reputation as a 'sophisticated and creative nation...[t]hrough funding arts and cultural activities in priority countries in regions.' 'Public Diplomacy Strategy 2014–2016,' DFAT, p. 5.

Intelligence Unit (EIU) as the World's Most Liveable City according to its global liveability ranking for seven consecutive years (2011–2017), it is logical that the CoM's international standing would offer much to conversations surrounding Australia's broader public and cultural diplomacy objectives.⁴⁶

However, DFAT's recent 2017–18 annual report makes a specific mention of Victoria's creative economy prowess with regard to Australian soft power.⁴⁷ This indicates that links are made between traditionally domestic activities in (regions of) Australia and Australia's international image, and that DFAT is turning towards a more open understanding of how to cultivate the value of Australia's culture. The creative economy's intersection with the political dimension is, therefore, an important synergy for future scholarship to consider, which Acuto also explores in his work on global cities, global affairs and urban studies. He notes that global cities, whose status is maintained through a connectedness to the global, strategically hinge globalisation and thus

⁴⁶ 'Global Liveability Report: 2017,' *The Economist Intelligence Unit*, www.eiu.com [accessed 06 Apr 2018]. Other liveability indexes, such as Monocle magazine's *Quality of Life Survey*, also consistently rank Melbourne highly: #4 in 2015; #3 2014; #2 in 2013; and #6 in 2012.

See 'Quality of Life Survey 2015,' *Monocle*, <https://monocle.com/film/affairs/the-monocle-quality-of-life-survey-2015/>

'Quality of Life Survey 2014,' *Monocle*, <https://monocle.com/film/affairs/quality-of-life-survey-2014/>

'Quality of Life Survey 2013,' *Monocle*, <https://monocle.com/film/affairs/quality-of-life-survey-2013/>

'Quality of Life Survey 2012,' *Monocle*, <https://monocle.com/film/affairs/quality-of-life-survey-2012/> [accessed 06 Apr 2018].

⁴⁷ The report notes that '[i]n 2017–18 the department's Victoria state office showcased the state's creative economy to consular representatives from 39 countries through five programs highlighting design, architecture, visual arts, liveability, performing arts, screen and digital games. The tours reinforced Australia's reputation as a culturally rich and diverse society and helped boost collaboration between the institutions visited and countries represented.' From '2017–18 Annual Report,' *Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade*, <https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/corporate/annual-reports/Documents/dfat-annual-report-2017-18.pdf> [accessed 20 Jan 2019], p. 72.

should be tackled beyond the economicism that fuels most of the world city literature, with a focus on how these cities are fundamental elements of the global scenario...it is the beginning of a new practice of urban and international affairs.'⁴⁸

Ultimately, CoM's emphasis upon the production of cultural data within a creative city context is a limited means to articulate cultural value. While its approach is a common means to justify the place (funding) of culture on a municipal agenda, it overlooks that the framework of the market (the cultural economy) is only one aspect of value. This is also indicative of the bureaucratic reporting context in which 'evaluation' must occur. Thus, when one is required to measure, is it possible to measure the 'less measurable' in a way that complements existing reporting frameworks? The next section outlines the Integrated Reporting Process as a means to address the challenges that the CoM would need to address to more meaningfully narrate cultural value within its current reporting parameters.

⁴⁸ Furthermore, Acuto expresses that global cities can be examined in terms of their ability to network globally, but also in terms of their '...capacity to shape what humanity looks like in the 21st century.' In CoM's case, this would also indicate the need to evolve the economic approach to its arts and cultural sector and practitioners at the policy level in order to contemplate the more holistic 'effects' of cultural practice in the city. Acuto, Michele, (2011) "Finding the Global City: An Analytical Journey through the 'Invisible College,'" *Urban Studies*, Vol. 48, no. 14, p. 2970.

Expressing Value Beyond Economics: Symbiosis and The Integrated Reporting Process

CoM's Creative City goal expresses a very specific type of economic cultural value, one that sees

culture not as [an] elusive creative substance with distant spill-over effects for the economy, but as a matter firmly located in the administrative and political interactions by which it is described, judged and communicated by different stakeholders.⁴⁹

Meyrick, Barnett and Phiddian call attention to this distinction in order to highlight how, 'governmentalized reporting is a social process with social meaning,'⁵⁰ in which culture's value may be measured by numerical measurement, but is situated in a broader narrative that that is defensible in terms of public accountability. This wider chain of political and administrative interactions are what Meyrick et al. describe as the conferral of value on a particular cultural activity, which involves multi-stakeholder dialogue.⁵¹ In CoM, this dialogue is primarily among the council, cultural organisations and artists that provide funding, infrastructure and artistic content, respectively, in order for cultural activity to occur. However, as my analysis above has demonstrated, it skews the conferral of value towards a governmental element which seemingly neglects the experiences of these events and aesthetic contributions of cultural activities themselves. A more mutualistic (+/+) outcome in this example would involve input from cultural

⁴⁹ Meyrick, Julian, Barnett, Tully & Phiddian, Robert, (2018) 'The Conferral of Value: the role of reporting processes in the assessment of culture,' *Media International Australia*, DOI:10.1177/1329878X18798704, [accessed 03 Jan 2019], p. 3.

⁵⁰ Meyrick et al., *The Conferral of Value: the role of reporting processes in the assessment of culture*, p. 3.

⁵¹ Ibid.

institutions and artists themselves into the development of the Creative City ethos in terms of accountabilities and measurement of value that Melbourne's cultural activity supplies to publics and the arts and cultural sectors. Presently, if we were to consider the visibility or agency of artists in relation to the reporting of value in CoM and symbiosis, they can be considered in a parasitic (+/-) or commensal (+/0) manner at best, as the CoM's discussion of the value of arts and culture is skewed towards the interests of the city, with artists and cultural practitioners regarded in merely numerical form. This not to say that the council has this opinion of its creative practitioners, but that its formal articulation of value from a reporting perspective lacks the ability to incorporate their presence and input in a qualitative or experiential capacity. One way of doing this is to evolve the reporting processes that assess culture. By overlooking the interactions between stakeholders such as artists, audiences and the environments and infrastructure in which cultural activity occurs in reporting documentation, the conferral of value is narrow and leaves little space for the discussion of 'outcomes' that occur outside a creative economy frame. Therefore, how might interactions be better included in the reporting process, if indeed 'reporting' is to remain the primary means in which municipality bodies such as the CoM articulate cultural value?

Some answers to this question may be found within Meyrick et al.'s research project at Flinders University in South Australia, which pays specific attention to the reporting process in the study of the value of culture. Called Laboratory Adelaide, researchers from creative arts, literary and digital studies backgrounds, sought to find more ways to recognise forms of cultural value that are flexible and responsive and reflective of the

dynamic responses that cultural practitioners undertake themselves.⁵² Meyrick et al. discuss the use of Integrated Reporting (IR) as providing a more flexible style of reporting for organisations that

seek[s] to address concerns about breadth of stakeholder consultation, recording of intangible capital, acknowledgement of long-term impact, and the proper integration of quantitative data and qualitative data. [It] aim[s] to produce fairer, more comprehensive and more meaningful communications of value.⁵³

As a means to overcome the emphasis upon impact (or in CoM's case, scale), Meyrick et al. propose that IR's emphasis on six different categories of wealth—financial, manufactured, intellectual, human, social and relationship and natural—should be considered by organisations as inputs in their assessment of value. Once considered, these categories or 'capitals' are turned into outputs, then outcomes and, therefore, are the basis of guidelines to the value-creation process.⁵⁴ Culture, Meyrick et al. argue, applies across all these categories, but they propose for the purposes of better understanding cultural value, the addition of a seventh category of cultural 'capital',⁵⁵ although Barnett and Meyrick do acknowledge that there "is no magic bullet for

⁵² Meyrick et al., *What Matters? Talking Value in Australian Culture*, p. xxx.

⁵³ Meyrick et al., *The Conferral of Value: the role of reporting processes in the assessment of culture*, p. 4.

⁵⁴ Meyrick et al., *What Matters? Talking Value in Australian Culture*, p. 119. IR's attention to credibility emanates from the work of art-historian and accountant, Jane Gleeson-White. Gleeson-White provides a direction of travel in her work on global corporate reporting that encourages communication over one-way broadcasts to shareholders, and consequently, introduces an integrated reporting approach as a means to describe (to financial capital providers) how an organisation creates value over the short, medium and long term. See 'Get to Grips with the Six Capitals' Integrated Reporting, <http://integratedreporting.org/what-the-tool-for-better-reporting/get-to-grips-with-the-six-capitals/> [accessed 03 Jan 2019].

⁵⁵ Meyrick et al., *What Matters? Talking Value in Australian Culture*, p. 120.

'demonstrating' the value of culture."⁵⁶ The outcome of Meyrick et al.'s approach is that more meaningful reporting is developed, which, following the discussion above, the CoM could certainly benefit from. Indeed, if the CoM were to continue reporting in a traditional, largely economic manner, the capitals proposed by IR represent a more responsive means in which to communicate the value of its programs in a more complete way. Furthermore, IR may be deployed in a phased approach, so its principles might be more meaningfully adapted and flexible to suit the needs of CoM.⁵⁷

As IR is not a coercive framework, what is less evident in the process is how the evolution from capitals, to outputs, to outcomes, is safeguarded against the conflation of IR principles into simply 'new' quantitative criteria to assess value, similar to what occurred in the relationship between FM and CoM's strategic plans. It is also important to remember that IR doesn't seek to do away with numbers altogether, but rather, to 'reappraise their effectiveness and meaning in light of wider environmental, social and governance goals.'⁵⁸ However, what might counteract the tendency to gravitate towards quantitatively focused evaluative criteria to capture value and add further nuance to IR, is symbiotic vocabulary. In this instance, cultural symbiosis has the potential to offer IR's seven categories of wealth a 'map' or series of structuring principles to discuss valuable relations in a way that is more narratively driven, which IR promotes. This would be a future area of research that may help bodies such as CoM uncover areas of potential

⁵⁶ Barnett, Tully & Meyrick, Julian, (2017) 'The Value of Culture: A Dilemma in Five Pictures,' *Griffith Review*, no. 55, pp. 184.

⁵⁷ Meyrick et al., *What Matters? Talking Value in Australian Culture*, p. 112–113.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 122.

value that are currently lost, as a symbiotic consideration of interactions could occur across the six capitals proposed in IR. In this sense, a hybrid of symbiosis and Integrated Reporting may eventuate to develop a framework that complements existing governmental reporting requirements, is bespoke to the organisation deploying it, and more comprehensively considers the value of the interactions and relationships that occur throughout the course of an organisation's activities.

Conclusion: A Multitude of Value and Reorientating Cultural Value

This chapter has considered the premise that one of the avenues for pursuing cultural value today by governments is through economics, and is largely manifested through the vocabulary of the creative economy and the impact agenda. My analysis demonstrates, however, that valuing culture in this way contains theoretical inconsistencies, especially since many forms of creativity cannot be quantified and measured according to specific (economic) criteria. In terms of the reporting processes in the assessment of culture, this results in what Meyrick et al. caution against—where the broader conception of value is absent or minimised, where ‘ultimately, what cannot be measured is elided or overlooked.’⁵⁹ Instead, as I and others have suggested, what should be acknowledged is a realisation that economic criteria are only one method of ‘valuing’ cultural and creative expression. However, as my analysis of CoM highlights, economic criteria are often the overarching criteria of evaluation when it comes to measuring cultural policy success. Pinning the concept of value to economic principles

⁵⁹ Meyrick et al., *The Conferral of Value: the role of reporting processes in the assessment of culture*, p. 4.

requires that assessments contain the vocabulary of profit or capital potential, and this also means that measurable outputs are 'necessary' in cultural policy. Yet, relying on economic vocabulary within a managerialist framework ultimately short-changes culture.

This focus echoes the challenge of instrumentalism that plagues current understandings of cultural value in the political domain, where culture and the arts are also definitionally constrained. While utility in the political context is in relation to (soft) power potential, in the economic context, culture's value lies in its ability to generate income, capital or to simply be bigger (in terms of sector size). When analysing examples such as those that involve cultural policy, however, there is an intersection of both political and economic considerations. This is because the roles of cultural initiatives are numerous: to improve or establish trade relations (whether related to the cultural industries or not), project an image of a country as an attractive and desirable place to do business/travel/partner with and to espouse broader values of democracy, stability and diversity within a region.

As seen in my analysis of CoM, which was a study of a particular domestic public policy, there is a parallel emphasis upon harnessing culture to achieve goals that are consistent with political aims—such as a public diplomacy agenda. There is an interaction with the tenets of soft power, witnessed in CoM's desire to be 'seen' as a creative city and mentions of the creative city as promoting security (although secure in what sense is not elaborated upon further). The thematic link between soft power and domestic policy is also evident through how the CoM gears its language towards the enhancement of

Melbourne's ability to shape the preferences of others (to stay/travel/invest there), and to appear attractive through its cultural industries, which are both tenets of soft power. This chapter also considered the overarching theme of expansion via the vehicle of culture, as seen in the consistent use of metrics that count the number of places to conduct creative pursuits and the amount of practising artists. Both political and economic domains, therefore, share the task of enhancing the value of a nation/city through the use of culture, yet, in both instances, value as a concept remains tightly defined.

In this case study, CoM's measurement of its impact as a creative city revealed that cultural and artistic contributions are primarily assessed in terms of their scale. Yet, as I proposed, this does not give further details into the quality or nature of those contributions. In this context, and in chapter five's case studies examining the value of culture with regards to policy and political goals, cultural value is short-changed. This lack of depth confirms the circumstances under which Belfiore and Bulaitis urgently advocate for a better approach to articulate the creation of cultural value.⁶⁰ It also makes Meyrick et al.'s proposal to pursue cultural evaluation more dynamically with different types of 'evidence,'—such as qualitative data, narrative-based reporting and the inclusion of a variety of voices to allow for multi-stakeholder dialogue in their use of IR and perhaps even IR with regard to cultural symbiosis—all the more pertinent.⁶¹

⁶⁰ See Bulaitis, *Measuring Impact in the Humanities* and Belfiore, 'Impact', 'Value' and 'Bad Economics', pp. 95–110.

⁶¹ *The Conferral of Value: the role of reporting processes in the assessment of culture*, p. 4. Also see chapter seven, 'The Reporting of Value,' in Meyrick et al., *What Matters? Talking Value in Australian Culture*.

On a theoretical level, exploring 'less measurable' aspects in cultural evaluation as a means to further cultural value discourse also connects with a series of further provocations surrounding a capitalist/cultural resistance binary. What does it mean for cultural value if, philosophically, it may be impossible to fully 'value' the arts in a way that evidentially represents the perspectives among the various stakeholders that are involved in the generation of cultural activity because, conceptually, 'value' in relation to 'culture' is dynamic and thus never fully knowable as there is no single 'truth' (surrounding cultural value)? Continuing the emphasis on symbiotic relationships and attention to cooperative and exploitative interactions is one way to circumvent this conundrum, as it seeks to better understand the dialogue between culture and value through its consideration of relationships at a given point in a cultural activity, based upon how stakeholders are engaging with each other and their (cultural) environments, rather than the pursuit of positivist evidence and proof.

By conceiving the economistic nature of the CoM policy's engagement with 'the arts' as commensal (+/0), symbiotic language allowed me to highlight the reduced agency that creative practice has in the CoM's Creative City policy. This reduced agency refers to the predominantly quantitative presence of creative practice in the policy. This symbiotic conceptualisation is helpful because it allows us to observe an interdependency between policy and culture that is marked by inequality, where the amount, rather than quality, of cultural practice is valued first and foremost. However, unlike the case of the NPEA, which was harmful in terms of threats to arts funding and the peer-reviewed

grant process, the 'absence' of creative practice in CoM's assessment of its Creative City strategy is not overtly harmful—at this point.

Symbiosis in this case study, therefore, helps to look at the CoM's articulation of its cultural value in a way that encourages the consideration of the dynamics of the relationships amongst stakeholders involved in cultural activity. The attention to relationship dynamics using symbiotic terms redirects our focus to seek the *many* perspectives that are involved in cultural activity, to highlight a less discussed aspect of cultural value: that positive and negative or ambivalent value might be simultaneously present in a relationship between cultural stakeholders. This is also evident in the case of the Creative City strategy, which is beneficial for both Melbourne and artist practitioners in one sense, as it advocates for 'more' arts and cultural events and spaces, but, on the other hand, is less beneficial and more superficial in the sense that it diminishes the actual contributions of creative practice in favour of metrics that are defined by scale. Therefore, symbiosis highlights the multiplicity of cultural value relations by displaying the dynamics of stakeholder relationships, rather than attempting to reconcile the differences between those who comparatively experience more, or less, benefit and harm. This approach contributes to cultural value a more nuanced vocabulary to conceptualise the complexity of relationships where multiple 'outcomes' may exist, whereby degrees of harm and benefit may be both present and 'co-exist' in cultural interactions, and ultimately how cultural value can simultaneously contain both cooperative and exploitative elements, just like symbiotic associations.

The next chapter continues the attention toward the less discussed types of cultural value, in its study of European theatre collective, Rimini Protokoll's, Melbourne performance of *100% City*. I explore the social dimensions of this type of theatre-making as I regard its ability to foster and encourage numerous cultural relationships as a process of aesthetic 'world-making.' I suggest that this example of participatory art not only negotiates cultural knowledges demonstrating various social aspects of cultural value, but also is directly concerned in the production of Australian cultural narratives and, thus, the political dimension of cultural value. Furthermore, it is Rimini Protokoll's attention to the 'local' through local themes, content, relationships and interactions, that also raises important provocations concerning how aesthetics might factor more meaningfully into the discourse of cultural value.

Chapter 7 — The Social Practice of Rimini Protokoll and Mutualistic Cultural Value

The social outcomes of cultural activities vary widely due to factors which, generally speaking, include the level of engagement of participants, whether an activity is structured, more organic, or based in the context of the everyday, the resources involved in a project, and perhaps most important in a governmental and/or bureaucratic sense, how outcomes are realised and reported. To conduct an examination into how culture can provide value beyond socio-cultural indicators that quantitatively measure cultural participation, attendance and access, this chapter examines a specific example of cultural activity in terms of the various types of relations generated from its execution. In doing so, this chapter moves away from the analyses that examine how governments value culture through their policies and reporting processes, to use arts practice (theatre) as a potential model to explore cultural value. The below case study focuses on mutualistic relations as identified through the theatre projects of Rimini Protokoll. It is a case study of how cultural practice and content itself is highly relevant in discussions concerning cultural value. I propose that to enhance the conception of the social in cultural value discourse, an examination of the aesthetic contributions within specific cultural activities is crucial because it helps us better understand the narratives and types of engagement that occur as a result of arts practice. This case study suggests that cultural value discourse ought to include the terms of aesthetic content and its subsequent relationships and connections in the consideration of value.

Rather than the semantics of government policy documents, to focus on arts practice and aesthetic contributions I engage with a creative methodology of participation to demonstrate how arts projects—in this case, European theatre collective Rimini Protokoll's performances of *100% City* in Australia and around the world—can enhance the relationships between people from different demographics and therefore provide value on a grassroots, community and even national level. Rimini Protokoll's *100% City* project was first performed in Berlin in 2008 using 100 local citizens who represented the city's demographics as the 'actors' in the performance. Since then, more than 35 cities have hosted their own location-specific variants of the production overseen by Rimini Protokoll, using local teams.¹ The format of *100% City* remains the same, or very similar, in each local iteration of the performance, and involves three major sections. The largest portion of the performance is the narrative-based section in which the 100 local people individually share their history and a personal anecdote. They then hand over the storytelling process to the next person of the 100 by communicating how they recruited the next person to the *100%* project. Interspersed with these personal histories are other scenes that involve songs, movements and mime including the section which represents what each individual is doing at a certain time each day. The third section consists of a live group vote where yes/no-type questions are asked to the group and people move physically to the side of the stage which best represents their opinion on a certain issue. The performance of *100% Melbourne* was performed on a revolve and included multi-media, live music and an aerial camera view of the revolve which at certain times during the

¹ '100% City: A Statistical Chain Reaction,' *Rimini Protokoll*, <https://www.rimini-protokoll.de/website/en/projects/100-stadt-7-1> [accessed 22 Apr 2019].

performance provided a projected image to the audience of a bird's eye view of the performance space. This chapter considers the symbiotic and social dimensions of the value of culture using the 2012 Melbourne iteration of the project, *100% Melbourne*.

Although participatory arts practice such as *100% Melbourne* is relatively common, it is not well interrogated within the literature about cultural value. The attention to the relationships in operation throughout this case study links the value of culture and participation through the social (and political) dimension. Symbiosis is used to identify these social interactions how these relations can be better articulated in terms of cultural value. This case study also has ramifications for the political dimension of cultural value and its direct association with Rimini Protokoll's creative practice. This aspect of the discussion is based upon themes of the value of culture and cultural relations at a national level, arguing that Rimini Protokoll's facilitation of a format performance, which strengthens the social bond, contributes to the aims of Australian cultural policy *and* cultural diplomacy. I propose that this is identifiable through Rimini Protokoll's aesthetic construction of the 'local' and attention to the configuration of community, which I claim is the facilitation of a process that explores cultural narratives on behalf of a nation. I conclude that the potential value of culture is powerful in this example of Rimini Protokoll's performances, as it compels unlike people to come together to share experiences and meaningfully interact towards a common goal. This act is social and political, and rests upon an understanding of how

people come together, i.e. their relations and relationships, in order to further the discussion concerning cultural value.

Before turning to the detail of the Rimini Protokoll case study, it is worth reflecting on the connection between the political and social dimensions of cultural value. In Australia, the attention to the public's participation in cultural activities that involve a social dimension, such as the arts, and community benefits is evident at various local, state and federal levels.² The DFAT, NPEA and CoM case studies in chapters five and six critically examined the limitations of how culture is currently valued by these institutions or expressed in policy terms, due to an over-reliance on political and economic outcomes. There are, however, connections between these case studies to the artistic practice explored in this chapter, in that they all share a desire to facilitate arts and cultural activity that has an impact on the public. The difference in this chapter is the exploratory nature of how these impacts are realised. Therefore, a key focus of this case study examines how Rimini Protokoll facilitates interactions within publics. This is necessary to more holistically examine the value of culture across different, but interconnected, dimensions.

² For example, The CoM's 2017–2018 Annual Report notes that, 'Melbourne's artistic, cultural and creative life is vital for community wellbeing. It provides a shared language for people of all ages and backgrounds to explore ideas... [CoM] Invest[s] in social and cultural capital by supporting arts and culture.' It then goes on to detail an indicator that contributes to this outcome which is '[t]he number of people who participate in selected arts and cultural events sponsored by the City of Melbourne.' See, 'Annual Report 2017–2018,' *City of Melbourne*, pp. 52 & 55. At a national level, participation in cultural activities is articulated by DFAT as being powerful when it involves a collaborative, social process between people of various nations, such as the *Australia Now* program, 'Collaboration on cultural projects helps build Australia's influence and strengthen our reputation as a culturally rich and diverse society.' '2017–18 Annual Report,' *Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade*, <https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/corporate/annual-reports/Documents/dfat-annual-report-2017-18.pdf> [accessed 20 Jan 2019], p. 70.

The Rimini Protokoll case study, as compared to the case studies involving DFAT, NPEA and CoM, highlights the variability in cultural relations. Indeed, Anheier and Isar remind us that evolving cultural relations within the context of globalisation present both positive aspirations and negative anxieties.³ Understanding that relations may occur upon a spectrum that includes degrees of benefit and harm means that, although cultural activities encourage certain forms of expression at particular times, they may also simultaneously discourage forms of expression for others.⁴ For the pursuit of political cultural value in particular, the tendency to encourage or discourage various types of ‘voices’ indicates the need for the careful curation of content and consideration of the types of messages and branding that are being put forth if done on behalf of the nation in cultural diplomacy programs, or as a part of any national, or even regional, cultural policy. However, combined with the fact that relations between people respond to evolving global and local influences, the fluid state of culture also provides the potential to respond to, or even initiate, change on a people-to-people level through the modification of people’s perceptions of a community, institution or even nation. This is where the public are openly involved with concerns of the state, and where the value of culture can be directly tied to its ability to bring people together in various and new (social) configurations.

³ Anheier, Helmut, & Isar, Yudhishthir R., (eds.) (2010) ‘Cultural Expression, Creativity and Innovation,’ *The Cultures and Globalization Series Vol 3*, SAGE, London, p. 1.

⁴ Discouragement may be in an active sense, or passive. In the case of cultural diplomacy, passive discouragement could be in the form of absence from cultural programming or discussions of cultural identity (that serve the State).

Anyone who is on the front line of the new negotiations not between competing states but between peoples is a citizen diplomat... If power is moving towards individuals – and I’m certain it is – then with power comes responsibility. So we need people to start thinking that they’re also part of the solution now.⁵

Former UK ambassador to Lebanon and scholar, Tom Fletcher, also believes the future of power lies in people and their interactions with others. His belief in the value of the social also means that the new ways that individuals engage with each other (like social media) require careful attention if we are to understand today’s global environment. In this sense, the social dimension of culture, as I discussed in the context of the discourse of participation and the arts in chapter two, also holds much potential value in terms of how it mobilises people in certain types of situations. This potential also adds to the cultural value discourse in terms of politics, especially in areas such as cultural diplomacy, cultural relations and cultural policy. As we saw in chapter five, Australia is one country that is making moves in this direction with an assertion in DFAT’s 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper that it will strive to improve its cultural credentials in a competitive global market,⁶ alongside its commission of a public diplomacy program evaluation report.⁷

⁵ Donaldson, Alasdair, ‘Interview with Tom Fletcher,’ *British Council*, November 2016, <https://www.britishcouncil.org/organisation/policy-insight-research/insight/influence-soft-power/interview-tom-fletcher> [accessed 26 Sep 2018].

⁶ ‘2017 Foreign Policy White Paper,’ *DFAT*, p. 8.

⁷ ‘2016–17 Annual Report,’ *DFAT*, p. 89.

An additional aspect of the Rimini Protokoll case study examines how they stage diplomatic processes by fostering mutual understanding in cross-cultural contexts, and negotiate a number of cultural relationships. I argue, therefore, that their work demonstrates, while simultaneously questions, many of the norms surrounding social values and cohesion that are assumed in governmental policy contexts concerning their publics. To understand more about how artistic projects like this operate, it is worth recalling that in participatory art, a central feature of this genre is a model of collective-collaborative practice which is based on constructing objects or experiences that are immersive or at a minimum, engaging. This is done with the intention of mitigating the artistic experience that is merely consumed, in favour of one that seeks to develop a narrative with long-term and ideally socially positive effects. In practice of course, the reality of spectatorship may derail this intention, which is an issue I consider further below. In the context of cultural value, it is within spectatorship or participation, where a form of double intentionality occurs. This involves the actual physical seeing of an image and what is more broadly depicted.⁸ From a holistic perspective concerning cultural value, this means that the 'simple' arts event of *100% Melbourne* not only entertains, informs and is an individual instance of participation in the global cultural economy, but also is more widely a means to improve a country's reputation (involving, for example, trade relations) and to advance the national interest. This is not unlike the dual purpose of art in the creative economy model, where art is not only a means of creative expression, but also a valuable commodity. This means that both participatory

⁸ Scruton's description of double intentionality, that is generally applied in discussions of aesthetics, might be a means to position questions of aesthetics *alongside* political aims in discussions of cultural diplomacy, rather than privileging the outcomes of the State when it comes to the design of cultural diplomacy programming. Scruton, Roger, (2007) 'In Search of the Aesthetic,' *British Journal of Aesthetics*, Vol. 47, no. 3, July, p. 247.

art and the creative economy model place culture in a position of instrumentality, albeit of different kinds, which I explore below.

Rimini Protokoll's Participatory Art: Dramaturgical Considerations and *100% City* Format

An explicit methodology of participation and engagement with the social dimension is evident in the work of European theatre collective, Rimini Protokoll. Founded at the turn of the millennium, Rimini Protokoll's oeuvre receives worldwide attention. They tour extensively as a part of international theatre festivals and biennales, and present exhibitions, radio plays, films, lectures, and standalone performances and/or events. Also described as a directorial cluster, Rimini Protokoll uses a specific performative mode deemed a 'Theatre of Experts,' which has roots in the documentary, verbatim and reality theatre of the 1990s with emphasis on contemporary societies, the exploration of the everyday on 'stage' (whatever/wherever that may be) and use of 'real' people and situations to inform their work.⁹

Consisting of a core trio of author-directors Helgard Haug, Daniel Wetzl and Stefan Kaegi, Rimini Protokoll's emphasis upon 'everyday experts' as opposed to professional performers directly harnesses the rhetoric of participation, as they frequently represent and/or incorporate those who are 'insufficiently known within the public realm,' in their works.¹⁰ These may include those considered as migratory subjects such as: immigrant

⁹ Mumford, Meg, (2013) 'Rimini Protokoll's Reality Theatre and Intercultural Encounter: Towards an Ethical Art of Partial Proximity,' *Contemporary Theatre Review*, Vol. 23, no. 2, p. 153.

¹⁰ Ibid.

workers, call-centre employees, resettled peoples, third culture children, long-distance truck drivers and people who are polycultural or use multiple cultures within their everyday life.¹¹ Among an extensive oeuvre, Rimini Protokoll productions including *100% City* (2008), *Call Cutta in a Box: An Intercontinental Phone Play* (2008), *Cargo Asia: A Truck Ride through Japan, Singapore, Shanghai* (2009), *Cargo Sofia-X* (2008), *Remote X (Kaegi)* (2013), *Home Visit Europe* (2015), *State 1–4* (2016) and *Dos and Don'ts* (2018) present situations where non-professional performers or audience members themselves are essential to the piece: whether they are the actors, spectators or a combination of both that enable the 'performance' to occur. Rimini Protokoll explain that, for each of their projects, they begin with a concrete situation in a specific place that is then developed through an intense exploratory process:

[We] get rid of this whole process of actors performing a text so that people in the audience can relate to it – let's put the people from the audience on stage and work with them on this connection: what do you have to do with [a particular situation/topic]?¹²

Mumford argues that this foundation, combined with a focus on situations and people with complex fluid identities and unique performance sites, earns Rimini Protokoll a privileged status as a global nomad.¹³ This is also reflected in the operating structure of

¹¹ Ibid., p. 154.

¹² Boenisch, Peter M., (2008) "Other People Live: Rimini Protokoll and their 'Theatre of Experts,'" *Contemporary Theatre Review*, Vol. 18, no. 1, p. 109.

¹³ Mumford presents this privilege as the ability to fluidly move across and within national borders as collectors of stories, bodies and performance sites. Mumford, *Rimini Protokoll's Reality Theatre and Intercultural Encounter*, p. 154.

the collective that originally had no home/base theatre or office.¹⁴ The trio themselves live across Germany, Greece and Switzerland. Therefore, across the onstage (discussed below) and off, a fundamental aspect to the work of Rimini Protokoll is its deliberate habitation within transience—of locale, participation and subject matter. Rimini performance events, for example, might occur in a moving vehicle, a private living room, a walking tour or in a more traditional theatre. Audiences might view a performance as a more passive spectator, or ‘direct’ the show through their choice and work as a group or individuals to progress the piece. Rimini Protokoll’s aesthetic includes engaging with countries all around the world and the experiences of numerous peoples ranging from politicians to call centre operators. Their work consistently interrogates paradoxes, whether it be the literal transportation of an entire audience in *Cargo Asia*, or the individual, and the intersecting narratives and adventures found in *Situation Rooms* (2013).¹⁵

The *100% City* project has continued to tour since its inception in 2008. The show’s casting structure requires 100 participants to become involved through a 24-hour time frame and begins with the selection of a single individual. Each participant is recruited in a chain-like reaction as prescribed by census data specific to that city’s demographic

¹⁴ As of 2008. See Boenisch, *Other People Live: Rimini Protokoll and their ‘Theatre of Experts,’* p. 107. Nowadays, the Hebbel am Ufer theatre in Berlin frequently hosts Rimini Protokoll.

¹⁵ In *Situation Rooms*, audience members are assigned to experience, ‘...the personal narratives of the ‘inhabitants’, [performers] [and as] the images start to move... the audience follows the individual trails of the cameras they have been given. They start to inhabit the building, while following what they see and hear on their equipment. The audience does not sit opposite the piece to watch and judge it from the outside; instead, the spectators ensnare themselves in a network of incidents, slipping into the perspectives of the protagonists, whose traces are followed by other spectators.’ See, ‘*Situation Rooms*,’ *Rimini Protokoll*, http://www.rimini-protokoll.de/website/en/project_6009.html [accessed 16 April 2015].

makeup.¹⁶ In Melbourne, each of the 100 individuals represented approximately 41,000 Melburnians or 1 per cent of Melbourne's population in a production that presents us with a performative pie chart. The dramaturgy of participation employed in *100% City* consists of 'experts' who are collected by Rimini Protokoll to engage in extensive conversations, interviews and meetings as the basis of their casting process. Once a group is gathered, the development of performance material occurs based on several key dramaturgical decisions that are applied in various ways across different projects. These decisions include drawing upon the context of the site where the piece will be performed, which informs how to piece together text or devise 'scenes.' They also draw heavily upon dramatic conventions of memory, biography and the personal experiences of their participants to tease out subject matter, weaving personal anecdotes with wider themes of belonging, politics or interculturalism. Significantly, this process emphasises dialogue and exchange between the directorial team and their experts, to the point where Rimini Protokoll refer to them as co-authors of their projects. This title of co-authorship means that, in the rehearsal room, decisions are collectively made about what participants will share from their lives,¹⁷ and what processes will be used to realise this within the mode of performance—for example, whether it be a 'scripted' monologue or improvisation. These exchanges will also inevitably involve compromise and, at times, forms of conflict. This workshop/development process concludes with the end result being what is seen by a paying spectator, a ticketed performance of *100%*

¹⁶ Participants are briefed regarding the type of person that they need to recruit for the *100% City* project and are encouraged to recommend others to become participants. The creative team offers assistance as needed. In the instance of *100% Melbourne*, locally based producer from the city of Melbourne, Bec Reid, managed participant recruitment which typically involved contacting people via phone and seeking referrals. See 'The Making of 100% Melbourne,' *City of Melbourne*, 22 Aug 2012, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gKZwi9_ovDU [accessed 04 Jan 2018].

¹⁷ Boenisch, *Other People Live: Rimini Protokoll and their 'Theatre of Experts,'* p. 111.

City. On one level, this configuration reflects a mutualistic relationship for both Rimini Protokoll and the performers, whereby a degree of authenticity is afforded to the work as ‘real’ people perform, and they, in turn, are afforded the chance to be heard and participate in a performance project as a ‘co-owner.’

Rimini Protokoll’s projects differ from a typical reality television format in their approach to participation. They describe their approach as one that emphasises a willingness to adjust, communicate and evolve their practice to meaningfully engage their experts to produce their theatrical event. As their participants display different needs, fears and motivations, Rimini Protokoll discuss how this creates new challenges for them and note that

we never teach them how to make theatre. We never make them do theatre exercises, none of the breathing or relaxation stuff. Actually, we’re very interested in the resistance they bring to the conventions of performance, often quite unconsciously... they bring these rules with them, or they generate them themselves, perhaps not consciously.¹⁸

Furthermore, Rimini Protokoll privilege the aspect of liveness by using the theatrical medium, albeit in their structurally unique way. Creating a space for shared experience is central to their performance ethos, where they then proceed to attack, reformulate,

¹⁸ Boenisch, *Other People Live: Rimini Protokoll and their ‘Theatre of Experts,’* pp. 110–111.

manipulate or even respect the notion of spectatorship and how different meanings will emerge from a single viewing.¹⁹

Forde notes how the performance puts faces to statistical demographics and intersperses personal stories with the task of making Melburnians visible to each other.²⁰ Tagged as ‘part theatre, part reality and 100% Melbourne,’ this performance not so much represents the everyday; it is purported to be the everyday—onstage and using non-actor co-authors.²¹ In terms of participatory art, *100% Melbourne* is also an example of a trend to (at least partly) renounce authorial ownership in order to sustain a consultative and dialogic approach to art-making. Part of the pursuit of dialogue and consultation means that projects like *100% City* are geared toward discursive exchange and negotiation.²² Much of the rehearsal process, for example, involves workshopping the personal stories of the everyday participants into a performance-suitable format and delivery. Rimini Protokoll confirms this in their assertion that theatre is primarily a communication hub, which extends from the workshopping period to the performance itself and the impact upon the relationships that continue after closing night.²³ Theatre, in this instance, brings people together in a space where new relationships and knowledges are formed or witnessed, and continue on into the ‘real world.’

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 112.

²⁰ ‘100% Melbourne Program,’ *Rimini Protokoll*, performed at the Melbourne Town Hall, 04–06 May 2012, p. 41.

²¹ Ibid., p. 40.

²² Grant H. Kester as cited in Bishop, *The Social Turn*, p. 23.

²³ ‘100% Melbourne Program,’ *Rimini Protokoll*, p. 257.

The Potential of Aesthetics

If we accept the proposition that live performance (and more broadly, the arts) also provides a means to communicate, educate and have the function of entertainment, *100% Melbourne* is an example of where the potential for critical aesthetics might lie. A critical aesthetic in this context enables us to present this type of arts practice as involved in world-making.²⁴ Papastergiadis presents the aesthetic in such a way that it reframes the imagination as a process of change because of its ability to create new representations (of our world).²⁵ This type of work is not simply an aesthetic representation of the world (although it does artistically present versions of reality); it is also afforded a critical dimension. This critical dimension is through a performance's ability to produce alternative, or even aspirational worldviews in its depiction of society. *100% City*, for example, offers a reading of statistics that encourages us to seek humanity within bureaucracy, when the audience is introduced to the stories from every single person who represents the 1 per cent of a city. Representing the entire city onstage may be read as a very specific endorsement of diversity and, therefore, a performance that encourages people to seek connections in their sameness. This is

²⁴ Papastergiadis, Nikos, (2012) *Cosmopolitanism and Culture*, Polity Press, Cambridge, p. 104. Pheng Cheah provides further context to the concept of world-making in modern cosmopolitanism, noting that world-making activity (such as world literature)... 'enables us to imagine a world...[and] since one cannot see the universe, the world, or humanity, the cosmopolitan optic is not one of perceptual experience but of imagination.' Cheah, Pheng, (2008) 'What Is a World? On World Literature as World-Making Activity,' *Daedalus*, Vol. 137, no. 3, Summer, p. 26.

It is in this sense that the world-making with regard to arts practice, such as *100% Melbourne*, produces knowledge in the world as it creates a world. However, it is important to remember, as Papastergiadis notes, that the function of art '...should not be confused with acquisitive methods that seek to capture the truth. The glimpse that art offers is less stable; it is more like the flickering recognition of a potential for change.' Papastergiadis, *Cosmopolitanism and Culture*, p. 193.

For the purposes of this thesis, world-making, therefore, is also a process or activity, rather than destination, characterised by the *imagination* and creation of possible alternatives (worlds).

²⁵ Delanty, Gerard, (ed.) (2012) *Routledge Handbook of Cosmopolitanism Studies*, Taylor and Francis, ProQuest Ebook Central, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/unimelb/detail.action?docID=981619> [accessed 05 Jan 2018], p. 221.

particularly exemplified as the 100 people onstage all have vast differences as they each represent the census data of the city of Melbourne, yet they communicate and cooperate in the performance.

In *100% City*, we are presented with a view of what a community looks like in a contemporary city and even how it could operate, if everyone were to be more open to hearing people's stories and demonstrating empathy for each other. It also highlights where the potential fault lines within a community might lie, as demonstrated in the section of the performance where people visibly disagree in their opinions onstage as they participate in voting on a variety of issues. Although the propositions surrounding community are not so radical to Performance Studies discourse, viewing the performance with regard to the social impressions that it offers provides insight into how a cultural activity has an ability to effect change and therefore increase its 'value,' especially when it comes to designing better ways to describe the contributions of culture in political and policy contexts.

Furthermore, understanding the value of culture through the prism of aesthetics is potentially a means to allow for both the utility of an art form to exist alongside artistic exploration, and the creation of new forms and contemplation of current configurations within society. The format of *100% Melbourne* does this by presenting collective knowledge which is created through the comparison of individuals and synthesised into a series of public interactions and mixed media engagement. These interactions can be understood as public interactions because each person onstage represents 1 per cent of

the population of Melbourne according to the census data; they literally are the public. In knowing that aesthetics are not only tools for knowledge transfer but the creation of new knowledges, as the participants in *100% Melbourne* present, the most overt of these new knowledges surrounds the construction of (new) narratives of what it means to be a Melburnian. It is in this sense of representing Melbourne identity onstage that the aesthetics in a project like *100% Melbourne* intersect with the concerns of Australian cultural diplomacy or, at the very least, soft power. This is demonstrated through examples such as DFAT's 2016–17 annual report, which states one of cultural diplomacy's aims is the promotion of a contemporary understanding of Australia,²⁶ and strengthening of its reputation as a 'sophisticated and creative nation with a confident, outward-looking arts sector.'²⁷ Defining what it is to be Melburnian today as directly explored in *100% Melbourne* is, therefore, an important means to better understand the identity of Australia's people through the arts and thus contributes to the aims of cultural diplomacy.

100% City's thematic engagement with the political is also discernible through its ability to negotiate, or to more simply present, cultural differences in relation to societal cohesion. This realises what Papastergiadis describes as the facilitation of a critical task that does not strive for a utopian space between boundaries, but re-engages the sphere of possibilities that are permitted or excluded by boundaries, in this case largely demographic boundaries.²⁸ The participants in *100% City* also demonstrate such a

²⁶ '2016-17 Annual Report,' DFAT, p. 72.

²⁷ 'Public Diplomacy Strategy 2014–2016,' DFAT, p. 5.

²⁸ Papastergiadis, *Cosmopolitanism and Culture*, p. 132.

variety in boundaries and indeed perspectives, yet no single perspective is permitted to dominate the performance—although, assumedly, certain opinions or actions from the everyday experts would resonate differently to individual audience members viewing the performance. Furthermore, in *100% Melbourne*, categories such as age, residential location, gender identity, cultural identification and personal perspective are presented as the key differences between the non-experts, yet the synergy of the newly founded group primarily acknowledges a possibility of relationships (both positive and negative) despite these boundaries. This is because the format of the *100% City* project does not seek to display and then diminish difference, but to communicate that everyday life is not ‘neat like numbers and pie charts but noisy and full of difference, a kind of organised chaos [that is] much like [how] democracy, communities and cities can be.’²⁹ Disagreement is displayed in the performance, but there is not necessarily an attempt to resolve it or explain why divergent opinions exist. This is especially witnessed in the voting section of the *100% City* performance where the non-experts share their opinion on an issue such as ‘do you believe in the death penalty?’ From here, participants move to the right or left side of the stage that corresponds to their yes or no response. Non-expert participants are also doubly linked through their individual personal relationships and their statistical relation to each other which also presents a type of belonging (or collectivity) not normally experienced in a single physical space. Accordingly, the *100% City* project engages with collaborative practice in a manner that tangibly demonstrates the value of participation. We witness the impact of the imaginary as people’s inner images (preferences, habits and biases) are accommodated alongside the

²⁹ ‘100% Melbourne Program,’ *Rimini Protokoll*, p. 41.

presentation of social ideals as individuals come together to 'vote' on issues such as capital punishment, marriage equality, their favourite Australian, and enjoyment of Vegemite. Not only do we, as spectators, witness different people from different cultures bound by their 'Melbourneness,' but these people are also presented as linked through their stories, common experiences or thoughts on societal issues of the day. This social dimension of culture as characterised via participation is valuable not because it is an arena that merely brings people together, but it is what these interactions reveal and create that have value to a society or nation, i.e. conversations about and between cultures, new terms of engagement between people, and an ability to stand together as a group, but also as separate individuals free to express their opinions. When approached in the above manner, the hybridity of the *100% City* project involving everyday people, population data, reality, storytelling and live theatre practice certainly could be said to contribute to a strengthening of the social bond and demonstrating the value of difference. Moreover, aside from the social interactions facilitated by *100% Melbourne*, there is an interesting synergy created in the performance concerning potential cultural value and a governmental context, especially in terms of cultural diplomacy, which is explored below.

Performance, Politics and Cultural Value

In terms of 'official' value, *100% Melbourne's* content aligns with key tenets of (Australian) public diplomacy, such as building links and understanding between people. In terms of the participants, the City of Melbourne documented how many forged ongoing friendships or reported being pleasantly surprised or enthusiastic to mix with

people they may not interact with in their day-to-day lives.³⁰ Here, despite reading *100% Melbourne's* interactions purely in terms of its communication with an overwhelmingly domestic audience, there are a number of other levels in this performance where relations are realised. This is discernible from audience interactions (amongst themselves), the participant's experiences and the international links built between Australian and European stakeholders (such as the collaboration between creative and production crews). This intersection of *100% City* and public (and cultural) diplomacy is especially evident if we consider DFAT's 2017 assertion that 'diplomacy begins at home.'³¹ More conceptually, the social value of this performance encourages us to live beyond the boundaries (of census demographics, for example) and acknowledge the simultaneity rather than opposition of someone else's culture or history. This type of knowing is not solely experienced from the written word, but is a site of critical reimagining and affect where artists and participants acknowledge and negotiate differences as they 'not just analyse, define and propose, they... develop collaborative strategies through which knowledge is produced and disseminated in a collective manner.'³²

³⁰ 'The Making of *100% Melbourne*,' *City of Melbourne*.

³¹ DFAT Victoria Official Twitter Feed, post on 13 Dec 2017 'Talking #FPWhitePaper with our #Victorian partners – diplomacy begins at home fpwhitepaper.gov.au,' [accessed 05 Feb 2018]. The notion of Australia's foreign activity beginning 'at home,' or in other words, with Australia or Australians at its forefront, was also enunciated by DFAT Secretary, Peter Varghese, in a 2015 speech about the Australian world view. He notes 'All foreign policy starts at home. And all foreign policy is a means to an end: to advance the interests of our country and our community.' Varghese, Peter, (2015) 'An Australian World View: A practitioner's perspective,' Address to the Lowy Institute, Sydney, Australia, 20 Aug, <https://dfat.gov.au/news/speeches/Pages/an-australian-world-view-a-practitioners-perspective.aspx> [accessed 22 Apr 2019].

³² Papastergiadis, *Cosmopolitanism and Culture*, p. 132.

Seeing difference displayed, as in *100% Melbourne*, forms a new type of knowledge that signals the potential for a more substantive person-to-person engagement despite what can appear to be differing values, experiences and cultural preferences with the group. This is in contrast to commonly accepted narratives of cultural diversity, which promote plurality or tolerance of various communities of people. It also transcends the less sophisticated applications of cultural power that are common to events or programs more geared towards cultural propaganda. An exercise such as *100% Melbourne* provides a forum in which negotiation between various (cultural) knowledges can occur as they physically meet and interact within the one space and work together as non-performer performers. In many ways, this is the very essence of social interactions, where the forging of people-to-people links involves very diverse individuals. It is these interactions which also ultimately benefit the reputation or actions of a state, making the configurations made possible through the production of *100% Melbourne* as another example of mutualistic value.

The negotiations presented onstage in *100% Melbourne* take many forms: between the very young and old, between atheists and people with strong faith/spiritual backgrounds, between newly arrived migrants and individuals whose families have been in Australia for numerous generations, and between varying political or social justice opinions in relation to marriage equality and capital punishment. Although the voting section of the performance physically demarcates the differences of opinion and preferences of the 100 per cent, scene changes and other performance elements see participants join together. Togetherness might be presented literally via a human

chain/conga line, emotionally, as participants support each other through difficult moments in personal stories, or theatrically, as musical interludes and the use of mime bring the people onstage into interactions with each other. Moments of community are found onstage not in terms of people's lifestyle similarities, but a willingness to collaborate and interact that stems from the acceptance of a shared reality (that they are all willing participants in a theatrical performance).

Far from the 'show and tell' function of a rigidly nationalist type of work that promotes a single, often ideal, depiction of a nation's people, such as propaganda, *100% Melbourne* explores the possibility of new relationships amongst imperfect people. This realism and multitude of perspectives is a representation of Australian values of democracy, freedom of speech and cultural diversity, which are also shared by Germany where the Rimini Protokoll collective originated.³³ This indicates that *100% Melbourne* has potential for Australia's soft power to boost the nation's reputation and people's affection for it—in this case, through the arts and the exploration of Australian (and also Melbourne) identities onstage. It also engages with soft power when read in terms of its ability to foster cultural negotiations, with the performance as a point of connection for Australian-German relations and also dissemination of key, shared (democratic) values. Based on this connection, any claims to cultural diplomacy with relation to *100% Melbourne* are two-way, indicating that any strategic discussions of culture should include both the nation who is instigating an event that might contribute to cultural diplomacy, and also who is hosting it. For Rimini Protokoll, the relationships

³³ 'Public Diplomacy Strategy 2014–2016,' DFAT, p. 3.

that they foster through their staging of *100% City* in a worldwide capacity, may be understood as a staging of diplomatic practice, with benefits to both the host nation and Germany (with Rimini Protokoll acting as a symbolic proxy).

In this sense, Rimini Protokoll helps us to question or think more about how value is considered with relation to culture. Public/cultural diplomacy efforts have the potential to be bolstered when they engage with works such as the *100% City* project, even if the performance is only predominantly viewed by a domestic audience. This is partly because a *100% City* performance is based on everyday experts as defined by a city's statistical data, which means that certain percentages of those on stage will not be native to Australia. *100% Melbourne*, for example, featured one everyday expert, self-described as the 'token' American. Furthermore, the performance also enjoys the international exposure of being associated with the body of work belonging to the global nomads themselves, Rimini Protokoll.

100% Melbourne demonstrates a collision of the arts and the everyday as the work does not reside outside what Papastergiadis refers to as 'the messy complicities of institutional objectives and economic imperatives.'³⁴ In fact, the *100% City* project co-opts these methods of official representation and demonstrates that aesthetics and political mechanisms in society are not the polarities they can be presented to be. For participatory art, therefore, *100% Melbourne* is a project that is enmeshed with the

³⁴ Papastergiadis, *Cosmopolitanism and Culture*, p. 94.

social and the political as it involved sharing, collaborating and building relationships with others whilst devising and performing the work. If Creative Victoria's assertion that the common ground of participatory art is to foster a 'shared belief in the creativity of all people and their inherent right to express what is important to them in a manner that is relevant, challenging and fun,' the *100% City* project meets this aim.³⁵

Challenges of Participatory Art Making: the Limitations of *100% City*

Despite this potential, however, there is a risk that a performance of *100% City* succumbs to an emphasis on process over product, which may also be an emphasis on process *as* product.³⁶ Rimini Protokoll state that their sharing of information and process of navigating both production and text requires more time than just rehearsals.³⁷ Rimini Protokoll's format for the *100% City* project is highly process-driven. From their use of the Theatre of Experts approach to casting, rehearsals that incorporate the non-experts' experience to develop content and co-authorship, to a performance structure that yields specific ensemble, monologue and musical interludes, a 24-hour time lapse and a section where performers 'vote' or express their opinions on specific social and political issues relevant to the host city. Certainly, the reviews and promotional material of this show all emphasise the process of devising and the concept of *100% Melbourne*

³⁵ 'Making art with Communities a work guide,' *Creative Victoria*, p. 3. Challenging is taken to mean the presentation of a different type of expression to most of the participants and spectators rather than challenging in the sense of an avant-garde art work. Note: Creative Victoria is a government body dedicated to supporting, championing and growing the state's creative industries, spanning arts, culture, screen, design and more. Formerly Arts Victoria. See 'Creative Victoria,' *State Government of Victoria*, <http://creative.vic.gov.au> [accessed 01 Mar 2016].

³⁶ Bishop, *Artificial Hells*, p. 19.

³⁷ Malzacher, Florian, (2008) 'Dramaturgies of Care and Insecurity: The story of Rimini Protokoll,' in Dreyse, Miriam and Malzacher, Florian (eds.), *Experts of the Everyday: The Theatre of Rimini Protokoll*, Alexander Verlag Berlin, Berlin, p. 23.

significantly more than what actually takes place in the performance.³⁸ However, to counter this, it is incomplete to view the performance without understanding the background and the format of *100% Melbourne's* creation and its use of real people onstage. Malzacher reminds us that this logical and pragmatic approach to art is fundamental to Rimini Protokoll's operating structure as a non-ideological association, perhaps best understood as

a brand name that facilitates communication, an effective working network, an umbrella organisation without an official statement of intent that maintains separate accounts even today.³⁹

The drawback, however, to a highly process-driven, businesslike approach to art is when the degree of collaborative success becomes the central criterion with which to evaluate the performance. This privileging of collaboration also highlights a fundamental assumption of participatory art, which asserts that active participants are better, more useful, or more informed than passive consumers. In other words, '[without] finding more nuanced language to address the artistic status of this work, we risk discussing these practices solely in positivist terms, that is, by focusing on demonstrable impact.'⁴⁰

In this case, the utility of the art is again the basis of the language to articulate the value of culture in the public realm. Although this is a widely accepted method with which to

³⁸ See, for example, 'The Making of *100% Melbourne*,' *City of Melbourne*.

³⁹ Malzacher, *Dramaturgies of Care and Insecurity: The story of Rimini Protokoll*, p. 21.

⁴⁰ Bishop, *Artificial Hells*, p. 18.

justify public spending, it is done so in a manner that largely neglects the more nuanced contributions that the aesthetics of a piece might offer. If, as discussed in previous chapters, we lack a means to more meaningfully understand how culture contributes to these spaces, we need an approach that considers a wider variety of relationships and interactions. In terms of better understanding value, this would include an emphasis on actors and their interpersonal relationships, institutional relationships, the relationships amongst cultural policy, actors and institutions and the positive and negative interactions that occur as a result of these relationships, to allow a more critical consideration of cultural projects to occur.

Anecdotally, as a spectator at *100% Melbourne*, my experience was highly informed because I understood the process surrounding how the show was constructed, and the aim behind it. This, understandably, made it easier for me to identify how aesthetic arguments were illustrated by the performance because I was actively seeking this information. What would my chances be of accessing the level of critical reimagining examined above if I did not have the impetus to view the production in this way, or even a theatre performance full stop?

The performance of *100% Melbourne* is at times fun, light hearted or poignant, and places entertainment at the forefront of its presentation. The music, for example, is upbeat and often serves to make scene changes more engaging, the interspersing of comic relief is frequently used to transition out of more serious moments in the narrative such as a sad personal story of an everyday expert, and the format of a game-

like structure adds a degree of playfulness to the overall performance structure. *100% Melbourne* is infotainment at its best. This raises questions about whether there is a disconnect between Rimini Protokoll's theoretical process of creating work and its expression, and the end product of the actual performance. How much resonance did the performance's process of collaborative production have with its audiences and were these messages clearly received? Was this really a production that was by the people, for the people? Therefore, the 'who,' as in who is viewing it, is another key dimension when examining the social dimension of cultural value.

As a result, the participation in *100% Melbourne* might be categorised as more benign and able to be neatly situated within the neo-liberal creative economy model, rather than implicated within a critical aesthetic that explores transgressive sites for participation. Accordingly, this example just as equally 'enters a realm of useful, ameliorative and ultimately modest gestures, rather than the creation of singular acts that leave behind them a troubling wake.'⁴¹ The performance event itself is glossy and highly digestible to a mainstream audience, yet the reflexivity of using census data as the basis of the performance was not sufficiently interrogated to allow for other expressions of what *100% Melbourne* could alternatively mean. For example, less socially acceptable realities, such as crime, were absent from the personal stories of the 100 participants, as were topics such as poverty and prejudice, which would statistically impact participants given that they are said to represent *all* of Melbourne. For cultural value, this glossiness might be simultaneously beneficial but limiting in terms of its

⁴¹ Bishop, *Artificial Hells*, p. 23.

impact, depending on receiving audiences. For the purposes of infotainment or cultural branding, it could be highly valuable to represent Melbourne positively but might be more superficial in terms of creating long-term links and sustaining relationships with meaningful engagement.

100% Melbourne offers an interesting example of how different types of cultural value might be realised in a single project. As Rimini Protokoll plays with aesthetics, the rationality of statistics and collaborative practice, this performance is not merely an instrument that illustrates other discourses (census data), nor is it a static depiction of an ideal community.⁴² Its pursuit of liminality encourages a multiplicity of expression, which means that it does participate in some aesthetic challenges to political discourse. This is seen where *100% Melbourne* presents a theatrical stage that aims to reimagine the public aesthetically. While it implores us to take part in this task also, the ambitious undertaking to challenge, or substantially question, its socio-political milieu is less successful. This is because it does not sufficiently interrogate the instruments of neo-liberalism and realpolitik that it engages with in its performance. This is not, however, an overwhelmingly negative aspect to *100% Melbourne*, as this struggle and discomfort may also be interpreted as the embodiment of the tension and paradox of what the arts can bring to discussions of value to society or questions of politics.

⁴² Papastergiadis, *Cosmopolitanism and Culture*, p. 14.

The *100% Melbourne* case study demonstrates how cultural value discourse might be understood further through a consideration of the social aspects that a cultural activity poses, yet understanding the value of culture in this way is not without challenges. Although *100% Melbourne* presents many possibilities that allowed for my articulation of the value in terms of social relations, there are factors—such as access—making it problematic to assume that the act of attending theatre itself could apply to an entire population. This is due to the privatisation of culture, where questions including those pertaining to class, economics, geographical location, etc. all impact on who actually sees the performance or theatre more generally. Therefore, rather than privileging an agenda of social inclusion or utility for all, participatory art and projects that interact with cultural value discourse would be better served by a more in-depth assessment of the involvement of the variety of stakeholders. The final section of this case study considers the ramifications of this work for Australia’s political stakeholders.

Rimini Protokoll’s Staging of Diplomacy: Linking the Social and Political Dimensions of Cultural Value

This chapter has highlighted how the processes and work of Rimini Protokoll establishes a unique polity of participation that directly engages with types of cultural value. This is primarily demonstrated in Rimini Protokoll’s facilitation of relations as they renegotiate practices of collaboration via their participatory dramaturgy. As discussed above, Rimini Protokoll deploy ‘everyday experts,’ partly as a means to brandish more ‘authentic’ representations of culture than professional actors. However, the authenticity of voices in Rimini Protokoll also rewrites the standard configuration of cultural relations as

understood in a political sense where *100% City* performers, the ‘non-professionals’ in the arts sector, represent an extension of distance from the official ‘directors’ that mediate cultural value (professional artists and government representatives). This reconfigures them as ‘agents’ of cultural politics twice removed—not only are they outside the government sector, but they are not professionals within the arts sector, either. This scenario means that the traditional targets of public diplomacy have now become agents of its creation.

The type of projects facilitated by Rimini Protokoll provide a format or conceptual basis for a more grassroots approach to cultural value in terms of their encouragement of people-to-people relations. The *100% City* project is especially representative of this contention, as the show’s content is based upon displaying (albeit edited) versions of individual and collective expressions of opinions and cultures from a specific geographic region. By presenting the everyday experts onstage, Rimini Protokoll engages in a practice that facilitates soft power on behalf of the host nation they perform in. Yet, in this instance, the national interest is not so much directed by the state itself—which is typical of the traditional configuration of cultural diplomacy—but is expressed as the interests of the people that make up a certain city. The ‘group voting’ section of the performance has tremendous potential to yield a cohesive impact, as spectators (and indeed the everyday experts onstage) are witness to, or perform, a scene that depicts the data of what normative opinions in each city consist of. Remembering that soft power is ‘the ability to affect others through the co-optive means of framing the agenda, persuading, and eliciting positive attraction in order to obtain preferred outcomes,’ this

convention is in operation throughout this section of the performance. Furthermore, the *100% City* project provides direct, immediate access to episodes that foster mutual understanding or, at the very least, ‘mutual display’ between cultures and people; one of the key objectives of cultural diplomacy and cultural relations and consequently, to organisations such as DFAT, a means to a public diplomacy through its network-building capacity. Beyond mutual understanding, there is also the production of archival materials (online videos, interviews, media) alongside a performance of *100% City* that have export potential and may boost a country’s attractiveness to outsiders, making it an accessible tool of public and cultural diplomacy, should it be mobilised in this manner.

The political hierarchy is problematised by Rimini Protokoll’s *100% City*, because the performances also provide a means for culture to operate as a vehicle for exploration, rather than primarily for the purposes of co-option or manipulation via seduction that a soft-power rubric is centred upon in instances of state-funded cultural diplomacy. However, if *100% City* were to be hypothetically placed within a deliberate act of Nation-branding (e.g. DFAT presenting a production of *100% Melbourne* in China, for example), the element of exploration afforded throughout the production becomes more utilitarian because on the basis of DFAT’s most recent public diplomacy strategy (as the foundation of cultural diplomacy activity), exporting the show aligns with DFAT’s goal of ‘Champion[ing] Australia as an open, innovative, democratic and diverse nation,’ which encourages the active pursuit of alliance-formation on the basis of cultural

understanding.⁴³ In this instance, the *100% City* project can also reflexively engage with aspects of cultural diplomacy, which in turn impact upon the consideration of its value, especially in a political, relations-based context.

Of course, the potential of this type of value (cultural relations) is limited when considering cultural diplomacy's traditional definition as the pursuit of inter-nation interaction. This is because the value of the *100% City* project as a direct cultural diplomacy manoeuvre based upon the establishment of cultural relations partly depends on whether or not foreign nationals or officials are exposed to the performance. This will impact upon whether it operates directly or more indirectly as a source of power. After all, if you are explaining yourself to the world and no one is listening, this contributes to whether cultural diplomacy is successful or not. Yet this is partly overcome by the nomadic, i.e. touring, nature of Rimini Protokoll's projects. As they circulate across the globe, the momentum of *100% City* as a vehicle for exploring a particular city as a performative demographic re-enters the political space when governments/city councils subsidise a performance in their capital city. As we recall, in the example of *100% Melbourne*, this performance was a co-production between Rimini Protokoll, City of Melbourne, Goethe Institute, and Arts Victoria.⁴⁴ Furthermore, as the role of public diplomacy evolves, the possibility for home-based cultural diplomacy is also changing. In Australia, for example, DFAT champions the 'public diplomacy at home'

⁴³ This goal is one of five keys goals that the most recent public diplomacy strategy outlines. To pursue these goals, DFAT champions cultural diplomacy as a means to establish networks and collaboration between artists/arts organisations and their partners to forge cultural alliances. 'Public Diplomacy Strategy 2014–2016,' *DFAT*, pp. 3–5.

⁴⁴ Arts Victoria is a government body of the Victorian Government, now known as Creative Victoria.

narrative, which aims to connect and cultivate aspects of 'Australian' identity, which may be strategically used in various ways.⁴⁵ Specifically, DFAT describes its practice of developing diaspora communities in Australia which connect and cultivate diasporas through outreach in the domestic community. This is done with the intention of better engaging with, to then leverage, immigrants' social networks and cultural community connections as a form of diaspora diplomacy.⁴⁶ *100% Melbourne* thus has potential for diaspora diplomacy as it explores the diasporas of Melbourne through its aesthetic presentation of diverse, census-defined everyday experts, engagement with diaspora stories (as each everyday expert introduces themselves) and cultivates cultural relations amongst these individuals from varying descendent countries (as the format of the production involves the everyday experts working together onstage and in rehearsals). In this sense, *100% Melbourne*, fits the 'public diplomacy at home' approach described by DFAT.

Conclusion

This case study of Rimini Protokoll has explored the value of culture in terms of a specific mode of arts practice, characterised by theatrical collaboration, which engaged in various cultural relations. The *100% City* project continues to tour today (in 2019),

⁴⁵ Through the focus on diaspora communities in Australia by drawing upon the skills and networks of immigrant populations and encouraging immigrants' connections to their descendent countries, DFAT strategically supports Australian identity that is characterised by pluralism, rather than a single Australian identity.

⁴⁶ Diaspora diplomacy is both the leveraging of skills, culture and networks of diasporas from those living in Australia, as well as referring to the Australians that live, and Australian organisations that operate, abroad. DFAT identifies both domestic and abroad diaspora communities as valuable to Australian interests, noting that they seek to 'engage diaspora communities drawing on their linguistic skills, social networks and cultural community connections to showcase and celebrate Australia's capabilities and values.' 'Public Diplomacy Strategy 2014–2016,' DFAT, p. 9.

indicating the long-term success of this work as it is performed around the world in new cities. As discussed above, the performance can be considered a mutualistic cultural activity that enhances understandings between various parties, as *100% Melbourne* essentially placed a collection of everyday people onstage for them to tell their stories. In a political context, this value also extends to the practice of public diplomacy, which in the year it was performed, 2012, was required by DFAT to project:

An accurate and contemporary image of Australia, an understanding of the government's foreign and trade policies, and strengthened people-to-people links and trade and economic ties.⁴⁷

100% Melbourne achieved this to a high degree as it directly enunciated and represented understandings of Australia through its subject matter and performance structure. It may also be characterised as strengthening an international partnership between Australia and Rimini Protokoll and contributing to the diplomacy-at-home narrative. These aspects of cultural relations are articulated by DFAT as being public diplomacy priorities. Deeper people-to-people linkages were established and an ongoing collaborative relationship between Australian cultural practitioners and Rimini Protokoll has endured, supporting a 'network of influence' which not only builds cultural relationships, but also, as DFAT states, 'cultivate[s] non-Australian influencers and local voices,' which in turn contributes to the public diplomacy objective of strengthening engagement amongst domestic and international stakeholders.⁴⁸ The most recent

⁴⁷ '2012–13 Annual Report,' DFAT, https://dfat.gov.au/about-us/publications/corporate/annual-reports/annual-report-2012-2013/pdf/dfat_annual_report_1213.pdf [accessed 01 Mar 2018] p. 214.

⁴⁸ 'Public Diplomacy Strategy 2014–2016,' DFAT, p. 9.

iteration of Rimini Protokoll work in Australia occurred on the Gold Coast, Queensland 29 March – 7 April 2018 with the performance piece titled *Home Visit Australia*.⁴⁹ These ongoing collaborations indicate the type of value in this instance might be articulated in terms of mutualistic relations between Rimini Protokoll and their Australian production partners, such as the City of Melbourne. The sense of value is also confirmed in evidence such as the City of Melbourne's annual report commentary, which noted that audiences responded to *100% Melbourne* positively, and that 'Audiences [of *100% Melbourne*] overwhelmingly rated the work as a provoking, engaging and deeply human experience.'⁵⁰

The interactions amongst performers are also relevant to the discussion of cultural value because *100% Melbourne* used everyday people to be the actors in the work. The relationships between performers are interesting because people were playing the role of 'themselves' in relation to their thoughts about their lifestyle and country, Australia. Many of the performers articulated positive outcomes resulting from their participation in the production. Comments from performers highlighted the learning aspect (trying to show who they were and mixing with different types of people), the community aspect (continued relationships outside the theatre and a sense of belonging) and a narrative perspective (discovering and sharing of stories and shared/unshared histories).⁵¹ These relationships demonstrate how positive social outcomes were generated as a result of participation in a cultural activity, highlighting the importance of gaining qualitative

⁴⁹ Presented as a part of the Bleach Festival 2018, see 'Rimini Protokoll,' *Bleach Festival*, <http://bleachfestival.com.au/artists/rimini-protokoll/> [accessed 30 Apr 2018].

⁵⁰ 'Annual Report 2011–12,' *City of Melbourne*, p. 28.

⁵¹ Performer comments paraphrased from, 'The Making of 100% Melbourne,' *City of Melbourne*.

feedback from participants in cultural events when examining propositions of value. It is in this sense that I suggest that cultural value has an experiential dimension, which might be enhanced further by encouraging people's reflection on their experiences of cultural activities.

While conflict and tension might be present in the participatory theatre practice, there are still limitations in approaching this type of work using the vocabulary of participation in order to discuss its political function (such as instrumentality). This is largely because the emphasis on these justifications of culture is in terms of utility where the relationship of art (collaborative creative practice) and the social are conflated, often in order to promote its benefits to society (and Nation). I have highlighted how participation and social forces interact within performance, where participatory art (e.g. *100% Melbourne*) demonstrates its most valuable potential by proposing aesthetic strategies and exploring new platforms for alternative thinking, doing and being in social and political formations. This directly correlates to how countries might evolve their sense of national identity to represent a more complex array of cultural voices that constitute a networked, global nation. Rather than simply presenting Australian cultural voices to the world, encouraging the exploration, interrogation and redefinition of who they are and how they relate to others (domestically and internationally) is also fundamental to a more meaningful realisation of the value of culture. Therefore, the true 'value' of these works is their ability to privilege ambivalent exploration over the emphasis on a positivist intention of strengthening social bonds (or for cultural diplomacy: fostering mutual understanding). Therefore, participatory art is at its best

when it is not so much about 'converting' people, but drawing into question the contradictions within societies and recognising its mutual tensions (without a predetermined endpoint or resolution). This is one dimension that is of tremendous value. If we borrow the aspects of exploration and negotiation of identity/ies that best-practice participatory art provides, it informs more nuanced ways to contribute to the (Australian) cultural narrative and how it is communicated on the world stage.

Rimini Protokoll's exhibition of a globalised aesthetic that harnesses the power of the local is one example of how arts practice can operate in terms of exploring new cultural narratives on behalf of a nation. Furthermore, examining the social dimensions that Rimini Protokoll's work engages with led to my consideration of the relationships that can be identified as a result of the performance as an additional means through which value may be examined. Combined, instances of mutualism demonstrate the broader value of this cultural activity by encompassing both the social and political 'outcomes' of the work. Symbiosis also allows a way to articulate the value, in terms of relations, that this performance generated. Furthermore, the symbiotic conceptualisation of the reciprocal (mutualistic) benefits between the 'host' producers, Rimini Protokoll, and the symbionts, the everyday experts, demonstrates how the consideration of coevolution might apply to cultural value more widely. In this instance, Rimini Protokoll and the everyday experts collaborated and coevolved into a 'unit' that produced and performed *100% Melbourne*. By understanding that reciprocal benefits result from periods of coevolution, as they do in mutualistic symbiotic relationships and in cultural examples such as *100% Melbourne*, symbiosis helps to further conceptualise another aspect of

cultural value: that the facilitation of collaborative conditions can create new stakeholder configurations that have potentially beneficial outcomes. While the pursuit of synergetic relationships in the context of cultural value might seem obvious, what this thesis's case studies have in fact shown is that it is more common for language characterised by instrumentality to be incorporated into discussions concerning cultural value. This is particularly when these discussions concern the evaluation of cultural value. Therefore, by focussing on language that highlights aspects of cooperation and coevolution, the value of culture may be thought of in a manner that emphasises symbiosis and synergies between stakeholders, rather than utilitarian outcomes.

This chapter thus serves as a provocation: that when it comes to the examination of cultural value in a social sense, future attention should focus upon the content of a cultural activity itself, in terms that consider the connections of relationships that are generated, but also how they *coevolve*. The next and closing chapter of this thesis will summarise the findings of this research and describe the potential future of cultural value discourse and scholarship.

Chapter 8 — Conclusion

This thesis has focused on understanding the relations which occur over the course (and beyond) of cultural activities. Given the search for beneficial outcomes in the assessment of culture in government and institutional contexts, there is sustained interest concerning public value and how to best measure the impact of cultural activity in order to articulate its value. The conceptualisation of improvement, discussed in chapter two, is largely realised across three different dimensions, the political, the economic and the social. However, while concepts of value might be pursued and communicated through varying mechanisms across these dimensions, I established in this thesis that they are interrelated, especially given the context of a global, networked society that cultural activities occur in today.

To further the knowledge surrounding how the value of culture might be conceived, I explored an ecological association to culture in chapter three and extended its application to provide an approach that encourages us to think about cultural relationships in terms of symbiosis. This approach responds to the contemporary challenges encountered within cultural value discourse: that an over-reliance on instrumentality limits the scope of how culture can be understood, defined and therefore strategically exercised in the future. As a result, to provide a more nuanced approach to cultural value, there is a need to reimagine how culture is valued that is less dependent on articulations that privilege quantitative assessments. Accordingly, this thesis has covered much ground in relation to the value of culture in Australia and

cultural value discourse. Yet, my examination of value across the thesis's case studies involving various examples of cultural diplomacy, cultural policy and cultural activity, demonstrate a state of affairs in which discussions surrounding the value of culture in these fields might continue by drawing upon a relationally based consideration of value. For example, the potential of value of cultural relationships is highlighted in the 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper which asserts that, in a globalised world, partnerships, including those amongst individuals and non-state actors are crucial to the attainment of soft power.¹

However, the rhetoric of partnerships remains high-level and DFAT is yet to more meaningfully articulate what and how networks and collaborative relationships might be more strategically leveraged; thus, a 'systematic' approach to Australian soft power is yet to be realised.² Furthermore, despite an indication that the encouragement of collaborations in this field are required, as well as the promise of a forthcoming multi-year public diplomacy strategy, Australia does not currently have a foreign cultural policy and abandoned its 2013 National Cultural Policy.³ At a national level, this is further

¹ '2017 Foreign Policy White Paper,' *DFAT*, p. 110.

² The report notes that '[i]n a globalised and contested world, a systematic and sophisticated approach to soft power is in our national interest ... the Government will conduct a review to ensure we continue to build soft power and exercise influence effectively.' *Ibid.*, p. 107. N.B. The results of the Soft Power Review are forthcoming.

³ The forthcoming strategy is discussed in the 2016–17 annual report. '2016–17 Annual Report,' *DFAT*, p. 89. Australian foreign cultural policy is discussed by Keys-Statham, Christiane, (2017) 'Australia's International Cultural Diplomacy,' *Australian Policy and History*, <http://aph.org.au/australias-international-cultural-diplomacy/> [accessed 25 Mar 2018]. Furthermore, Australia does not have a national arts policy either, despite a 2013 launch of Creative Australia, which was shortly followed by a change in Australian government. Although online versions of the document exist, it is not featured as a policy document on Federal Government websites and is widely considered as abandoned by the Liberal party. Also see Craik, who notes that Creative Australia 'virtually sunk without a trace.' Craik, Jennifer, (2013) 'Creative Australia: Missed opportunity or new paradigm for a national cultural policy?' *Asia Pacific Journal of Arts and Cultural Management*, Vol. 10, no. 1, Dec, pp. 48–54.

indication that cultural value in Australia lacks the formal infrastructure to meet challenges of the knowledge economy and the increased interactions between citizens of the world. As my analysis has outlined, there are a variety of relationships that occur within this field that are poorly understood or absent from debates. Despite various sources of 'data' available, there are limited means to assemble them into a more meaningful narrative. Meyrick and Barnett remind us that when it comes to cultural value, 'if we cannot measure what we value, we will come to value what we measure.'⁴ The task to define additional areas of value when it comes to the consideration of culture becomes clearer if we seek to expand the economistic and metrics-based approach to cultural value.

One way of conceptualising cultural value in a manner that allows for a greater understanding of types of value is to pay attention to the environments and interactions that occur during the course (and after the fact) of cultural activity. It was in this context that I harnessed symbiosis to develop cultural symbiosis as a series of conceptual metaphors. These conceptual metaphors allow users to communicate about complex interactions and relationships formed over the course of cultural activities in an experiential, ecology-based terminology that is common to everyday language. This approach allows for different types of cultural value to be articulated through the identification of the degrees of harm or benefit that relations in this field generate. This assisted my exploration of the relations that form across the various dimensions of

⁴ Meyrick & Barnett, *After 'What Matters?': A reflection on the value of arts and culture and four 'lies' of data*, p. 423.

culture and the value of these relationships to a contemporary society, such as Australia. This was especially useful with regard to questions about the value of culture in terms of the public and nation in the context of cultural diplomacy, the creative economy and genre of participatory arts.

I began this enquiry by interrogating the dominant narratives that surround the containment of value of the creative sector and cultural discourse itself, in chapter two. By investigating the political dimension of cultural diplomacy and the economic dimension of the creative economy as it operates in a western, post-industrial context, I highlighted that it is commonplace for advocates of culture in Australia to do so under the auspices of utility. More specifically, the tendency in Australia towards a utilitarian approach in the discussion of culture was present across all dimensions: the political, economic and social. The practice of utility is evident across a variety of actors—from bureaucrats and policymakers, as well as artistic and cultural practitioners—and institutions who are primed to justify their activities via an ‘evidence base’ (such as cultural indicators) in their production of cultural content.⁵ This emphasis on the utility of culture to act as a tool to serve a higher purpose (political capital, financial gain and social benefit) means that contributions that are made outside these purposes are typically, or structurally, overlooked when they are less adherent to the tenets of soft

⁵ Evidence bases, such as the *Australian Bureau of Statistics National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics* I introduced in chapter two, that aim to measure the impact that Australian arts and culture have on economic and social wellbeing. See ‘Vital Signs: Cultural Indicators for Australia,’ *Australian Government Department of Communications and the Arts*. Similar rhetoric is often required from arts and cultural practitioners in their pursuit and acquittal of arts and cultural subsidies, where grant applications request impact statements of the outcomes that a potential project will deliver. See, for example, ‘Arts Projects for Individuals and Groups,’ *The Australia Council for the Arts*, <https://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/funding/funding-index/arts-projects-for-individuals-and-groups/> [accessed 26 Apr 2019].

power or governmental understandings of cultural value. Through an examination of the literature, I agreed with scholars such as Belfiore and Meyrick that the over-reliance upon instrumentalisation is problematic because it narrows the scope under which cultural value might be identified, and thus pursued, in future policy designs or evaluations concerning the public value of culture. Furthermore, while the importance of actors is partially addressed by some scholars, the nature of the interactions between or amongst actors has not been fully reckoned with in the ecological sense that Holden proposes, or in a manner that allows for a comparative examination of the value of culture to occur. This narrowing of scope means that the objectivist and more experiential processes of culture do not speak the same language. As a result, I proposed that there is a disconnect in the way cultural value is understood. The disconnect occurs across more epistemologically based understandings of culture (in terms of production and consumption), the cultural economics approach (in terms of cultural indicators) and a more phenomenological understanding of culture (examining value in terms of experiences and qualitative information).

To explore this disconnection further, I considered Australian examples of proposed and current policies that contain varying types of cultural relations and how they engaged with economic rhetoric, political power and social narratives of culture. This analysis found that there is a disconnection between the roles that culture actually plays and how they are strategically leveraged by a government or state despite impetus to maximise the public value of the arts especially within the context of globalisation. Understanding or pursuing these contributions was articulated by institutions, such as

DFAT, through broad or non-specific language that is difficult to either quantitatively evaluate or monitor in the longer term. In instances where more concrete assessments of Australian cultural value have been made, by those such as the Australia Council or Australian Bureau of Statistics, they occurred sporadically or on a one-off basis, making their viability as a longer-term approach to understanding value, problematic.⁶ The CoM approached this conundrum in reverse, and was overly reliant on metrics and quantitative measurements that offered concrete insight into the size of its cultural economy, but very little in terms of any other types of value that its cultural activities might have generated. Consequently, I observed that it is unsurprising that the arts and culture remain on the fringes of International Relations discourse and, on the whole, under-utilised when operating under the umbrella of public diplomacy. Therefore, a major issue that this thesis considered was that the officially articulated and evaluated functions of culture do not reflect the various, and often more complex, ways that culture can provide value in terms of its ability to explore, disrupt or engage with a nation, its citizens and notions of community.

⁶ In 2008–09, the ABS presented statistics pertaining to the cultural sector, via its creation of experimental satellite accounts referred to as the Australian National Accounts: Cultural and Creative Activity Satellite Accounts, Experimental, 2008–09. This experimental satellite account focused on cultural and creative activity in Australia to provide further insight into the current structure and evolution within the Australian economy. Although these were an interesting example of how official statistics intended to provide indicators of industry change and trends in the Australian cultural and creative field, they have not continued to be collated. The release of 2008–09 data only occurred in February 2014 following the release of the National Cultural Policy, and shortly after this there was a change of federal government. See ‘Explanatory Notes: 5271.0 - Australian National Accounts: Cultural and Creative Activity Satellite Accounts, Experimental, 2008–09,’ *Australian Bureau of Statistics*, 10 Feb 2014, <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/exnote/5271.0> [accessed 26 Feb 2018].

Across the three case study chapters of this thesis, I presented an assortment of analyses where the value of culture has been articulated, pursued and measured. Following an in-depth examination that establishes the conceptual limitations of each instance where culture was co-opted or instrumentalised, the challenge has been to then direct where cultural value discourse should best focus its future attention. Rather than attempting to propose an alternative model or framework which cultural value discourse might adopt as an all-encompassing understanding of value, I have suggested that exploring what types of value occur as a result of the interactions between stakeholders is a useful place to reconceptualise how and where value is recognised. My emphasis on ecology, relationships and symbiosis provides the language, which at the opening of this thesis I argued was lacking, so that the discussion of culture across official institutions (such as governments), cultural and general public contexts might move closer to being on the 'same page.'

Rimini Protokoll's *100% City* project offers an example that demonstrates how a specific type of cultural expression generates its own version of mutualistic (+/+) cultural relations, redefining the social spaces under which it operates; where performance extends beyond the theatre, and people's social connections are enhanced through their participation in *100% Melbourne*. This case demonstrated that the value of culture can be both individual and more broadly realised at the societal level. The impact of aesthetics is particularly valuable within this context, as it is typically minimised or absent in discussions of the value of culture in a policy or evaluation context. As works such as Rimini Protokoll's *100% City* highlight, there are platforms that provide

alternatives to economistic or overly quantitatively based conceptions of value, particularly with regard to how members of the public interact with and perceive each other and their nation, which is at the heart of their participatory dramaturgy informed by social praxis. Looking to the 'effects' of other participatory arts projects in this manner is a direction for future research and will add further nuance to the types, and the value, of contemporary cultural relations that occur in Australia.

If Rimini Protokoll's strategies of exploration and negotiation of identity/ies are understood in terms of discourse surrounding cultural value, they steer scholars and policymakers away from positivist interventions that primarily concern instrumentalism to an arena that is more responsive to the terms in which information is translated in the information age—through the network and its multidirectional flows of information and data. In this configuration, information is not exclusively transmitted in a vertical manner (through top-down cultural messaging from the government), but is geared towards exchange, is rhizomatic in form, and allows stakeholders (such as the state) to better receive and engage with a wider variety of players and emerging platforms of communications. The alternative to instrumental reasoning, as Klammer posits, is based upon substantive reasoning which 'aims to articulate the substance of what we -and others- are doing, what qualities individuals, organizations and groups of people are pursuing.'⁷ To look towards 'what we are doing' in terms of valuing culture, these studies were also conceptually informed by cultural symbiosis to enable an experiential examination of relationships, attention to network-forming activities and a focus on the

⁷ Klammer, Arjo, (2017) *Doing the Right Thing: A Value Based Economy*, Ubiquity Press, London, pp. xii–xiii.

aesthetic contributions of a cultural activity (the theatre performance of *100% Melbourne*). Ultimately, I propose that translating the significance of artistic works and their ensuing interactions represents much potential for governments who seek to harness the benefits of cultural transnational networks and exchanges. This task is a way for culture in terms of its aesthetic register to more directly engage with cultural value and politics.

Cultural symbiosis also expands cultural value discourse. The symmetries between an ecological framework and cultural politics are numerous: they both share a reliance on the establishment of many concurrent networks and relationships; they are both dynamic and evolve over life-cycles and in response to their environmental contexts; and they both involve organic matter, whether it be interactions between humans or the smallest, microscopic organisms. The emphasis on dealing with that which is (a)live is integral to appreciating the complexities of examining how culture transmits messages but is also received by other parties. Understandings of the relationships that occur throughout cultural activity are enhanced if they are characterised in terms of degrees of advantage or harm found in biological categorisation, which also aligns with International Relations' protection and promotion of the sovereign state and the premise of 'value to the Commonwealth/state/society' that cultural policy requires to subsidise cultural activities. These findings show that by moving beyond economic arguments, social and cultural relationships can be influential to the concerns of cultural policy, are involved in the development of local artist practitioner networks, and provide nations with stronger cultural identities and offerings which aid cultural diplomacy

efforts. In short, by looking at the value of culture in terms of ecological relationships, there are many multi-faceted contributions across political, policy, and social dimensions.

Consequently, my proposition of a shared, symbiotic vocabulary enables us to articulate how the relationships concerning cultural activities and cultural policy might be approached and referred back to in the future. This vocabulary provides a means to address a central issue faced globally by governments today: the deficiency of holistically applied criteria to 'assess' the inherently subjective terrain that culture interacts with. By positing a cultural vocabulary that might be more experientially applied, we can begin to more directly compare what types of relationships work best in what locations and within certain contexts. By considering how aesthetic content can also contribute to the formation of relationships over the course of cultural activities, as with the example of Rimini Protokoll, I have also articulated a means to strengthen the unique influence that the arts and culture play in international politics in terms the value of cultural relationships occurring a social dimension.

Conceptually, cultural symbiosis adds depth to the literature on cultural value, which, as discussed in chapter two, contains discourse gaps when it comes to understanding how the relations amongst various agents impact upon conceptions of value. Cultural symbiosis as a series of conceptual metaphors can describe the conditions of relations resulting from cultural activities, but more important is its role in provoking the consideration of the connections between numerous stakeholders that are less visible

in cultural policymaking and cultural value discourse.⁸ Symbiosis's association with ecology reminds us that culture is dynamic and very much enmeshed with the conditions and context under which it is produced and operates. Performance scholar Peter Eckersall notes that 'ecology insists that we think of culture as a living organism dynamically engaged with its environment.'⁹ By considering the nature of the evolving links between individuals, states, institutions and even venues, a more thorough inquiry can be conducted to determine what aspects of cultural projects deliver certain types of returns in terms of symbiosis, and also which aspects may be the riskiest, or require disproportionate input or monitoring. Therefore, culture has the potential to be more strategically inserted into policy manoeuvres if experiential knowledge can be more specifically interrogated in order to better understand the relations that lead to positive or negative outcomes in terms of the state, economics or social dimensions. More conceptually, it means that the conversation surrounding the value of culture is broadened to encapsulate different types of 'data' that are difficult to quantify, and the role of human experience or subjective judgement exercised by relevant individuals is factored into the consideration of value through their experiences of cultural relationships. Accordingly, the major contribution to knowledge offered by this research is the focus on symbiosis, and the ecology of relationships that occur within cultural activity, that allow us to better understand and articulate the value of culture. This makes a contribution that draws upon social and cultural value and moves beyond

⁸ In the case of the Australian political context, it was discussed in chapter two that public diplomacy is largely measured in terms of high-level KPIs and evaluative criteria that focus on execution and linkage to public diplomacy strategic objectives, rather than the quality and characteristics of interactions and associations that were maintained/established.

⁹ Eckersall, Peter, Gray, Dominic, Menon, Jisha & Van Graan, Mike, (2013) 'Valuing Ecologies of Performance: Culture and Capital in a Neoliberal World,' *Performance Research*, Vol. 18, no. 2, April, p. 31.

economistic arguments, which may in turn inform future cultural policy and understandings of the value of artistic practitioner networks.

Findings in terms of Cultural Value in Australia Today

In comparing the case studies of Rimini Protokoll, DFAT, the NPEA and CoM, a range of stakeholders who contribute to how the value of culture is understood or pursued are evident. The significant relations contained in the case studies discussed in this thesis include interactions amongst stakeholders, such as government agents and artistic practitioners, between government agencies/departments, between artistic practitioners and the general public. On a more abstract level, there are also intersections between economic, political and social understandings of culture and the conceptions of value within these respective domains. The array of stakeholders, therefore, demonstrates a diversity between the various groups that are involved in shaping how we understand the value of culture, whether these groups are identifiable as formal institutions such as government departments, or groups that are a less structured collective of individuals, such as artistic practitioners or the general public. Furthermore, despite related subject matter, the conception of value across the three cases of cultural policies and activities also varies, which suggests that specific political, economic and social factors influence and challenge perceptions surrounding how culture can be best valued.

In the case of the NPEA, there was a clash in perceptions of value, between a government minister, Brandis, and Australian artistic practitioners which resulted in an antagonistic (-/-) outcome. Here, the very premise of cultural value was disputed—is culture for the nation first and foremost, and should it be allowed more exploratory freedom, or be held accountable to bureaucratic conceptions of excellence? The NPEA's source of funding was also contentious and characterised by a series of parasitic (+/-) interactions, whereby the Arts Ministry reallocated funds to themselves from the arm's length arts funding body, the Australia Council. Eventually, the attempt to strategically redeploy cultural funding to be more narrowly allocated by the Arts Ministry in terms of public-private partnerships and cultural diplomacy initiatives was revised, highlighting the folly of attempting to reconfigure the cultural sector without consultation with the makers of cultural content itself. It also showed how the theoretical processes of cultural value can clash with realpolitik. It also demonstrates the very important role of domestic stakeholders when attempting to invest in the perception of a nation, and what can happen if this role is downplayed or preoccupied with the outward focus of cultural politics and/or expansion of cultural industries.

This commensal (+/0) approach to culture, where the needs of the nation are disproportionately prioritised while aesthetic content and voices are absent in the pursuit of value, is also echoed in the evaluative process that DFAT deploys in terms of its public and cultural diplomacy activity. While this absence might be attributed to the managerialist format of end-of-year reporting and the use of metrics and KPIs, this process highlights how the privileging of instrumental outcomes, and hence

measurement of them, remains the most common approach to articulating value, despite the more conceptually broad context of soft power and mutual understanding that is pursued at a national level.

In the case of the CoM, the 'value' of value was also flattened to adhere to the tenets of economics-based parameters. The conceptual, commensal (+/0) interaction amongst art practitioners and the government (in this case, city council) was evident as reports of positive outcomes were articulated in terms of increasing the size of the cultural industries in Melbourne, but the sector itself and actual artistic content is less relevant and not critically considered in strategic planning or reporting documentation surrounding Melbourne's cultural policy. The emphasis on the importance of economic growth also relegates the social value (of the arts), despite the two being intertwined. The key relationships that CoM's reporting documentation privileged were relations of scale, measured by the number of artists and 'audiences' or participants who accessed CoM-subsidised art. Success, or successful cultural value, was evaluated, on the whole, through maximal participation in cultural activity and the growth of the arts and cultural sector as connected to the global, cultural branding strategy of being known as a Creative City. Although the creative economy narrative (realised in the CoM as Creative City) is a means to consistently advocate for the expenditure of funds on cultural causes, its use in this case also lacks the space to consider the specific contributions of its actual cultural activity (such as aesthetic content or consideration of community benefits that are, for example, more social in nature). Rather, CoM 's Creative City strategy appears

more geared towards the attainment of (cultural) status as a means to value its cultural practitioners and activities.

In the case of Rimini Protokoll, value is more dynamic as these cultural practitioners play with modes of participation and literally display census demographics using human bodies in their performances of *100% City*. Through the notion of critical aesthetics, there is potential to understand how culture has the ability to effect change (and add value), when it comes to describing the effects that a cultural work might have upon society. In *100% Melbourne*, this approach to culture provides mutual value as people are not only brought together, but their subsequent interactions are also valuable to a society or nation, including conversations about and between cultures, and an ability to stand together as a group but also as separate individuals. These social interactions, where the forging of people-to-people links involve very diverse individuals, represent a valuable type of relations at a political level as they are assumed to contribute to social cohesion or, at the least, awareness of other cultures and people. What is also interesting about the case of Rimini Protokoll is their process of creating ‘cultural activities,’ which in *100% City* is a participant-based model of a Theatre of Experts. Despite links to cultural value and observations concerning what their work facilitated in Melbourne (or what is known in bureaucratic or evaluative terms as, ‘outcomes’ or ‘impacts’ of the work), Rimini Protokoll are not primarily concerned with outcomes in a policy sense. Rather, Rimini Protokoll’s work and process of producing performances such as *100% City* are people-focused and result in the generation of relatable content, and feature the telling of stories that concern people—especially those whose stories

are less present in the public domain. This, of course, might serve to highlight the differences in the roles between artists and policymakers or governments. However, by looking at Rimini Protokoll in this way and highlighting their contributions to conceptions of cultural value, it also demonstrates why the frame of reference in which cultural value is approached is in need of an update, if it is to more fully encompass the experiences of cultural activity on a human level.

My examination of cultural value has also provided a potential path for a heightened role of aesthetics. Critical aesthetics as a means of world-making, which we saw in my analysis of Rimini Protokoll, can allow the *content* of cultural activities to be explored in terms of how they align with wider political goals. Rather than talking about which cultural activities *have* value (like soft power) in relation to policy outcomes, cultural symbiosis encourages dialogue to interrogate *how* cultural value operates in terms of who is involved and the nature of the relations between these parties. This means that the contributions the *content* of artistic products/cultural activities make to brand 'Australia,' or to realise the aims of cultural policy, can be understood in more concrete terms. There is much more work to be done in this area.

Overall, these cases demonstrate the mechanisms which limit how the value of culture, and especially the arts, is described and justified in the public and political realm. Measuring the public value of the arts is an ongoing issue that is being considered across a variety of disciplines. However, as we recall from chapter two, for scholars like Belfiore, today's problem lies not in the instrumentality of aesthetic expression per se, but how

its profitability is highlighted over other benefits. When viewed from the rhetoric of the creative economy, the push for a market-driven agenda is more practical and accessible, especially when debate surrounding what an art-based agenda looks like in Australia continues.¹⁰ Australia is interested, but currently still developing, an updated strategic response to address many of these considerations to determine how to extend its influence abroad and improve perceptions of the country. We know that improving soft power is currently on the Australian agenda when it is directly discussed in the recently released Foreign Policy White Paper.¹¹ Yet, pursuing soft power through the existence of international linkages alone is not sufficient to consistently impact upon other nations and cultures to positively influence Australia's reputation and brand as a nation, even within the strongest of soft power strategies.

As a response to this context, I proposed that rather than a foreign policy tool, or key deliverable of cultural policy, repositioning the value of culture as an ongoing interaction involving changing human sensitivities is central to redefining the question of value. My use of symbiosis articulates various groupings that allow for a comparison of the outcomes of cultural activities via the identification of relations between them. Cultural symbiosis's 'types' of relationships mean that a cultural diplomacy event, for example, can be studied individually as a means to assist cultural relations staff to better identify and record locally based 'key players' for future reference and collaboration.

¹⁰ Meyrick, et al., *What Matters? Talking Value in Australian Culture*, pp. 19–20.

¹¹ The paper notes that '...the Government will also develop a stronger nation brand that better positions Australia in the eyes of the global community. In competitive and fast-changing global markets, we want to be recognised as uniquely Australian.' See, '2017 Foreign Policy White Paper,' *DFAT*, p. 110. Given these comments, the pending release of Australia's next public diplomacy strategy will also be of great interest to read in the context of cultural value discourse.

Conceptually, therefore, cultural symbiosis has the potential to help orientate a narrative form of 'data' towards a more informed understanding of the types of value that are generated via cultural activity beyond the standard strategic goals of public policies.

Applying symbiosis to the case studies also helped to further the knowledge surrounding cultural value by demonstrating several additional points. These points include:

- that cultural relationships can contain harmful elements that may be inevitable at certain stages over the life cycle of stakeholder interactions, and that this is an 'organic' part of a cultural ecosystem where various relationships flourish, peak and decline;
- that different types of value might be experienced simultaneously by stakeholders involved in cultural interactions, indicating the multiplicity and complexity of cultural value; and
- that facilitating the beneficial coevolution of cultural stakeholders can enhance cultural value.

Future Directions

A future direction for the findings of this research lies in the potential to assess a wider variety of interactions than what is currently evaluated in policy contexts. In terms of policy analysis, the process of recording feedback may be currently limited by factors such as staff resources, reporting structures and the variety of voices (perceptions) that

report the outcomes of events produced as a result of particular cultural policies. Future attention to symbiotic relationships within this space describes the relationships within stand-alone cultural projects, and has the potential to provide comparative 'data' with which to assess activities over the course of a year, as well as track similar activities across wider policy frameworks (such as *Future Melbourne*) or even form the beginnings of forecasting tools to identify and track trends (such as success and failure) with regard to cultural policy. The organisation of the 'data' provided by cultural symbiosis might also be used for data mapping. Although this technology is presently under-realised, approaches to the quantification of culture in Australia have been attempted previously and a means to better approach the terms of relations between agents in this space would be useful in shifting the balance from an over-reliance on numbers (e.g. how many cultural activities that meet public policy objectives) to a dialogue that also considers the inherent value of the relations generated by cultural activities.¹²

Thinking about the relations of cultural activity in terms of symbiosis offers a conceptual provocation or *beginning* of a way of thinking to reposition the direction of current discourse about cultural value. This provocation has potential to be more widely applied in a practical context and evolve according to the needs and resources of those who adopt cultural symbiosis to examine the networks that are established in their relevant fields. This way forward represents a third avenue to the approach of cultural value which Meyrick et al. note, 'combine[s] both types of [qualitative and quantitative]

¹² Such as the ABS economic modelling in 2008 of creative satellite accounts.

information in a way that makes sense of them as different but aligned sources of knowledge.’¹³

While cultures are vastly different globally and even across smaller regions, a cultural symbiosis does not seek to conflate these differences, but instead endeavours to highlight common practices and shared values. It also provides a space and theoretical impetus to understand what type of relationships are less desirable, exploitative or perhaps of neutral or little value. This information can be considered in decision-making concerning arts and cultural funding about what types of investments are the most fruitful, and where funding is best allocated. In this context, cultural symbiosis assists to describe culture in terms that complement existing governmental or institutional processes, yet is mid-way between making a ‘special case’ for culture and the arts or relying on ‘inappropriate modes of scientific address’ to make a case for the value of culture.¹⁴ The impressions of and responses to cultural activity are the focus of cultural symbiosis, in order to gauge how a state (for example, Australia) is faring when it comes to its achievement of public diplomacy goals or cultural policy goals. If recorded and compared over time, symbiotic language will reveal patterns and trends that are difficult to discern at the micro-level. This may lead to the ‘coding’ of a wide variety of individual experiences, learnings and challenges in the relations that occur as a result of cultural activities using symbiosis in the future, meaning that they then have the ability to be

¹³ Meyrick, et al., *What Matters? Talking Value in Australian Culture*, p. 121.

¹⁴ Meyrick et al. note that the conversation around the evaluation of culture needs to be changed, so that it reflects more context and is less reliant on metric power. To them, value can only exist through metrical indicators when it is socially endorsed. Therefore, rather than relying on numbers to ‘speak for themselves,’ they are ‘made to speak by the words around them and the rhetorical purpose for which they are arranged.’ Meyrick, et al., *What Matters? Talking Value in Australian Culture*, pp. xxvii–4.

aggregated and yield further insights into the nature of their value. This is not foreign to the private sector, yet is vastly underutilised in areas of government, such as foreign affairs and cultural policy. The next steps for cultural symbiosis, therefore, may be to develop a series of standard variables that might contribute to the coding of cultural activities on a larger scale.

These potential directions also highlight the unique nature of cultural symbiosis, in that it attempts to put form to perceptions and subjective data alongside a categorical identification of data when it comes to valuing culture for the purposes of policy. This is not done to fix the position of culture in this field, but as a means to provide a mechanism to compare similar scenarios. Rather than seeking to define culture in order to prescribe its utility as a foreign affairs or policy tool, I argue that looking to the configuration of relationships (cultural symbiosis) means that the tracking of cultural ‘assets’ and operation across a variety of circumstances will ultimately highlight the instances where learnings might be gained from these connections.¹⁵ This is in direct response to one of the most common challenges of value this thesis has considered—how to approach its effects in a more meaningful, and perhaps more strategic, manner.

Moving forward, I also encourage cultural policy and cultural diplomacy scholarship to consider these contributions with the aim of reorientating the conceptualisation of culture in a way that allows for cultural value’s unique intersection with the subjective

¹⁵ Instances for learning might be to more closely investigate the correlation or commonalities between a series of mutualistic or commensal relationships across a subsection of certain cultural activities funded by DFAT, for example.

to be encouraged. By widening the field to look to alternative conceptions of value, especially in terms of the types of relations that are produced, we can restructure our understandings further to more fully negotiate and comprehend new ways in which the value of culture might be comprehended in the future.

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