Understanding Socially Engaged Arts as Discourse and Experience:

Discursive structures of inequality, and art as experience

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

June 2022

Abstract

This thesis used a heuristic-ethnographic methodology to understand socially engaged arts practice. In so doing, the study has identified two distinct paradigms for conceptualising and exploring socially engaged art: as discursive practice in the funded arts sector, and as aesthetic experience in amateur participation. Part One explores socially engaged arts as discursive practice in the funded arts field, revealing structures of power, exclusion and dispossession that serve to produce and reproduce hierarchies of cultural value in the interests of funded institutions and those who dominate them. This phase of the analysis uses Bourdieu's theorising of *The Field of Cultural Production* (Bourdieu, 1993) and language as symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1991b) to identify how the endogenous problematisation of inequality and the exogenous pressures of policy attachment construct socially engaged arts as, primarily, a discursive practice that legitimises the inequality of funding distribution, disconnects discursive from realised practice, and marginalises the visibility and social potential of amateur socially engaged arts.

Part Two explores socially engaged arts as aesthetic experience expressed through amateur participation, illuminating forms of creativity that are absent from existing scholarship and cultural policy. This phase of the analysis finds the limitations of Bourdieu's analytical scheme, and proposes an alternative approach drawn from kinship studies and John Dewey's conceptualisation of *Art as Experience* (Dewey, 1958). This alternative theoretical approach is used to probe the complexity and potential of amateur socially engaged arts practice, revealing intrinsic motivations that structure amateur socially engaged activities, and do not conform to the exigencies of competition and status that characterise the funded arts field (where discursive practices function as transmuted forms of economic capital, and are thus available to Bourdieu's analysis) or to the commonly theorised motivations of sociability and self-interest (Stebbins, 1982; Putnam, 2000). The amateur socially engaged activities examined in this research are structured by, and organised to express, the aesthetic phase of 'mutuality of being' (Sahlins, 2011a) through the unity of volunteerism, nurture and creativity.

Taken together, these modes of socially engaged practice reveal that cultural policy, contemporary cultural policy studies, and research exploring amateur participation have issues to address when it comes to the disconnect between discourse and practice in the funded sector, the marginalisation of amateur socially engaged activities (that do not fit with limited, and limiting, notions of what socially

engaged arts should be, the forms it can take or how it can be done) and the social value of kinship as aesthetic experience realised through everyday amateur participation.

Table of Contents

Introduction: socially engaged arts as two interconnecting problems

i.   **The problem – origins of the research**

This thesis has been inspired by 20 years' experience as a professional Arts Development Officer, Creative Producer and Director in the UK's funded arts sector. In these contexts, my work was to help people 'fulfil their creative potential and access the highest quality cultural experiences' (ACE, 2021b, p. 15) through activities commonly referred to as 'community arts', 'participatory arts', 'outreach' and/or 'socially engaged art' – activities that, as summarised by Ramsden et al., are 'organised by a paid individual (or individuals) or where the activity is organised on behalf of members [participants]' (Ramsden et al., 2011, p. 12). For clarity (as will be explained in the next chapter, *Methodology and research design*), this thesis uses the term 'socially engaged' to address these forms collectively.

My work during those 20 years was directed by overarching cultural policy, organised around the sector's longstanding objectives of 'excellence and access' (Gross and Wilson, 2018, p. 1). I initiated projects that sought to engage people in arts activities in order to solicit wider social benefits such as community cohesion, improved health and wellbeing, economic regeneration and awareness of particular social concerns (Belfiore and Bennett, 2007; Henley, 2016). In this effort, I encountered two interconnecting problems. Firstly, I often failed, as does the sector as a whole (see Mirza, 2006a; Hewison, 2014). Empirical studies have revealed persistent failure when it comes to access to arts employment and funding, and participation in the products of the funded arts sector, predominantly along lines of ethnicity and social class. It is routinely highlighted that public arts funding benefits only a small, active minority of predominantly white, middle-class participants (Neelands *et al.*, 2015; Brook, David O'Brien and Taylor, 2018)[1]. Despite widespread acknowledgement of this inequality (see McAndrew et al., 2017; Brook et al., 2018; Hewison, 2020) and the proactive rhetoric of socially engaged arts practices (see Belfiore, 2009; O'Brien and Miles, 2010) the funded sector has failed to bridge the gap between the destinations of arts funding and the cultural lives of most people (Neelands *et al.*, 2015). In my own experience, while it achieved some success, it seemed that my work often followed this course.

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[1] Research literature often discusses 'social class' in vague, loosely defined terms, referring to communities, social background, inequality and occupations, and their relations to labour markets. This study understands class using the National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC) framework, which has informed recent and influential studies of arts participation and cultural employment. This framework clusters occupations into eight groups, from I (higher managerial and professional, e.g. doctors, CEOs and lawyers) to VII (occupations such as bar staff, care workers and cleaners), with VIII referring to those who have never worked or who are long-term unemployed. As O'Brien et al. point out, using this framework reveals creative occupations as 'middle-class' jobs, 'even though they may be low-paid and precarious for many people trying to work in them' (Brook, David O'Brien and Taylor, 2018, p. 39). There are, of course, other ways in which to understand class relations that may have been used in research cited in this thesis.

Research literature offers several explanations for this failure, and these will be considered in this thesis. One explanation, the focus of Part One, is the disconnect between what is *said* about socially engaged arts and what these practices are doing and achieving. During this study, attention was drawn to the particular role of the discourses operationalised in arts funding, and how these inculcate the inequalities that socially engaged arts ostensibly seek to address, marginalising other forms of arts participation, such as amateur groups and their broader social value. This led to the second problem this thesis seeks to understand. In asking the question, 'what is socially engaged arts?', I realised that my own *amateur* participation (playing in bands for fun) solicited social benefits through activities that would never be described, considered or conceptualised as *socially engaged* in funded or academic work, not even by myself, a professional producer in the funded sector. In other words, there is a particular language and way of thinking about arts participation in the funded world that appears to ignore, or devalue, the social benefits of amateur participation, while often failing to deliver the social benefits and inclusion upon which funding is arbitrated.

Part Two of this thesis, therefore, explores how amateur arts can be every bit as socially engaged, and how this potential is persistently overlooked. I observed this problem across extant literature, in which concern with public expenditure focuses on the social benefits of the funded arts but pays little attention to the impacts of amateur forms. As such, an understanding of the impacts and potential of amateur participation remains largely unappreciated and under-researched (Ramsden et al., 2011), leading to a rudimentary account of amateur practices, often understood through a limited, and limiting, range of theoretical approaches. In this study, attention to unresearched forms of amateur participation has led to an alternative theoretical approach that draws from both John Dewey's conceptualisation of 'Art as Experience' (Dewey, 1958) and ideas developed in contemporary kinship studies (this will be elaborated in 2.4).

And so, in the lead-up to this project I experienced two interconnecting problems that have inspired this research: the gap between discourse and practice in the funded sector, and the gap between the value and understanding of professional and amateur arts activities. These gaps crystallised into the research questions that frame this thesis.

ii.   Research questions

Four questions have evolved from and guided this research:

Part One:

1. How are 'socially engaged' discourses constructed in the publicly funded arts?
2. How do these discourses affect amateur/voluntary arts activity?

Part Two:

3. Can amateur arts be understood as 'socially engaged' and, if so, how do amateur socially engaged arts practices organise and sustain themselves?
4. What does amateur socially engaged work tell us about the relationship between cultural policy, funded institutions and amateur participation?

These questions explore how discourses about socially engaged art in the funded sector contribute to ongoing inequality and the marginalisation of amateur practices, while illuminating how amateur practices can be understood as 'socially engaged' and, further, they explore how amateur socially engaged activities are mobilised and structured outside the funded sector. This allows the thesis to examine 'socially engaged arts' from two perspectives: professional/discursive and amateur/experiential. In Part One (addressing *socially engaged art as discourse in the funded sector*) the analysis draws upon Pierre Bourdieu's theorising of cultural production (Bourdieu, 1993) and linguistic markets (Bourdieu, 1991) to unearth structures of inequality that restrict access to, and the distribution of, public arts funding (focusing on Arts Council England [ACE] in particular). Turning to amateur participation, Part Two finds the limitations of Bourdieu's theorising which, while effective for understanding inequality in arts funding and professionalised institutions, becomes overly deterministic and reductive when it comes to amateur arts participation. Here, the thesis proposes an approach combining Dewey's 'Art as Experience' (Dewey, 1958) with conceptual developments rooted in kinship studies, to reveal the importance of family, friendship and faith[2] for amateur socially engaged arts intermediaries. In this way, the thesis works *with and against Bourdieu* to offer a multidimensional analysis that provides a detailed understanding of what socially engaged arts is, and its function within funded and amateur paradigms, without falling into the common trap of privileging the funded arts over amateur participation.

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[2] For some interviewees, religious faith plays a role in the aesthetic experience of their work - secondary to family and friendship, but a constituent of kinship understood complex ways. This theme was explored in depth but owing to the focus and scope of the analysis has not been included in the thesis. Instead, it will be published later as a monograph.

iii.   Significance

There is an ethical question surrounding public arts funding, particularly National Lottery funding distributed through ACE. As Stark et al. summarise, 'poorer sections of society play the game [the Lottery] more regularly than others, using a higher proportion of their income' (Stark et al., 2013, p. 10), while the beneficiaries are, as the Warwick Commission reported, 'the wealthiest, better educated and least ethnically diverse 8% of the population' (Neelands, Belfiore and Firth, 2015, p. 33). The ethical question is, therefore: on what basis is this unequal distribution justified and sustained? Studies exploring the structural inequalities of the funded arts sector have, for good reason, focused on the social stratification of employment and corresponding artistic/aesthetic preferences of a predominantly white middle class who dominate positions of power and influence in the sector (Brook et al., 2018). This has gone some way in explaining the social-structural conditions that have led to the sector's failure to broaden access and participation. However, relatively little attention has been paid to the discourses that enable this inequality, particularly those that ostensibly recognise and seek to address inequality through representations of 'socially engaged' artistic work.

One notable exception (that has influenced this study) has been David Stevenson's *Understanding the Problem of Cultural Non-participation: Discursive structures, articulatory practice and cultural domination* (Stevenson, 2016), which explores how (within the funded sector) the problematisation of non-participation functions as a discursive apparatus that, for pragmatic reasons, has been constructed and mobilised to solicit public investment, when in reality there is no certainty 'that an exogenous "problem" of poor cultural participation exists, and that what policies to increase cultural participation are tackling is an endogenous "problem" that exists because the Government subsidises certain cultural organisations' (Stevenson, 2013, p. 83). Stevenson argues that non-participation, as it is understood in the funded arts, is a 'myth' (Jancovich, 2017). Extending this hypothesis, it can (and will in Part One) be argued that socially engaged arts, when directed towards addressing the problem of 'non-participation', is a publicly funded solution to a problem that is, at best, uncertain and functions as a discursive practice that justifies inequitable public funding. These points will be developed in 1.2 and 1.3.

If a more equitable solution to cultural funding is to be realised, it is vital to understand how inequality has been produced and reproduced through the very discursive practices that seek to address it – socially engaged arts. This thesis offers an important contribution by revealing how the discursive practices of socially engaged art provide justifications, structural frameworks and schemes of perception that reproduce the unequal distribution of funding. Alongside this (and in some ways

because of it), there is a significant knowledge gap when it comes to amateur participation in general, and the socially engaged nature and benefits of amateur practice in particular. As Ramsden et al. have noted, 'UK studies have tended to focus on the impact of capital investment… [and so] very little is known, certainly in the academic/accessible literature on, for example, the role voluntary arts play… There are no publicly available social audits on grassroots arts groups' (Ramsden et al., 2011, p. 26). The small range of scholarship to have explored amateur participation tends to focus on the social, health and economic benefits of a narrow range of the most visible, structured activities, such as those of amateur dramatics societies (Dodd et al., 2008; Ramsden et al., 2011; Holdsworth et al., 2017; Walcon and Nicholson, 2017), operatic societies (Matarasso, 2012) and grassroots music scenes (Music Venue Trust, 2015). Extant theorising presents a rudimentary account of what motivates and structures amateur arts participation, limited predominately to the assumption that it is organised around both self-development, through the acquisition of skills equivalent to those in the professionalised arts, and the sociability of co-producing performances. The idea that amateur participation could be purposefully organised for the social benefits of others is largely absent from existing research.

Again, if a fairer and more inclusive approach to cultural policy is to be achieved, understanding the social impacts of amateur participation, and what motivates these impacts, is of vital importance. As such, while identifying how discursive practices reproduce inequality in the funded sector, this thesis illuminates amateur socially engaged arts as a specific form of cultural work, organised to provide social benefit to others, beyond the limiting framework of self-interest and sociability (Part Two).

iv.   Structure of the thesis

The mechanisms of inequality that operate in arts funding and the potential of amateur participation are both vital centres of knowledge that must be developed and incorporated into a holistic understanding of the role of arts participation in public life. To achieve this, the thesis is structured in two parts. Part One (1.1–1.4) focuses on research questions 1 and 2:

1. How are 'socially engaged' discourses constructed in the publicly funded arts?
2. How do these discourses affect amateur/voluntary arts activity?

This phase of analysis works *with Bourdieu* to understand socially engaged arts as a discursive practice structured by the linguistic market of the funded field, unearthing how this discursive practice/market contributes to inequality by marginalising the social potential of amateur socially engaged activities.

Part Two (2.1–2.5) examines *amateur socially engaged arts* as a specific form of practice that is almost completely absent from existing analysis. Here, the thesis focuses on research questions 3 and 4:

3. Can amateur arts be understood as 'socially engaged' and, if so, how do amateur socially engaged arts practices organise and sustain themselves?
4. What does amateur socially engaged work tell us about the relationship between cultural policy, funded institutions and amateur participation?

This phase of the study explores the underlying motivations and experiential qualities of *amateur socially engaged arts* – activities explicitly organised for the wider social benefit provided to others – that do not conform to extant theorising of amateur participation. Here, analysis works *against Bourdieu*, critiquing the limitations of his approach and offering instead both John Dewey's conceptualisation of the aesthetic nature of experience and ideas evolving in kinship studies (specifically Sahlins' [2011a] concept of 'mutuality of being') as an alternative framework that reveals how intrinsic, intersubjective motivations produce unique forms of *socially engaged creativity*. This highlights alternative pathways for future cultural policy, accounting for the social benefit realised through amateur participation, with closer attention to the subjective/aesthetic dimensions of experience (Dewey, 1958).

As will be explained in the next chapter, this thesis takes the view that, because there are homologies between academic and cultural fields (Bourdieu, 1991; 1993), academic literature contributes to discourses in the funded arts sector. Analysis of literature produced within the sector reveals that academic studies are often used selectively to produce discourses that justify expenditure and practices. As Stevenson points out, 'traditional literature reviews that set out to undertake a process of gap-spotting… tend towards affirming the dominant discourses in the field of study and sustain the normative practices within the institution of academia. Such an approach tends to under-problematise existing literature and in so doing acts to reinforce rather than challenge existing theories and the logics and assumptions on which they are based' (Stevenson, 2016, pp. 44–45). Therefore, literature review is handled within the analysis. The thesis moves next to methodology and research techniques, explaining the heuristic-ethnographic approach used to develop a holistic understanding of the role and motivations of socially engaged arts in both funded and amateur arts contexts.

Methodology and research design

i.   **Introduction**

This chapter outlines the methodological approach and research techniques used in this study. Roman numerals are used to avoid confusion with Parts One and Two of the analysis that follows. After clarifying key terminology (*ii*), the discussion begins by outlining the rationale for the naturalist ethnographic approach (*iii*). This is followed by an explanation of the role of reflexivity, and of how this has provided a tool for phenomenological understanding (iv). Section *v.* introduces important concepts and ideas developed in Heuristic Inquiry, and how these have been incorporated into the heuristic-ethnographic approach to enable research-of-self and research-of-others to participate in the development of data through a bricolage of research techniques. Sections *vi.* and *vii.* explain the processes of data selection, and specific techniques used in the self-research and external inquiry stages. Section *viii.* outlines how grounded theory has been used, and in *iv.* the various ways in which data has been triangulated. Section *x.* addresses the ethical considerations encountered and the practical solutions undertaken throughout this project.

ii.   **Terminology**

Before describing the methodological approach and data-collection techniques employed, it is important to clarify the terminology used in this thesis. As described in the introduction, I encountered numerous terms that referred to ostensibly similar activities in the funded arts sector: *community art*, *outreach, participatory art, engagement* and *socially engaged art*. These often appeared interchangeably to identify practices wherein professional artists target particular groups to engage them in activities and/or solicit social benefits such as community cohesion or improved health and wellbeing[3]. These activities could be 'passive' (i.e. consulting with groups to inform artworks made by professional artists) or 'active' (i.e. engaging participants in the creation of an artwork) (Belfiore, 2006 in Mirza, 2006). In this thesis, to avoid confusion, these forms of practice will be referred to collectively as 'socially engaged art', although occasionally other terms may appear in quotations.

The other important terminology to be clarified relates to the institutional frameworks surrounding professional and amateur artistic work. In the analysis that follows, Bourdieu's conceptual framework

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[3] This type of work will be explored in depth in 1.2 and 1.3. Examples from my own work include 'Punchline', a project in which professional dancers, boxers, filmmakers and musicians worked with NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) young people to create a performance in a boxing ring as part of the 2012 Cultural Olympiad. This project was funded to provide content for the Olympic ceremonies while engaging young people in education and training. A further example is 'Desi Pubs', a project that commissioned 12 artists to work with Asian pub landlords in the Black Country. (West Midlands) to create artworks and a festival that promoted the region's heritage and involved local people in positive community activities.

of 'social fields' is used to understand publicly funded arts practices. This framework is useful but, as will be seen in Part Two, also limited. In this study, analysis is conceptually preceded by (or contained within) John Holden's more straightforward 'Three Spheres of Culture': funded, commercial and homemade (Holden, 2015). While I recognise the overlap and interconnections between these paradigms, this provides a useful starting point for exploring how different institutional frameworks undergird and shape socially engaged arts practices. In this thesis, 'funded sphere', 'funded sector' and 'funded field' refer to activities that are publicly funded through Arts Council England, local government, central government (Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport – DCMS) or other channels of public investment. The 'commercial sphere' describes activities that 'exist without direct public investment, and [from which] individuals and organisations must make an overall profit in order to survive' (Holden, 2015, p. 9) – there is a direct economic relationship between producer and consumer in a commercial, vendor/customer relationship. This area of work is *not a focus of this thesis*, which examines funded and amateur socially engaged artistic work, and so arts markets and commercial creative industries are not entered into the analysis, although some quoted material aggregates data from both funded and commercial sectors (cultural and creative industries – CCIs).

Holden's 'homemade' sphere is a broad category, referring to voluntary, amateur and hobbyist forms of arts participation, 'defined by the fact that people do not get paid for their work' (Holden, 2015, p. 8). Again, in literature and industry jargon, numerous terms and subcategories are used for this heterogeneous world, i.e. 'grassroots', 'voluntary', 'unfunded', 'amateur' and 'everyday'. While recognising that these terms carry certain nuances, when speaking in general about forms of artistic activity that exist outside funded and commercial paradigms, for clarity I will use the term 'amateur' or 'voluntary', because both are commonly used in literature (for example Stebbins, 2006; Dodd et al., 2008; Ramsden et al., 2011; Nicholson, 2015), although, again, other terms may appear in quotations. In this thesis, while different theoretical approaches are used in analysis, Holden's overarching spheres – funded, commercial, and amateur (homemade) – provide a useful starting point that differentiates between contrasting frameworks for artistic practice.

iii.   The ethnographic approach

The thesis that follows has developed from heuristic-ethnographic study. From the outset, the choice to adopt ethnographic methods was guided by the range of techniques on offer, including interviews, interaction, observation, narrative analysis, auto-ethnography and reflexivity. This methodological toolbox was fitting for research that sought to illuminate practices that are contested, opaque, and

involve complex subjective motivations[4]. The choice was also inspired by the compelling range of studies surveyed that have employed ethnographic approaches to similar research questions[5].

This project has adopted a 'naturalist' ethnographic approach, bringing qualitative, rather than quantitative, data into analysis (Merriam, 2009). This decision was based on the epistemological questions surrounding positivist approaches, which assume that the more interaction a researcher has within the field, the more findings become the artefacts of that researcher's presence, compromising the integrity of the research (Aull Davies, 1999; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007; Chang, 2008). Positivist ethnographers, it is argued, should remove their influence by placing themselves *outside* the phenomena they seek to explain, using distancing techniques such as survey, statistical analysis and observation. Today, the idea that positivist methods can, alone, yield objective truths about social and cultural phenomena has been superseded by the naturalist perspective, which acknowledges how such techniques (albeit useful) are unable to provide contextualised answers to social/cultural questions (Slater and Gidley, 2007). The naturalist ethnographer takes the position that research methods should operate within the social world under investigation, responding to the way in which 'human behaviour is continually constructed, and reconstructed, on the basis of people's interpretations of the situations they are in' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007, p. 18). Rather than attempting to remove themselves from the field of study, researchers should be made invisible by fully submerging themselves within it in order to explore phenomena in their natural context, 'assuming the position of the outsider within, viewing everything, including the familiar, as though it were "anthropologically strange", and in so doing rendering it into an object available for study' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007, p. 9).

This provided a useful starting point for me, as an arts professional *turned researcher of arts professionals*, who, upon embarking on this project, was already submerged in the field, with considerable access to the meanings that guide behaviour therein. However, while positivism and naturalism advocate different approaches, both regard the researcher as a potential source of

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[4] There is no constant, formalised definition of what socially engaged art is, or should involve. As will be seen in the chapters that follow (1.3 - 1.4), there are many interpretations and approaches to socially engaged arts, and disagreement around the veracity of these divergent interpretations and approaches. It will be seen that the most constant feature is that socially engaged arts practices are something artists and arts organisations do on the discursive plane in the competition for funding by expressing or implying the wider social benefit of their work.

[5] Examples include 'Local governance, disadvantaged communities and cultural intermediation in the creative urban economy' (Warren and Jones, 2015), 'Revealing and re-valuing cultural intermediaries in the "real" creative city: insights from a diary-keeping exercise' (Perry et al., 2015), *Understanding the Problem of Cultural Non-participation: Discursive structures, articulatory practice and cultural domination* (Stevenson, 2016) and 'The sociable aesthetics of amateur theatre' (Walcon and Nicholson, 2017)

distortion that can and should be managed, seeking to eliminate the researcher's presence by 'turning him or her either, in one case, into an automaton or, in the other, into a neutral vessel of cultural experience' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2010, p. 15). Since from the onset of this research I was already submerged in the field, it would be disingenuous to imagine that I could become a 'neutral vessel of cultural experience'; the questions that guide this study have evolved from more than 20 years of pre-research involvement with socially engaged arts in the funded sector, and frustration with the inequalities of arts funding distribution. Further, the research engages interviewees who have prior knowledge of me and my work. This raised epistemological challenges, particularly in relation to potential pre-reflexive assumptions that I brought to the study. The task, then, has been to recognise and interrogate my preconceptions so that I may 'bracket' my position in relation to the object(s) of study.

iv.   Reflexivity

In contemporary ethnography, reflexivity recognises that the researcher is a part of the social world they study and that, to varying degrees, they are co-participants whose subjective interpretation influences the findings. Reflexivity acknowledges how

> the orientations of researchers will be shaped by their socio-historical locations, including the values and interests that these locations confer upon them. What this represents is a rejection of the idea that social research is, or can be, carried out in some autonomous realm that is insulated from the wider society and from the biography of the researcher, in such a way that its findings can be unaffected by social processes and personal characteristics (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007, p. 15).

For most, reflexivity involves critical self-examination in order to identify tacit knowledge that may contaminate the process of building an objective analysis:

> It's a matter of 'placing' oneself, which requires the practice of 'Othering' one's own premises, actions, and interpretive tendencies. Logistically, reflexivity is a method of gaining greater sensitivity to the local and global contexts, of identifying one's own location, and of establishing a sense of rigor in one's research (Markham, 2017).

In this context, rigour is contingent upon the researchers' ability to 'bracket' themselves *out of the research*, suspending their 'personal motives and values, with the objective being to minimize the

imposition of such values on the research process' (Sultan, 2019, p. 18). This type of bracketing has been influenced by Bourdieu's methodological approach, which expands the reflexive lens to include not only the researcher but the research discipline itself. Bourdieu argued that reflexivity too often focuses on the disclosures of individuals, while missing the deeper 'scientific unconscious embedded in theories, problems, and… categories of scholarly judgement' (Knafo, 2015, p. 3). Bourdieu viewed this as a 'scholastic fallacy' (Bourdieu, 1990b, p. 384), whereby the social sciences feign an objective point of view as though they have no socially constituted history (Kenway and McLeod, 2004, p. 529). His solution was to put 'perspective into historical perspective' (Bourdieu, 2000, pp. 20–22) and to contextualise the multiple perspectives of subject, object, field of study *and the academic field where the object and field of study have been conceptualised* to produce an intersubjective account (Bourdieu et al., 1999, pp. 3–4).

Bourdieu's 'perspectivism' (Kenway and McLeod, 2004, p. 525) invited intriguing questions for this research. The situation Bourdieu problematised was, for me, inverted. I did not arrive to the research with 'the scholastic point of view' (dispositions, perspectives and intellectual bias deriving from the social sciences) (Bourdieu, 1990b) but, rather, with a point of view constructed within the funded arts world. As such, while important in attaining objectivity, 'bracketing' my subjective experience appeared to limit the potential of my own situated knowledge as both object of study and research tool. Additionally, as Knafo (2015) argues, the extent to which Bourdieu's perspectivism resolves the problems it seeks to address is questionable: 'Scholars who follow this course often fail to explain why assumptions that bias their understanding… would not also condition how they conceive of their own subject position' (Knafo, 2015, p. 2). Knafo cites Bourdieu's own self-analysis as an example of such failure:

> Bourdieu systematically avoids depicting himself in positions of power. The history he tells is always one of resistance to the power of others. And yet this is someone who occupied some of the most prestigious positions in French Academia (Knafo, 2015, p. 6).

Knafo argues that reflexivity is useful only when it conceives of situated knowledge in phenomenological terms. Reflexivity should focus less on the particularisms of multiple perspectives, and more on the nature of subjectivity and the problem it poses for knowledge creation, casting the problem as one concerning subjectivity (in general) rather than the subject [or subjects] in its [or their] specificity (Knafo, 2015). This moves reflexivity towards a focus on *how meaning is made*, and the generative interaction between subject and object – researcher and field:

[The subject] cannot be analysed in abstraction from the object, for what characterises it is not simply the entity that it refers to (i.e. a subject), but more importantly an existential relationship that is intentional and encompasses both the subject and the object. In that sense, the subject of reflexivity is not something we can settle before looking at [the object of study] because there are emergent properties that are always involved in the subject-object relationship (Knafo, 2015, p. 9).

From this perspective, reflexivity can be conceived not only as a control for bias (interrogating and bracketing subjectivity) but also as a powerful tool whereby the research interaction is entered into the methodological and analytical frame, as the researcher uses 'their experience and knowledge of others to expand their knowledge of self. But the selves they explore are of course the products of their own culture and hence this sort of autobiographical exploration in field work also involves greater sensitivity to the way in which cultural realities are constructed' (Aull Davies, 1999, p. 180). In this research, following Knafo, Aull Davies, and Hammersley and Atkinson, reflexivity has been used as both an ongoing process of bracketing and as a means of objectifying my own experience to unearth insights about socially engaged arts. In this way, the study leans into *Heuristic Inquiry* – a phenomenologically aligned method that maximises the potential of s*hared experiences between the researcher and interviewee*, and which is particularly useful in situations where the researcher comes from the field of study and has similar experiences to those being researched:

I do not bracket myself out of my research studies. Instead, I bracket myself into the process of inquiry. As I out my personal interests, motivations, and agenda, I in myself within the study… am able to bring my authentic embodied self into the research process to be present with the authentic embodied selves of the co-researchers as both process and outcome are co-constructed (Sultan, 2019, p. 18).

v.   From auto-ethnography to heuristic-ethnography

In the early stages of this project, I used auto-ethnographic techniques to develop a phenomenological account of how I (prior to the research) came to conceptualise and utilise socially engaged arts in my professional work. This initial activity influenced the direction of the study, which initially sought to evaluate different models of socially engaged arts practice in response to funding cuts. Through auto-ethnographic analysis, attention shifted towards an effort to understand *what socially engaged arts means and does for practitioners, and the diversity of activities that come to be represented as 'socially*

engaged' and how this contributes to inequality in the funded arts sector. As such, self-analysis could only go so far. In addition to this, I could not escape the critique that auto-ethnography's concern with 'self' has contestable epistemological value. Méndez, for example, argues that auto-ethnography can become little more that subjective anecdote, lacking scientific rigour when 'interest in self' becomes inescapably 'self-interested' (Méndez, 2014, p. 283). Ellis and Bochner argue that auto-ethnography provides unstable epistemological foundations because of its inherent retrospection. It is, they say, 'always a story about the past and not the past itself' (Ellis and Bochner, 2000, p. 745). These critiques, while perhaps unfairly dismissive, recognise potential issues and limitations when using auto-ethnography as the sole methodological technique. Further, on consideration, there is no epistemological reason why auto-ethnography cannot be used alongside other methodological approaches to reveal phenomena in the present, leading to the heuristic-ethnographic approach, in which auto-ethnographic techniques are included within a bricolage design.

Heuristic Inquiry is a process of 'self-and-other-exploration, toward shared understanding of the essential nature of the core phenomenon… and its significance to oneself, to others, and to the world' (Sultan, 2019, p. 9). It begins with personal experience and expands outwards to incorporate, compare and reflect upon the experience of others:

> Heuristic inquiry emerges from the researcher's initial engagement, or first encounter, with a topic of extreme interest through an autobiographical experience that, though it is internal and personal to you (the researcher), is potentially of social and universal significance (Sultan, 2019, p. 10).

Figure 1.1. *Topic of Inquiry/Research Question as a Lens for Being, Relating, and Knowing* (Sultan, 2019, p. 12)
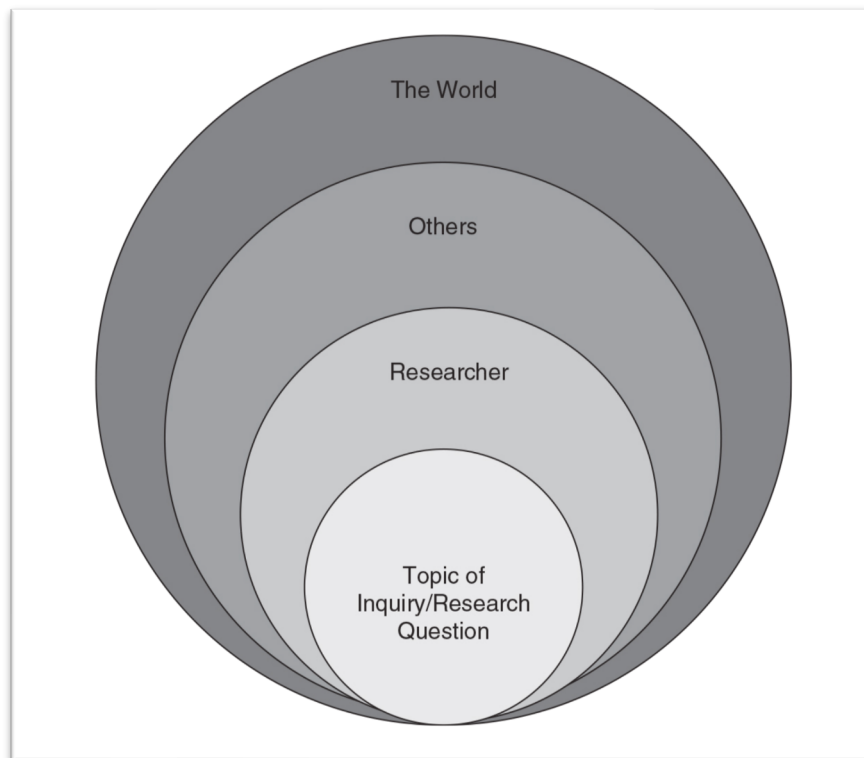
At its heart, it is a phenomenologically aligned method that draws upon the 'communion between what the researcher already knows about the topic and what he is out to learn or discover about it from others who have also experienced it' (Sultan, 2019, p. 2). By placing self-research in conversation with external inquiry 'the researcher's experience acts as a frame of reference for co-creating novel understandings of the living experience that is being explored' (Sultan, 2019, p. 23) . This approach has, for several reasons, been extremely useful. Firstly, as described, it puts reflexivity to work *beyond the bracket,* allowing the researcher to enter personal experience into the interaction, making it available to analysis through a process that balances 'engagement and detachment… without getting stuck on either end of these spectra' (Sultan, 2019, p. 12). Secondly, it focuses on 'relational, intersubjective discourses—both verbal and nonverbal, both personal and shared' (Sultan, 2019, p. 13). As such, the relationship between different planes of discourse, for example the way in which individuals negotiate meaning through participation in various discursive practices, becomes a focus of analysis. Thirdly, it is a highly flexible approach that lends itself to bricolage with (particularly) auto-ethnography, grounded theory and narrative research (Sultan, 2019, pp. 29–35), all techniques deployed in this study. It is therefore 'ideal for researching phenomena that are vague or difficult to observe, measure, or document' (Sultan, 2019, p. 22).

Finally, this method conceives the research process as a set of non-linear phases, each phase ongoing, calling upon techniques responsive to themes that emerge from the data gathered. Table 1.1 outlines the six phases of Heuristic Inquiry suggested by Nevine Sultan, and the related data-gathering techniques deployed in this project. The left-hand column groups these into three overarching stages for explication below.

Table 1.1 The Stages of Heuristic Inquiry. Source: Author based on Sultan (Sultan, 2019, p. 94)

Stage	Phase (Sultan)	Description (Sultan)	Techniques used in this study
Reflexive Self-Research	Engagement	Researcher's first contact with a topic of intense interest or a research question and/or with various other phases of the study	Auto-ethnographic, interview, analysis of texts
	Immersion	Researcher's full commitment to living the question or topic, in all dimensions of life, as the question becomes the primary focus of the researcher's attention	Auto-ethnographic, interview, observation, participation, analysis of texts
External Inquiry	Incubation	Researcher's temporary and deliberate withdrawal from the research question or topic to allow seeds of new knowledge to sprout	Interview, observation
	Illumination	Researcher's awareness (usually intuitive) of previously undisclosed information related to the research question, often coupled with altered perception of the topic	Ethnographic interview, observation, reflexivity
Analysis	Explication	Researcher's exploration of emergent themes and fine-tuning of those themes in preparation for the creative synthesis	Interview, reflexivity, analysis of texts, writing
	Creative synthesis	Researcher's integration of the multiple themes of the topic into a cohesive whole, usually using some form of creative interpretation	Analysis of texts (including interview transcripts), writing

Although this study includes important elements of Heuristic Inquiry, it retains the vital features of traditional ethnography. Heuristic Inquiry often treats interviewees as 'co-researchers', involved in every stage of the research, including the final analysis (Sultan, 2019). In this study, while the production of research data has been collaborative, analysis has been researcher-led in the conventional manner. This was in part due to practical necessity – to ask interviewees to commit as co-researchers would be to ask them to undertake a PhD themselves, impractical for most and thus limiting to the scope of the research. Furthermore, critical analysis may have been hindered if co-researchers had brought self-interest to the process. Responses have been subject to critical analysis and so, as is often the case with ethnographic research, there has been, as Kushner put it, 'an intermingling of interests – but, ultimately, as in all good tangos, of final betrayal. I talked as a friend but slunk off to write as a scientist' (Kushner, 2000, p. 35).

The thesis is also presented as a traditional analysis of text and interview data – excluding my personal experience, and the 15,000-word phenomenological report produced through reflexive analysis. This is because my experience has not been necessary for illustrating the points that will be made. Interview data has provided more than enough material from which to extrapolate conclusions and, when it comes to the body of research data accumulated, I am one case among many. Reflexivity has been most useful for attaining positionality and engaging interview participants in comparison and reflection through conversations in which shared experiences emerged.

vi.   Stage 1: reflexive self-research

The project can be described in three stages: reflexive self-research, external inquiry and analysis. As I set out, auto-ethnographic techniques were used to produce a phenomenological understanding of how I, as a professional in the funded arts sector, came to understand and operate socially engaged arts in this sector. Three techniques were used in this initial phase of the project.

Timeline

I began by compiling a timeline of my professional career as an arts professional from 2000 to 2017. This timeline tracks a career that includes local government, Arts Council and self-employed cultural work, and picks out moments and events that have contributed to my engagement with, and my understanding of, socially engaged arts. This provided a starting point for further, more searching, research methods (Chang 2008, p. 73).

Analysis of documents

Another technique was to review and analyse documents retained from my professional life, including funding applications, evaluation reports, appraisals, marketing material, contracts, emails and event management plans. Following Chang, these were treated as 'textual artefacts' that reveal 'the evolution of… values and perspectives from different stages of life' (Chang, 2008, p. 108). Particularly useful were two box files compiled for Halton Borough Council's Job Evaluation in 2009. These files include an unusual level of detail, and documents that would otherwise have been discarded. Importantly, they were compiled (in 2009) to articulate the value of my work as I saw it at that time, engendering self-narrative in context, rather than retrospectively reconstructed. Further, they exemplified the bureaucracy in which my work was situated – a feature that was important to the analysis in 1.2.5. Revisiting this material with a reflexive eye revealed a system of thought and rhetorical apparatus that was, at the time, so internalised that the exogenous forces that structured it (funding applications, evaluation procedures and, indeed, the process of job evaluation) were almost invisible to me. This realisation directed the phases of external inquiry (described below) and provided the starting point for Part One of this thesis.

Reflexive writing

The third auto-ethnographic technique (drawing on those described above) was to write a phenomenological account of how I came to understand socially engaged art as a professional working in the funded sector. Although not included in the thesis, writing through this topic clarified my position and provided the foundations for ongoing reflexivity, allowing me to either bracket or engage my situated knowledge in the research encounter to gain trust, probe particular issues and/or encourage deeper reflection among interviewees. Immersing myself in my pre-research experience (at the beginning and throughout the research project) consolidated two foci of external inquiry. Firstly, reflexive self-analysis revealed that, for me, *socially engaged arts had a discursive function* in my professional life, *structured by engagement with bureaucracy*. Secondly, I identified a notable *disconnect between how I thought about socially engaged arts in my professional work and my personal experience of creativity outside the funded world*. In other words, I thought about arts participation differently in these contexts, but both could be described as soliciting social benefits and/or being socially engaged. This consolidated the research questions, focus and approach of the study.

vii.   Stage 2: external inquiry

Alongside self-research, there has been an evolving process of external inquiry, primarily in the form of interviews and analysis of documents produced by others. Following the heuristic-ethnographic approach, external inquiry oscillated between the 'immersion' and 'incubation' research phases (Sultan, 2019, p. 94). As a professional in the funded arts, my social circle (including my partner) comprises predominantly professional artists, engaged to varying degrees with socially engaged arts practices. It is a topic that I live with constantly and am, unavoidably, immersed in. The difference, therefore, between immersion and incubation has been the extent to which I engaged directly with the research questions through targeted interviews (immersion) or withdrew into more generalised, exploratory conversations (incubation), allowing myself to be carried off topic to related subjects and aspects of artistic work. Through this ongoing process of 'engagement and detachment, proximity and distance, tension and release' (Sultan, 2019, p. 12), the focus of the study has been drawn towards the uniformity of recurring discourses about socially engaged arts that, paradoxically, describe activities that are very different to one another in practice[6]. Through the dialogue between reflexive self-analysis and external inquiry, this disjuncture became a space for analytical illumination and explication.

Discursive practice

Part One of this thesis presents the results of a deep investigation into how policy/funding literature structures socially engaged arts as discursive practice that has a particular function in the funded field. As such, external inquiry has involved analysis of texts and interviews, and the relationships between them. In 1.1 I will introduce the theoretical framework employed for this analysis, which uses Bourdieu's conceptualisation of linguistic markets as locations of discursive strategy[7]. It should be noted that 'discursive practice' is a term commonly associated with Foucault, and his analysis of knowledge and power. Foucault used the term in multiple ways to describe the domain of statements, discrete groups of statements and/or *regulated practices that account for a certain number of statements* (Foucault, 2002). It is this last usage that encapsulates Foucault's theoretical understanding of discursive practice, referring to both '" things said" and to the rules that explain how it becomes possible to say (or know) certain things—"the rules governing a knowledge"' (Cousins and Hussain, 1984, cited in Bacchi and Bonham, 2014, p. 180). For Foucault, discourse is a regulated practice that is '"rule like" through its routinization… routinized sets of heterogeneous relations

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[6] This will be explained in the analysis that follows in Part One.
[7] While the analysis examines policy literature, the study is an ethnographic analysis of discursive practice, rather an Interpretive Policy Analysis, in that it seeks to identify how policy and strategy texts contribute to discursive practices and schemes of perception in the funded arts field.

among bodies, things, actions, concepts, at work in the formation and operation of discourse, understood as knowledge' (Bacchi and Bonham, 2014, p. 183). As such, discursive practices are both knowledge and the r*ules that determine which knowledges are given authority* at a given time:

> They are of interest, not because of their meaning or content, but because of the role they play in installing networks of relations, which are necessarily political as they affect every dimension of how lives are lived. These relations or discursive practices are necessarily always productive of 'the real', identifying their operation as a target for intervention (Bacchi and Bonham, 2014, p. 185).

Foucault's rendering of discursive practice works to reveal how knowledge forms *truth*, through bodies of rules that are embedded in discursive (or knowledge) practices (Bacchi and Bonham, 2014, p. 187). In this way, discursive practice refers to structures – apparatus or *dispositif* – of social power that are deeply ingrained and often enacted unconsciously:

> Discursive practices are not purely and simply ways of producing discourse. They are embodied in technical processes, in institutions, in patterns for general behaviour, in forms for transmission and diffusion, and in pedagogical forms which, at once, impose and maintain them (Foucault, 1977, cited in in Bacchi and Bonham, 2014, p. 190).

It will be seen in the next chapter (1.1.11) that there is significant convergence between Foucault's discursive practice and Bourdieu's theorising of language and symbolic power deployed in this analysis. In this thesis, the term discursive practice is used in a more general sense, aligned with Bourdieu's theorising, referring to 'a form of social practice in which language plays a central role' (Cameron and Panović, 2014) and having 'the power to produce existence by producing the collectively recognized, and thus realized, representation of existence' (Bourdieu, 1991b, p. 42). Discursive practice, in this thesis, does not refer specifically to Foucault's rendering (although this is certainly relevant and applicable) but complements Bourdieu's analysis as a term that encapsulates his problematically verbose rendering of 'language and symbolic power' (Bourdieu, 1991b). Understanding discourse in this way, as a structured-structuring social practice (beyond a mere system of signs) provides an effective approach for analysing how schemes of perception are made and remade through discourses in which agents are not neutral conduits of fixed, shared meanings, but participants in structuring social relations, fields and actions through discursive practice.

Selecting documents as data

In *Understanding the Problem of Cultural Non-participation: Discursive structures, articulatory practice and cultural domination* (2016), Stevenson advocates 'following the intertextual trail from initial document to related ones' to identify routinised discourses within a given field (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012, p.97, cited in Stevenson, 2016). Adopting this approach led the current study to a selection of DCMS, local government and ACE policy documents, and also grey literature, tracing back to the UK's first formal policy for the arts: *Policy for the Arts: First steps* (Lee, 1965). ACE funding and strategy literature makes up the majority of this material because, following the heuristic approach, the selection of literature has been guided also by interviewees who, in the funded field, were particularly concerned with ACE funding and policy. Further, because most professionals (in the funded and adjacent fields) will engage with ACE at some point, this seemed a logical place to centre analysis.

Following the 'intertextual trail' led also to 'advocacy research' (material produced within the funded field to persuade the Treasury to invest (Belfiore, 2006, in Mirza, 2006)[8] and the subsequent decision to handle academic literature within the analysis. When it comes to the social role of the arts, cultural sector literature often draws selectively from academic studies and, regarding questions of inequality, it is often an explicit intention that academic research should inform policy[9]. As such, academic research does not stand outside the construction of socially engaged art as a discursive practice in the funded field. In this sense, as Bourdieu pointed out, academic literature becomes 'caught up in the object [it] would take as [its] object' (Bourdieu, 1995b, p. 296). He identified important homologies between academic and artistic fields, highlighting a symbiotic relationship wherein scholars lionise particular cultural forms, producing discursive representations that inculcate high/low cultural hierarchies by legitimising the themes and practices deemed to be worthy, edifying and valuable:

> Academies… claiming a monopoly over the consecration of contemporary producers, are obliged to combine tradition and tempered innovation. And the educational system, claiming a monopoly over the consecration of works of the past and over the production and consecration (through diplomas) of cultural consumers… accords that infallible mark of consecration, the elevation of works into 'classics' by their inclusion in curricula (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 123).

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[8] This will be described and analysed fully in 1.3.
[9] For example, ACE's *Cultural Democracy in Practice* cites King's College's (2017) *Towards Cultural Democracy (2-17)*, by Dr Nick Wilson, Dr Anna Bull and Dr Jonathan Gross.

Bourdieu did not exclude the academic field, sociology, or indeed himself, from this process, critiquing the claim that academics can attain an objective position towards their object – 'the scholastic fallacy' described in *iv*. He was cogent of the way in which education and academic institutions contribute to social stratification in adjacent fields – and in society as a whole – by producing institutional capital (official qualifications in respect of culture) and consecrating rarefied forms of cultural capital, including forms and structures of linguistic capital. The interplay between academic scholarship and sector discourse will, in the analysis that follows, be seen in the production of 'socially engaged arts' as discursive practice[10] in arts funding. This thesis takes the view that there is no hard line to be drawn between academic and sector discourse, with the former commenting objectively on the latter without contributing to its construction. For this reason, rather than separate out academic literature from policy literature and interviews (as with a traditional literature review), the former is handled *within* the analysis, allowing interconnections to be appreciated. While many documents have been reviewed, it is a smaller number that have been analysed in close detail to provide the quotations used as exemplars in the chapters that follow.

Selection of interviewees – a heuristic approach

Part One and Part Two of this thesis are both drawn from qualitative interviews. Following the heuristic method, interviewees were initially selected for having ostensibly similar experiences to my own in the funded sector. This led to several informants who regularly participate in arts funding and describe their work as socially engaged. Of these, a key research partner has been artist Fasil Aziz, who has been involved from the beginning as a CDA partner[11]. Fasil has asked to remain anonymous in this thesis, and so information that might identify him, including his name, locations, and the names of some other interviewees, has been anonymised by the use of pseudonyms, and all comments from my interviews with him have been paraphrased. To fully immerse myself in Fasil's work, I conducted multiple in-depth interviews, and observed meetings, projects and public speaking. I also mapped and interviewed the network of people (see Table 1.2) who connect with and enable his work, including local, regional and international partners, the majority of whom are representatives of, or people whose work is funded by, ACE, Heritage Lottery and/or similar public arts funding agencies.

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[10] Paradoxically, because Bourdieu's thinking has become so widely adopted in academic research, it will be seen that even his critique has become involved in this process.

[11] This project was undertaken as a Collaborative Doctoral Award (CDA). The principle behind a CDA is that projects should 'encourage and establish links that can have long-term benefits for both collaborating partners, providing access to resources and materials, knowledge and expertise that may not otherwise have been available and also provide social, cultural and economic benefits to wider society' (AHRC, 2018).

Table 1.2 Interviewees working in funded socially engaged contexts

Interviewee	Organisation
Peter Lowe (pseudonym)	CEO, Central Culture UK (pseudonym)
Abid Hussain	Diversity Officer, Arts Council England, UK
Fatima Mullick	CEO, Saïd Foundation, UK
Fasil Aziz (pseudonym)	Deep Urban Arts, Southern City, UK (pseudonym)
James Hodkinson	Reader in German, University of Warwick, UK
Jessie Webber (pseudonym)	THERE Gallery, Southern City, UK (pseudonym)
Arron Singh Gill	The Gap Project, Birmingham UK
Asad Ali Jafri	Cultural producer, global arts leader, USA
Josè Rocha (pseudonym)	The New Space, Tunisia and USA (pseudonym)
Sandra Hall	Friction Arts, Birmingham, UK

Through immersion in his work, I became aware of the value Fasil places on international partnerships and how these influence his approach to and understanding of socially engaged arts. This opened up an avenue for 'incubation', enabling me to withdraw from the primary research questions through a more exploratory mode of inquiry, which allowed the research focus to percolate. I was interested to know how socially engaged arts is understood and conceptualised across national, political and linguistic boundaries. I took advantage of the opportunities provided by Midlands4Cities to investigate the work of two organisations whose work in Europe, Tunisia and the USA connects with Fasil directly, as well as with other intermediaries interviewed: The New Space, Tunisia and Trans Europe Halles, Europe. This led to a second group of interviewees, who I categorise here as 'fringe interviewees' (see Table 1.3), because these interviews were largely unstructured and investigated themes not directly linked to the research topic (socially engaged arts in funded and amateur contexts in the UK).

Table 1.3 Fringe interviewees in incubation phases

Interviewee	Organisation
Esther Grimm	3Arts, Chicago USA
Suhaila Aziz	Operations Director, Taleef Collective, USA
Sadia Nawaab	Director of Arts & Culture, IMAN, US
Imed Belkhodja	Projects Manager, British Council, Tunisia
Sadiya Selmi (pseudonym)	The New Space, Tunisia and USA (pseudonym)
Adam Chérif	Urban Rooms Dance Collective, Tunisia
Amine Hattab	Urban Rooms Dance Collective, Tunisia
Vullnet M. Sanaja	Director, Anibar, Kosovo
Symon Kliman	Director, Nadácia Cvernovka, Slovakia
Rene Penning	Director, Kulturfabrik, Luxembourg
Raine Heikkinen	Marketing and Development Manager, Kaapelitehdas, Finland
Innes Suija Markova	Director, Institute for Environmental Solutions, Latvia
Gerard Lohuis	Managing Director, P60, Netherlands
Eleftérios Kechagioglou	Director, Le Plus Petit Cirque du Monde, France
Burak Sayin	Community and Communications Manager, Trans Europe Halles, Europe
Barbara Lubich	Co-Founder, Zentralwerk, Germany

Data gathered from these interviews was purposefully detached from the primary research questions and therefore has not been included in the thesis. However, this stage of incubation played a vital role in consolidating the focus and structure of the study, providing insights that, although not explored as fully as others, support the thesis that follows. Most striking was the diversity of interpretations attached to socially engaged arts, and how these seemed to be influenced by different resourcing, policy and/or funding frameworks. In other words, they corroborated the emerging hypothesis of Part One, although for practical reasons it was necessary to focus on UK-based examples[12].

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[12] As the study developed, the analysis focused on UK contexts to provide a more detailed account of how specifically UK policy and amateur arts frameworks shape and produce particular forms of socially engaged arts practice. Further, access to these fringe interviewees was difficult, and conducting follow-up interviews was not possible.

As described above (*vi*), the other key question to emerge from self-research was: why did I think about arts participation differently in my job and in my personal life? This led the study to consider alternative frameworks for understanding artistic practice and whether socially engaged arts – the deliberate use of arts for specified auxiliary social benefit – existed outside funding/policy paradigms in amateur/voluntary contexts and, if so, how this was realised. This evolved into research questions 3 and 4:

3. Can amateur arts be understood as 'socially engaged' and, if so, how do amateur socially engaged arts practices organise and sustain themselves?
4. What does amateur socially engaged work tell us about the relationship between cultural policy, funded institutions and amateur participation?

As described in the introduction, analysis of literature revealed that the social role of everyday/amateur creativity is marginalised in both academic and funded-sector research (CASE, 2010; Ramsden et al., 2011) and the theoretical approaches to understanding amateur arts are inadequate, and often deterministic and reductive (this will be explored in Part Two). Subsequently, there are fewer texts available to analyse practices that, as will be seen, are structured by more intrinsic, subjective systems of meaning and value. For this reason, Part Two draws on interview data to a greater degree. However, identifying appropriate interviewees for these questions was difficult. I was uncertain whether such activities existed and, if so, where. It became clear that voluntary/amateur groups tend not to describe themselves using such terminology as 'socially engaged'[13], because, as Part One of this thesis will demonstrate, this is primarily a discursive practice resulting from the exigencies of funding bureaucracy[14]. Furthermore, there seemed to be a tendency for professional intermediaries to describe themselves as 'grassroots' when, in fact, they were funded, albeit on a project-to-project basis[15].

Despite these challenges, I was able to identify several unfunded/amateur groups who purposefully directed their amateur artistic work towards the social benefit of others in such a way that I am describing as 'amateur socially engaged'. These groups were identified through fortunate encounters

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[13] Or related terms including 'community art', 'outreach', 'participatory art' and 'arts engagement'

[14] It was common for amateur interviewees to use 'the company' (as in theatre company), 'the group' or the group name when referring to their work. In describing their purpose, they used terms such as 'helping', 'getting' and 'supporting'. If/when I introduced the term 'socially engaged', I would usually need to explain it and clarify its meaning.

[15] Pre-empting the discussion that follows, this is often because in the funded field a symbolic value is attached to such representations, which suggest authenticity when it comes to being connected to communities.

with people familiar with their activities. The organisers who have initiated and deliver these activities became the key sources for Part Two (see Table 1.4).

Table 1.4 Interviewees working in amateur socially engaged contexts

Interviewee	Organisation
Jess Hakin	Constellations Drama/Festival Arts participant/Spectra, Birmingham UK
Julie Beckett	Festival Arts, Birmingham UK
Jenny Baines	Festival Arts, Birmingham UK
Tru Powell	Aston Performing Arts Academy, Birmingham UK
Pelego (Pel) Powell	Aston Performing Arts Academy, Birmingham UK
Ben Kyte	Independent music programmer, Birmingham UK
Evette Edmeade	Director, The Arches Project, Birmingham UK

Approach to interviews

Following the heuristic-ethnographic approach, interviews were usually semi-structured (unstructured during phases of incubation) and intended to be generative, providing the conditions for expansive interviewee-led responses. Interviews were usually bracketed – identified as such and guided by a few prepared questions – but conversational, allowing interviewees to respond 'in their own words and not restricted to the preconceived notions of the ethnographer' (Aull Davies, 1999, p. 95). There were occasions when it was useful to discuss exemplars, comparisons and provocations drawn from my own experience. This allowed us to co-direct conversations and collaborate in developing a phenomenological understanding of shared experiences. It also helped to build trust and openness, vital to the heuristic interview style:

> Relationships are key in heuristic research. Specifically, the quality of the data you collect will rely in large part on your ability to successfully facilitate the flow of relationship and conversation (Sultan, 2019, p. 125).

Although interviews were conversational, as the research entered what Sultan describes as the illumination phase, in which 'awareness (usually intuitive) altered perception of the topic' (Sultan, 2019, p. 94), I circled around key themes identified through ongoing analysis of previous interviews, documents and literature. Themes included:

- o What is socially engaged art?

- o What motivates socially engaged arts activity?

- o How do you do it?

- o Why do you do it?

- o What does it do for you?

- o What are the challenges of working in or outside arts policy/funding?

- o What resources support your socially engaged practice?

- o How does arts funding and cultural policy affect socially engaged arts practice?

Such themes were not approached as a fixed series of questions, but rather as prompts that aided multiple conversations. Because personal narratives are an important aspect of what motivates action, at times I interjected as little as possible, allowing the interviewee to explore themes freely. Over the course of many interviews, narratives unfolded, covering topics including personal history, history of participation in socially engaged arts work, approaches to this work, political views, family life, opinions about other arts activities, bad experiences and frustrations. Contained within these narratives were values, beliefs, experiential drivers, and motivations that have been drawn out and analysed in the thesis that follows.

Interviews taken through to analysis

All interviewees have contributed in some way to the development of the thesis. Starting with a relatively large sample led to the emergence of patterns and recurring themes that steered the research to illumination and explication phases. As the project found focus, data from some interviewees warranted multiple follow-up interviews, these being the case studies presented in the following chapters, and listed in Table 1.5 below.

Table 1.5 Case studies

Part One	Interviewee	Organisation
	Fasil Aziz (pseudonym)	Deep Urban Arts, Southern City, UK (pseudonym)
	Jessie Webber (pseudonym)	THERE Gallery, Southern City, UK (pseudonym)
Part Two	Jess Hakin	Constellations Drama/Festival Arts participant/Spectra, Birmingham UK
	Julie Beckett	Festival Arts, Birmingham UK
	Jenny Baines	Festival Arts, Birmingham UK
	Tru Powell	Aston Performing Arts Academy, Birmingham UK
	Pel Powell	Aston Performing Arts Academy, Birmingham UK

Focusing in detail on these interviewees allowed analysis to dig deeper, opening up conversations that were more searching and intimate. As Merriam puts it, focusing on case studies 'allows the research to uncover aspects of individuals that would not be readily available, and experience these in a more rounded, contextualised way' (Merriam, 2009, pp. 258–259). Because of their relationship to the research questions, these interviewees were subject to multiple interviews, observation (in their daily work and delivery of projects), desk-based research (examination of documents, websites and other material) and further triangulation through interviews with collaborators and participants. These case studies are presented as exemplars of wider trends observed across the larger sample. This multi-case, comparative approach reveals common phenomena across different locations, wherein 'the single case is of interest because it belongs to a particular collection. The individual cases share a common characteristic or condition' (Merriam, 2009, p. 49)[16].

viii.   Stage 2: external inquiry

As Aull Davies points out, 'data analysis is intrinsic to all stages of ethnographic research, and not something that begins once data collection is complete' (Aull Davies, 1999, p. 193). By adopting elements of Heuristic Inquiry, analysis has been an ongoing process of 'illumination' and 'explication'

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[16] In this research, it will be seen that the common characteristic shared by cases in the funded field (Part One) is a particular understanding and strategic deployment of socially engaged arts as a discursive practice, structured by funding bureaucracy. For amateur socially engaged cases (Part Two), it is the value and role of kinship as aesthetic experience that directs the interviewees to focus their work on the broader social benefit provided to others.

leading to 'creative synthesis' in the thesis that follows, gradually consolidating research questions, and providing a rudder that has steered the research. The bricolage of heuristic-ethnographic methods has produced a significant amount of data, including texts, interviews and observation. This material has been filtered, reduced, distilled and interpreted through a process of deductive analysis, deploying 'grounded theory' as attention moved 'back and forth between concrete bits of data and abstract concepts, between inductive and deductive reasoning, between description and interpretation' (Merriam, 2009, p. 176).

The process began by my transcribing interviews, and reading, then rereading, texts. The objective was to identify corresponding segments of data that represented recurring themes across the sample. These segments could be short statements, or textual extracts that were heuristic (in that they spoke to broader themes) and self-contained (in that they could be understood in general terms, regardless of context). Segments were then categorised according to ongoing processes of 'constant comparison' and axial/selective coding that comes from interpretation and reflexions on meaning (Merriam, 2009), gradually breaking down the extensive body of material to illuminate patterns, themes and practices that have directed analysis towards particular theoretical frameworks for creative synthesis. For example, ostensibly disparate responses, relating to family life, rehearsing at home and friendship, were categorised as 'family', 'home' and 'friends', and then further as 'motivations of kinship' (Part Two).

Following the heuristic approach, the process has been led by interviews rather than sources outside of the study, such as those that might have been predetermined by theoretical literature. As Glaser and Straus conclude, 'merely selecting data from a category that has been established by another theory tends to hinder the generation of new categories, because the major effort is not generation but data selection' (Glaser and Straus, 1967, cited in Merriam, 2009, p. 185). Because Heuristic Inquiry focuses on investigating intersubjective meaning-making, it tends to place research findings before abstracted theory, allowing emergent themes to select theoretical concepts, rather than entering the research with predetermined propositions to be proven/disproven. In this research, themes were identified before the deployment of theoretical propositions – data chose the theoretical framework, as emergent themes were put into conversation with theoretical literature. The thesis is therefore multidimensional, interrogating both data with theory, and theory with data.

In Part One, recurring themes that emerged from interviewees in the funded field led to Bourdieu's theorising that connects 'language and symbolic power' (Bourdieu, 1991b) to practices in funded arts

(Bourdieu, 1993). This facilitated an analytical through-line from the reflexive phase of self-research (*vi*) to multi-case analysis with actors in the funded field/ACE strategy documents (*vii*). In Part Two, interviews with amateur socially engaged intermediaries follow the same heuristic-ethnographic course to arrive at 'a structural description of… experience, the underlying and precipitating factors that account for what is being experienced [and] how… the experience of the phenomenon [has] come to be what it is' (Moustakas, 1999, in Merriam, 2009, p. 199). Here, analysis led towards kinship studies and John Dewey's theorising of the nature of aesthetic experience, a theoretical approach suited to modes of socially engaged practice absent from extant research and theorising[17]. This has allowed the thesis to be organised into two parts, representing two paradigms (funded/amateur) understood through two theoretical frameworks that reflect upon one another to reveal contrasting modes of socially engaged arts – professional/discursive (Part One) and amateur/experiential (Part Two). Owing to the volume and multidimensional nature of the material produced, mind-mapping has been a vital tool throughout, externalising and rationalising the interconnecting themes and theoretical approaches adopted in the study.

Figure 1.2. *Mind Maps created by author,* (Cox, 2017 -2021)

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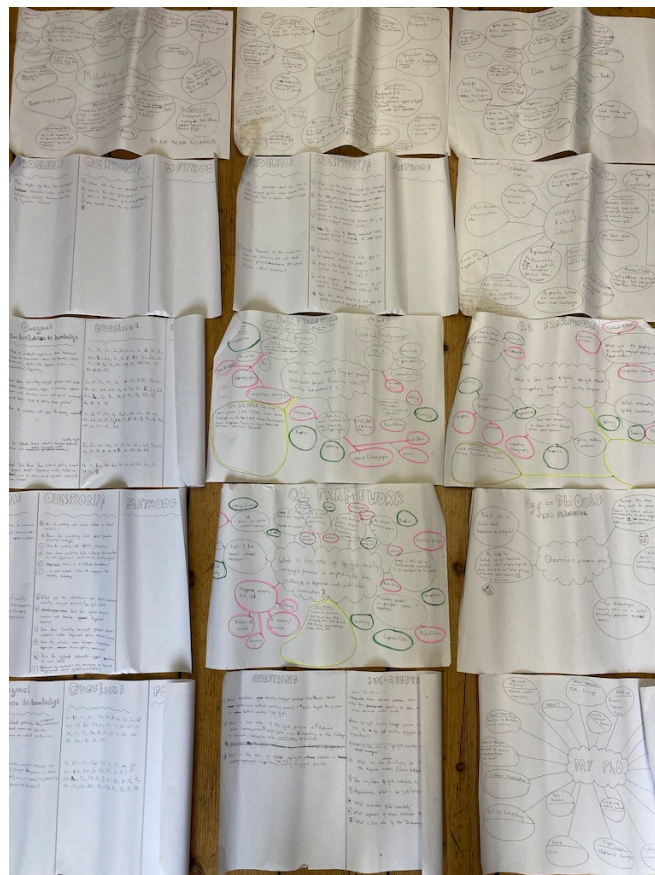
ix.　　Triangulation and reliability of sources

Triangulation is, to a considerable extent, hardwired in a bricolage research design, in that it 'involves using more than one method to gather data, such as interviews, observations, questionnaires, and documents' (Green and Chian, 2016, p. 5). In this study, self-research (*vi*), external inquiry (*vii*), analysis of the correspondences between policy/funding literature and interview data, and comparison with other research projects examined in literature review, have all served 'to ensure that the result of the study is not dependent on characteristics of a single measure or of a measurement method' (Green and Chian, 2016, p. 3). In addition, 'data triangulation' (Green and Chian, 2016) has been realised through a comparative case approach, whereby themes identified across a broad sample have been examined in closer, case-study detail. This has allowed analysis to search for and corroborate commonalities and divergences across cases representing different forms of creative practice, including theatre, visual arts and music. It will be seen that, while the work of each case study is aesthetically different (as are the social/cultural backgrounds of the interviewees) the trends observed remain constant. Going further, as is common with heuristic research, analysis has involved *theoretical* triangulation – 'using more than one theoretical scheme in the interpretation of the phenomena' (Green and Chian, 2016, p. 5). As such, the thesis presents both commonalities and divergences in theory, leading to two theoretical approaches for understanding two modes of socially engaged arts practice, operating within different organising frameworks.

ix.　　Credibility

The credibility of this research is expressed in the rigour of its methodology, as well as in the quality of interpretation. Ethnographic research, of any sort, is subject to interpretation and subjective influence by the researcher and/or interviewee. As Jones and Walker put it:

> Human beings [are] not… organisms responding… to some external stimulus, nor inexorably driven by internal needs and instincts, nor… "cultural dopes", but… persons, who construct the meaning and significance of their realities. They do so by bringing to bear upon events a complex personal framework of beliefs, and values, which they have developed over their lives to categorise, characterise, explain and predict the events in their worlds (Kaplan, 2000, pp. 45–46).

This is true for both researcher and researched (interviewees). As such, data has been analysed as socially situated practices rather than as 'facts' about how the world is. Critics of ethnographic research may argue that this compromises the validity of conclusions drawn (*ii, iii*). However, the

methodological process described here has filtered material through an extensive triangulating process of deliberation and focused thought about the phenomena, as well as a deep consideration of auxiliary questions and the challenges these raise. Through an intensive programme of Engagement, Immersion, Incubation, Illumination, Explication and Creative Synthesis (Sultan, 2019, p. 94), which has included a thorough interrogation of my own tacit knowledge and assumptions, this project has developed a heightened understanding of both the processes of analysis and the conclusions drawn. The thesis that follows is, therefore, presented as a credible contribution to knowledge developed through a rigorous methodology that 'enacts the capacity to connect to an object, or "apply" a logic to a series of social processes, within a contingent and contestable theoretical framework' (Howarth, 2016, p. 3).

x.   Ethical considerations

This research involved a number of ethical considerations, primarily relating to the potential impacts of publication. While the project does not investigate themes, practices or behaviours that might be considered sensitive, revealing the opinions and motivations of interviewees could potentially impact their professional reputations and/or relationships. Therefore, the project has undertaken practical steps to protect the wellbeing and interests of participants, in line with Birmingham City University's (BCU) research ethics procedures, including its Data Protection Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Anti-Fraud and Bribery Policies, and Equality and Diversity Policy, and also the Prevent Duty.

The research has been subject to ethical assessment and approval. BCU's assessment panel categorised this study as 'medium risk', recognising that it 'involves humans as subjects of the research (with their knowledge and consent)' and that 'the research includes a requirement to retain personally identifiable information about individuals (images or written records)'[18]. In response to this, interviewees were provided with information sheets and consent forms prior to interviews. Most importantly, interviewees were given the opportunity to be anonymised in the published thesis. As mentioned above, only one interviewee, referred to here as Fasil Aziz, requested to be anonymised, and so all names and identifiable references (e.g. place of work) relating to him have been replaced with pseudonyms. This has meant that, owing to their proximity to his work, some other interviewees, who did not ask to be anonymised, have been (e.g. Jessie Webber). This not only protects Fasil and others from identification; it also allowed them to speak candidly, without concern that others might associate comments with them directly or misinterpret what had been said.

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[18] This terminology is taken from BCU's ethical review panel report.

xi.   Summary

In this chapter I have outlined the methodological approach and research techniques used in this study, and how these have structured the thesis that follows. The heuristic-ethnographic bricolage design has produced a thesis in which literature review is handled within an analysis in two parts, examining two modes of socially engaged arts practice that reflect upon each other to reveal deeper systems of thought and experience. The thesis therefore moves directly to analysis in Part One, where socially engaged art in the funded arts field is interrogated to reveal how discursive practices contribute to pervasive structures of inequality in the destinations of arts funding. Analysis begins, in the next chapter, with an overview of the theoretical framework identified through analysis of data collected from the funded field.

1.1 Beginning with Bourdieu: key concepts for the construction of socially engaged art in the funded field

1.1.1 Introduction

In the chapters that follow I argue that socially engaged arts in the funded sector exists primarily as discursive practice constructed in response to the inequalities of arts funding (1.2) and the necessity to appeal to policymakers (1.3). This discourse primarily serves the interests of funded institutions that, by and large, fail to broaden participation in their products. This will be understood using Bourdieu's theorising of cultural production (Bourdieu, 1993) and language and symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1991b), a conceptual framework that was identified through the heuristic-ethnographic research process. The starting point here, then, is an outline of Bourdieu's analytical scheme that will be used to interrogate data in the chapters that follow. I introduce the key concepts of field (1.1.3), habitus (1.1.4), capital (1.1.5) and conversion (1.1.6) that underpin Bourdieu's analysis of social stratification in cultural production and his theorising of discourse as location of symbolic power (1.1.7). I also include a summary of Robert Putnam's 'bridging' and 'bonding capital' (Putnam, 2000), often used in research and policy literature as an alternative to Bourdieu's conceptualisation of social capital. Putnam's approach will be brought into analysis in both parts of the thesis. Having established these key concepts, the chapter introduces Bourdieu's theorising of 'the field of cultural production' (Bourdieu, 1993), drawing out ideas relevant to the analysis (1.1.7–1.1.9). The chapter then turns to Bourdieu's account of discourse, language and symbolic power, locating this within his system of analysis, and his understanding of cultural production.

By outlining Bourdieu's analytical scheme, this chapter establishes the theoretical framework for Part One – working *with* Bourdieu to reveal how, in the UK's funded arts sector, socially engaged arts functions as a discursive practice that serves the interests of those who occupy positions within funded institutions. In Part Two, analysis will work *against* Bourdieu, testing the limits of his theoretical scheme, and offering an alternative approach for understanding amateur socially engaged art as 'experience' (Dewey, 1958).

1.1.2 Bourdieu's key concepts

Bourdieu provides a framework for understanding cultural production and consumption, mobilised by a concern with class-based social inequality, revealed by the interoperating 'structuring-structure' of field, habitus and capital. While this is not a study *of* Bourdieu, his influence on contemporary

understandings of arts participation makes his work a central concern, both as an approach to understanding socially engaged arts as discursive practice in Part One, and, in Part Two, as an economistic system that fails to capture the motivations for amateur socially engaged arts activity, contributing to its marginalisation. As such, Bourdieu's ideas will be used and critiqued extensively in this thesis.

1.1.3 Fields of practice

For Bourdieu, the social world is a composite of overlapping fields of practice. He envisaged that many domains of social life – religion, politics, professional work, family, education and so on – can be understood as social fields – forums of investment, exchange and competition – in which participants compete to attain position by making investments relative to, and contingent upon, those of others. For a domain to be analysed as a field, Bourdieu theorised, it must have some degree of autonomy through specific 'rules, rituals, conventions, categories, designations, appointments and titles which constitute an objective hierarchy, and which produce and authorise certain discourses and activities' (Webb et al. 2002, p. 21-22). As a field becomes autonomous, it produces hierarchies wherein elite positions are established and occupied by agents (cultural intermediaries, 1.1.10) who, officially or unofficially (formally or informally), exercise authority over the value and efficacy of particular forms of capital (1.1.5). While different fields develop different rules, discourses and systems of value, Bourdieu posited that beneath these variations are invariant structuring practices. He argued that there are homologies between fields: 'each has its dominant and its dominated, its struggles for usurpation or exclusion, its mechanisms of reproduction, and so on' (Jenkins, 1992, p. 86). In this way, patterns of social stratification operate across social fields as privilege accumulates in the overlaps between differentiated fields (Bennett et al., 2009, p. 13).

1.1.4 Habitus

Habitus is a long-established concept for thinking about social organisation[19]. Bourdieu's development was to invest habitus with the power of negotiation in an effort to overcome the dualism between the objective and the subjective (agency and structure). For Bourdieu, 'the subjectivist and objectivist stand in dialectical relation. It is this dialectic of objectivity and subjectivity that the concept of the habitus is designed to capture and encapsulate' (Bourdieu, 1988, in King, 2016, p. 417). Bourdieu's habitus describes embodied, pre-reflexive dispositions received from (and attuned to) the objective social world that become engrained as unquestioned truths, undergirding schemes of perception – 'doxa' (mental structures) and 'bodily hexis' (the physical being) – resolving, he argued, the subject-

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[19] Notably used by Marcell Mauss, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Max Weber, Emile Durkheim and others (Wacquant, 2016)

object problem by 'inscribing subjective, bodily actions with social force so that the most apparently subjective individual acts take on social meaning' (King, 2016, p. 417). Habitus, Bourdieu argued, is of both mind and body because 'bodily hexis is political mythology realized, embodied, turned into a permanent disposition, a durable way of standing, speaking, walking, and thereby of feeling and thinking' (Bourdieu, 1995a, p. 69). The dispositions of habitus are neither fixed nor the sole source of thought and action, but it is the rapport between habitus (subjective) and social fields (objective) that produces individual, but socially constrained, negotiations, strategies, thought and actions:

> [T]he habitus makes possible the production of all the thoughts, perceptions and actions inherent in the particular conditions of its production… Through the habitus, the structure of which it is the product governs practice, not along the paths of a mechanical determinism, but within the constraints and limits initially set on its inventions (Bourdieu, 1995a, p. 55)[20].

For Bourdieu, then, habitus is both predetermined and generative, situated within a set of socially constituted constraints that determine agency, as individuals negotiate social fields. Accents, tastes, moral values and so on are all facets of habitus acquired through acculturation: as 'the child mimics other people's actions… body hexis speaks directly to the motor function, in the form of a pattern of postures that is both individual and systematic, being bound up with a whole system of objects, and charged with a host of special meanings and values' (Bourdieu, 1995a, p. 74).

1.1.5 Capital

Social fields, Bourdieu theorised, can be analysed as quasi-economic forums of competition and exchange. The currencies that determine agency and position are species of capital that fluctuate in value and effect across differentiated fields. What capital is, and its social value, is contingent upon the specificities of a given field. Bourdieu evinced capital manifesting in three primary categories: economic, social and cultural.

Cultural capital

Cultural capital describes material or symbolic assets that, when recognised, locate an individual within class hierarchies, determining their prospects within a given field. What can be described as cultural capital is wide-ranging, including tastes (dress/music/art/film/food), morals, education, specialist knowledge, accent, vocabulary, home décor, art objects and countless other things. The

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[20] It will be seen in Part Two that Bourdieu's conviction that his scheme of analysis escapes mechanical determinism can be, and is, contested.

nature and value of cultural capital can be widely dispersed or highly localised. For example, specialist knowledge of contemporary art will have high value in the artistic field but little, or even negative, value elsewhere, while an education in law from a high-status institution (e.g. Oxford, Cambridge) may be more widely recognised as legitimate and honourable, and therefore valuable.

Bourdieu theorised that cultural capital exists in three states: embodied, objectified and institutional. The embodied state is incorporated with habitus – dispositions of mind and body (Bourdieu, 1986, pp. 17–18) that accumulate through pre-reflexive acculturation and sometimes conscious acquisition. Embodied cultural capital is 'subject to a hereditary transmission which is always heavily disguised, or even invisible… predisposed to function as symbolic capital… unrecognized as capital and recognized as legitimate competence, as authority exerting an effect of (mis)recognition' (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 18). Recognition and misrecognition are key devices within Bourdieu's theoretical scheme. Symbolic valuations are most often (and most effectively) pre-reflexive, and constitute a system of unconscious categorisation, misrecognised as *disinterested* (without conscious calculation for personal advantage) enjoyment of taste, or appreciation of competence. The symbolic value of what is recognised is contingent on the specific rules of a given field. For example, people *recognise* the linguistic competence of an educated person as intelligence and authority – the higher-status language of educated people. In so doing, they *misrecognise* the symbolic power contained within this form of cultural capital (language [1.1.10]), as well as the system of social stratification that ensures that privileged groups naturalise (as a disposition of habitus) high-value linguistic competence.

In its objectified state, cultural capital is carried through material goods such as artworks, books, instruments and even machinery. Objectified cultural capital is, Bourdieu argued, dependent on embodied cultural capital because it signals, *by objectifying*, embodied dispositions. For example, while an artwork can be purchased monetarily, legal ownership does not guarantee the transmission of its cultural capital. There must be *recognition* of 'the precondition for specific appropriation, namely, the possession of the means of "consuming" a painting… which, being nothing other than embodied capital, [is] subject to the same laws of transmission. Thus, cultural goods can be appropriated both materially—which presupposes economic capital—and symbolically—which presupposes cultural capital' (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 20). In *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste* (1984), Bourdieu demonstrated how objectified cultural capital draws embodied dispositions into the proxy class struggles of cultural consumption to locate individuals within high/low social categories. He considered, for example, the problem for the 'nouveau riche', who may have money but not the embodied dispositions (understatement and discretion) to convincingly appropriate the

fine arts, while at the same time their native dispositions (i.e. to be 'showy', 'flashy') give away their native class position (Bourdieu, 1996b, p. 249). The dissonance between embodied and objectified cultural capital devalues the overall endowment, and so the investment of economic capital in high art is symbolically recognised as pretentious and vulgar (Bourdieu, 1996b, pp. 247–250). In short, the interaction between embodied and objectified cultural capital is a misrecognised class struggle, pre-reflexively determined by the value conferred upon particular cultural products (objectified cultural capital) and dispositions that make aesthetic taste feel entirely subjective, disinterested and natural.

Institutionalised cultural capital is, for Bourdieu, a specific form of objectified cultural capital that certifies and guarantees hierarchies of value within given fields (and across society as a whole) through the formalising work of institutions. Academic qualifications, professional accolades and formal positions confer upon the holder 'a constant, legally guaranteed value with respect to culture… a form of cultural capital which has a relative autonomy vis-à-vis its bearer and even vis-à-vis the cultural capital he effectively possesses at a given moment' (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 20). In its most visible form, qualifications obtained through higher education constitute a form of institutional cultural capital that is a prerequisite for positions of power, status and economic advantage within cultural institutions (e.g. education, university, arts centres, civil service), where the work is *to legitimise the value of particular cultural products in and beyond that field*. In this way, institutional cultural capital ensures advantage for higher-class factions by officially and legally consecrating the cultural capital of higher-class groups as more worthy, valuable and creditable, while restricting access to the power of 'consecration' (roles that involve official categorisations of value, importance, taste etc) for lower-class factions.

Bourdieu theorised that this leads to homologies within institutions, producing what he termed *'institutional habitus',* a *collective* set of dispositions and unquestioned perceptions – doxa – that become synthesised, systemised and professionalised in bureaucratic work. In '*Rethinking the state: genesis and structure of the bureaucratic field'* (Bourdieu, 1994) Bourdieu posited that in the bureaucratic work of an institution there is an 'immediate and tacit agreement… which attaches us to the established order with all the ties of the unconscious' (Boudieu, 1994, p. 14). This is an idea developed in educational research, where Reay et al. have observed educational institutions engendering 'institutional habituses': 'a complex amalgam of agency and structure [that] could be understood as the impact of a cultural group or social class on an individual's behaviour as it is mediated through an organisation' (Reay et al., 2000, p. 2).

Social capital

For Bourdieu, social capital is 'the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of… mutual acquaintance and recognition… which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively-owned capital, a "credential" which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word' (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 21). Bourdieu's conceptualisation of social capital includes 'objective relations' – the value of being *associated* with a particular group – importing the symbolic (social) capital of a group without direct social interaction. In this way, Bourdieu's social capital accounts for how a manner of speaking, or a school name (e.g. Eton), can imply a particular social network, soliciting symbolic relations that may be advantageous/disadvantageous. Thus, the profitability of a social interaction will be contingent, not only on the mutual affirmation/dissonance between personalities (habitus) but also on the social groups those *types* are associated with (Fox, 2014). Subsequently, social capital is a powerful determinant in class reproduction, accrued symbolically beyond direct social networks. Bourdieu argued that membership of certain groups solicits advantages that are not consciously pursued, but are always the result of 'investment strategies, individual or collective, consciously or unconsciously aimed at establishing or reproducing social relationships that are directly usable… transforming contingent relations, such as those of neighbourhood, the workplace, or even kinship, into relationships that are at once necessary and elective, implying durable obligations subjectively felt (feelings of gratitude, respect, friendship, etc.) or institutionally guaranteed (rights)' (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 22). Feelings of friendship, according to Bourdieu, are therefore misrecognised strategies of self-interested investment. Such feelings (consciously or unconsciously) restrict opportunity to those inside the group – socialising among like-minded people and looking out for one another ensures that opportunity, advocacy and support remain within a given social circle[21].

Robert Putnam and 'friendly' social capital

It will be seen in the chapters that follow that in academia, and policy and sector discourse, Bourdieu's conceptualisation of social capital is often supplanted by Putnam's 'bridging and bonding' version. Putnam's bridging and bonding social capital seeks to offer a more communitarian, positive account that does not reduce feelings of friendship to misrecognised strategy. For Putnam, bonding capital works to consolidate communities of trust within similar, homogeneous populations. As such, it can be exclusive, and is 'often parochial and only benefits those with internal access' (Leonard, 2004, p.

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[21] In Part Two, this aspect of Bourdieu's theorising becomes problematic when it comes to the motivations of amateur socially engaged arts.

929). Bridging capital, on the other hand, seeks to harvest the benefits of *connectivity between* social groups. As such, it is more inclusive and 'tends to bring together people across diverse social divisions' (Field, 2003, in Dahal and Adhikari, 2008, p. 4). Putnam summarises the difference between these forms with an analogy: 'bonding capital constitutes a kind of sociological superglue, whereas bridging capital provides a sociological WD-40' (Putnam, 2000, p. 23).

In *Bowling Alone: The collapse and revival of American community* (2000), Putnam briefly addressed the exclusionary potential of bonding capital, describing how 'strong ingroup loyalty, may also create strong outgroup antagonisms' (Putnam, 2000, p. 23) and 'impose conformity and social division' (Putnam, 2000, p. 352). He noted how exclusionary ideologies can be fortified by bonding capital, giving the example of the KKK – a tight-knit social network that circulates and consolidates xenophobic beliefs (Putnam, 2000, p. 22). However, he did not extend the analytical facility of bridging or bonding capital to pre-reflexive social stratification as Bourdieu does. Intriguingly, he does not address Bourdieu's theorising at all, steering towards the functional account that has become vogue in policymaking circles. As Blackshaw and Long (2005) note, the amenable and functional utility of both bridging and bonding capital means that they lend themselves conveniently to neoliberal social policy by sidestepping the oppressive systems of power that Bourdieu's theorising brings to the fore:

> The seduction of the 'niceness' of Putnam's formulation of social capital… pays little attention to Bourdieu's point that poorer community groups tend to be at the mercy of forces over which they have little control (Blackshaw and Long, 2005, p. 1).

Shifting emphasis from social capital as a source of power to a 'solution to the dilemmas of collective action' (Dahal and Adhikari, 2008, p. 3), Putnam circumvents how 'people who realize capital through their networks of social capital do so precisely because others are excluded' (DeFilippis, 2001, p. 801). By separating social capital from class-based systems of distinction and dominance, Putnam's theorising is criticised for providing an 'agenda for social capitalists'[22] that ignores how tight 'connections with people in power may not allow people to have a say in shaping the society into

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[22] Blackshaw and Long's 'social capitalists' refers to the production of Putnam's social capital as a professionalised and commodified concern, often in a top-down system of social policy. Pre-empting the analysis of 1.2 and 1.3, it will be seen that the ability to operationalise Putnam's bridging and bonding capital as a claimed benefit of arts funding rests with those in a position to make such a selection, who, it will be seen, have an interest in engaging with Bourdieu's arguments to the extent that they can be handled in a disinterested manner, without exposing the role of Bourdieusian social capital in securing their own advantageous positions within the cultural field. From a Bourdieusian perspective, such a selection *is itself* an expression of symbolic power afforded to privileged groups who assume control over discourse, whereby cultural intermediaries and academics provide policymakers with a discursive device that obscures the function of social capital among elites.

which they are to be "included"' (Blackshaw and Long, 2005, p. 21). It is also argued that Putnam's bridging and bonding capital collapses into a single dimension when applied to real-world social situations. For example, the complex multidimensional relationships most people have, bonded by, say, religion, social proximity and upbringing but divided by social values that cannot be bridged (e.g. religious or political beliefs), are difficult to appreciate as bridging, bonding or a composite of both (Blackshaw and Long, 2005).

In the funded arts field, where there is fierce competition over scarce resources (particularly economic), Bourdieu's conceptualisation of social capital[23] is more useful for analysis. His emphasis on 'conflicts and… social relations that increase the ability of an actor to advance her/his interests' (Siisiäinen, 2000, p. 3) provides a more critical approach than that of Putnam, illuminating pervasive structures of social inequality, such as the corollary between the homogeneous make-up of the funded arts workforce and the unequal distribution of arts funding[24].

Economic capital

Economic capital, and the logic of economism, underpins the organising principles of Bourdieu's scheme. For Bourdieu, economic capital 'is at the root of all the other types of capital and… these transformed, disguised forms of economic capital, never entirely reducible to that definition, produce their most specific effects only to the extent that they conceal (not least from their possessors) the fact that economic capital is at their root, in other words—but only in the last analysis—at the root of their effects' (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 24). Bourdieu routinely highlighted how economic capital presupposes/underwrites social and cultural capital by affording access to the locations where these transmuted forms of economic capital can be acquired (e.g. elite private education, time consolidating social networks, private clubs, golf courses). Perhaps owing to its self-explanatory nature, Bourdieu did little to theorise economic capital, presenting it as self-evident resources of monetary value that can be used to further one's prospects (income, savings, properties, belongings etc). However, as Waithaka and others have argued, a more refined understanding should be taken into analysis, recognising the difference between, and the social effects of, equity and less fungible assets such as owner-occupied housing that may increase in value or locate people within the catchment of a good school but, at the same time, can leave inhabitants penniless – asset rich/cash poor (Waithaka, 2014).

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[23] Bourdieu's definition: a resource in the social struggles that are carried out in different social arenas
[24] However, as will be discussed in Part Two, we do not need to accept his reduction of friendship (and even kinship) to misrecognised, self-interested strategy.

1.1.6 Conversion, endowments and homologies

Class stratification is reproduced, Bourdieu argued, through the conversions between economic, social and cultural capitals. He demonstrated that these forms of capital convert from one to another, asserting multiplier effects that consolidate structures of class and distinction. In its most simplistic rendering, economic capital (money) converts to cultural capital (private/higher education, specialist knowledge [embodied/objectified], dispositions [embodied] and qualifications [institutionalised]), which converts to social capital (networks, friendships and the symbolic value of objective relations), leading to higher-status professions and, ergo, reproducing class hierarchies by concentrating cultural and economic power within dominant groups across generations. In this way, the principles of economism are fundamental to Bourdieu's logic of practice. Conversion, he theorised, is facilitated by 'labour-time' – work – that transforms one type of capital into another. For example, 'the transformation of economic capital into cultural capital presupposes an expenditure of time that is made possible by possession of economic capital… to delay entry into the labor market through prolonged schooling' (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 20). The investment of labour-time can be a conscious effort or it can be unconsciously misrecognised as, for example, the enjoyment of an activity (cultural capital predetermined by dispositions), socialising with friends (social capital) or improving oneself. Such activities require time and energy, which produces useful social networks (social capital) and/or cultural competences (cultural capital) that pay dividends in securing class position, status and opportunity.

1.1.7 Field of cultural production

The chapters that follow conceptualise the funded arts sphere (Holden, 2015) as a Bourdieusian subfield of cultural production to reveal how the inequalities of funding and the exigencies of policy attachment construct socially engaged arts as discursive practice, a task to which Bourdieu's scheme is well attuned, not least because of his particular attention to professionalised fields of cultural production[25]. As such, the term 'funded field' will be used when discussing the funded sector in this context.

Bourdieu viewed aesthetic taste, and therefore (and in particular) art, as a tacit system of class structuration – taste as embodied cultural capital, artworks as objectified cultural capital – not as the apprehension of innate aesthetic form, but as the reading of objectified cultural capital in cultural

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[25] Bourdieu's system of analysis found full expression in his influential studies of cultural production and consumption, most notably *Distinction: A social critique of the judgment of taste* (Bourdieu, 1996b), *The Field of Cultural Production* (Bourdieu, 1993) and *The Rules of Art* (Bourdieu, 1995b).

products that are codified into socially constructed hierarchies, and thus function as vehicles of distinction. Beyond this, as Born (2010), Jenkins (1992) and others have noted, Bourdieu had little to say about *aesthetic experience*, a theoretical chasm that renders the motivations of amateur socially engaged arts invisible to his analysis, thus providing a basis for working *against Bourdieu* in Part Two. However, when it comes to social stratification and inequality in the funded arts field, his apprehension of aesthetic taste as social distinction provides considerable analytic utility. Bourdieu argued that the dispositions required to 'decode' high art (and therefore enjoy it in a disinterested manner) are attained through a long process of familiarity, mastery of specialist language, higher education, and other advantages afforded by higher levels of social, economic and cultural capital:

> Works of restricted art owe their specifically cultural rarity and thus their function as elements of social distinction, to the rarity of the instruments with which they may be deciphered. This rarity is a function of the unequal distribution of the conditions underlying the acquisition of the specifically aesthetic disposition and of the codes indispensable to the deciphering of works belonging to the field of restricted production (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 120).

The production and consumption of art, Bourdieu argued, 'is the area par excellence of denial of the social' (Bourdieu, 1996b, p. 11) – a domain where disinterested judgements of taste are objectively attuned to class hierarchies, and felt and experienced as something natural and benign (doxa), misrecognising art's true function as a tacit system of social stratification. To reveal art as distinction, Bourdieu drew upon his quasi-economic scheme to illuminate conscious/unconscious struggles in which class factions compete for status and power through cultural production and consumption as accumulation of capital. *The Field of Cultural Production* (Bourdieu, 1993) is where struggles and strategies between actors determine the value of socially differentiated cultural products across society as a whole:

> It should not be forgotten that [objectified cultural capital] exists as symbolically and materially active, effective capital only insofar as it is appropriated by agents and implemented and invested as a weapon and a stake in the struggles which go on in the fields of cultural production (the artistic field, the scientific field, etc.) and, beyond them, in the field of the social classes—struggles in which the agents wield strengths and obtain profits proportionate to their mastery of this objectified capital, and therefore to the extent of their embodied capital (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 20).

Bourdieu conceptualised the field of cultural production as a composite of multiple subfields distinguishable by discipline (e.g. literature, music, theatre, visual arts), genre (e.g. contemporary, jazz, classical, pop etc) and logic (commercial vs art for art's sake). Subfields, and the field as a whole, are hierarchised and structured by two opposing poles: the subfields of 'restricted' (high arts) and 'large-scale' (commercial, entertainment and popular culture) production.

1.1.8 The restricted field – the home of socially engaged art

Studies adopting Bourdieu's analysis usually position the UK's funded arts sector within the restricted field[26]: 'a universe of belief [that] distinguishes itself from the production of the most common objects in that it must produce not only the object in its materiality, but also the value of this object, that is, the recognition of artistic legitimacy. This is inseparable from the production of the artist… as a creator of value' (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 164). Bourdieu conceptualised the restricted field as 'the economic world reversed' (Bourdieu, 1993, pp. 29–112), organised around a system of belief that generates and distributes symbolic and cultural value by ritually negating overt economic interest and valorising what he termed 'the charismatic ideology' of art (Bourdieu, 1993, pp. 76–77) (commonly understood as art for art's sake) – a collective belief that art evolves in a purely aesthetic manner, divorced from its social function. This charismatic ideology, Bourdieu argued, is an illusion (*illusio*) – a myth maintained by the 'circle of belief' (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 77) – arts professionals, art-lovers, curators, booking agents, venues and so on (collectively termed cultural intermediaries ,1.1.10) – who compete for the authority to consecrate what is great, innovative, important and, ultimately, legitimate and valuable within the field. Through these struggles, the value of aesthetic styles, schools, institutions, discourses and so on is collectively conferred and franchised, as the charismatic ideology gathers around successful artists/intermediaries like religiosity enshrouds priests and prophets, licensing them to perform aesthetic revelations that are, according to Bourdieu, misrecognised modes of social distinction[27]:

> [T]he quasi-magical potency of the [artist's] signature is nothing other than the power, bestowed upon certain individuals, to mobilise the symbolic energy produced by the functioning of the whole field, i.e. faith in the game and its stakes that is produced by the game itself… The artist… is collectively mandated to perform a magic act which would be nothing without… the universe of celebrants and believers who give it meaning and value… in

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[26] Also called the artistic field

[27] Bourdieu drew significantly from Weber's sociology of religion (*Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*) (Dianteill, 2003), identifying parallels between the way in which religious institutions organise around religious belief and how cultural fields organise around aesthetic belief.

the system of objective relations which constitute it, in the struggle of which it is the site and in the specific form of energy or capital which is generated there (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 81).

Devotion to this ideology, and the condemnation of economic interests, disguises the underlying economism that paradoxically drives this 'market of symbolic goods' (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 75). The struggle for aesthetic authority is a misrecognised effort towards status and power – aesthetic expertise being 'nothing other than a credit with a set of agents who constitute "connections" whose value is proportionate to the credit they themselves command' (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 78). Bourdieu argued that nothing reveals the logic of the restricted field better than 'radical attempts at subversion' (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 80), a strategy to gain status and position by scandalising the established ideology (and thus other agents) of the field. When artists undermine the illusion of art (by putting a signature on a urinal[28] or labelling food tins 'artist's shit'[29]) their acts 'are immediately converted into artistic acts, recorded as such and thus consecrated and celebrated by the makers of taste. Art cannot reveal the truth about art without snatching it away again by turning the revelation into an artistic event' (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 80). As such, these 'ritual acts of sacrilege… are bound to become sacred in their turn and provide the basis for a new belief' (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 80).

The restricted field (and therefore the UK's funded arts field) is, then, a world of faith, misrecognition, struggle and strategy that favours privileged groups because artistic value is determined by an ideology that condemns economic profitability, and as such is accessible only to those who can afford to participate. Bourdieu routinely underscored how the symbolic profits attained by disavowing economic capital (reverence to the illusion of aestheticism) and risky acts of sacrilege are most often underwritten by generous endowments of economic and social capital:

> The propensity to move towards the economically most risky positions, and above all the capacity to persist in them… depend to a large extent on possession of substantial economic and social capital (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 68).

In this way, despite the castigation of economic interest, economic capital *is* a powerful determinant in this 'economic world reversed' (ibid), underwriting the labour-time required to sustain oneself in the game. This converts into cultural and symbolic capital and, for the successful few, economic capital and status in the long run. The economic value of a restricted artwork, artist, curator or intermediary

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[28] A commonly cited example – Duchamp's *Fountain*, 1917
[29] *Artist's Shit*, Piero Manzoni, 1961

is inflated (often far beyond the material value of production) by the multipliers of cultural and symbolic capital invested by the objective structure of relations (the circle of belief) of the field – a collective effort that misrecognises the social functions of the charismatic ideology, which is to produce/reproduce the apparatus of distinction.

1.1.9 Large-scale production

In contrast to the restricted field, the subfield of large-scale production is *explicitly* governed by the economic profit attained by popular appeal. Pop music, television, musicals, light classical – all those things considered popular entertainment – belong to the large-scale field, dominated by the quest for 'profitability [that] creates the need for [the] widest possible public' (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 126). This is the location of popular, 'socially neutralised… middlebrow art' (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 125) – cultural goods 'characterised by tried and proven techniques and an oscillation between plagiarism and parody' (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 128). Successful producers are those who acquiesce to the market, deploying their creative skill and aesthetic knowledge to appeal to the widest range of cultural interests through the evocation of the 'average spectator' (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 126). This often requires acts of 'self-censorship' (ibid) that suppress individual efforts towards distinction so that producers may generate socially neutralised works. Bourdieu argued that while the technical skill and expertise of large-scale producers (specialists producing cultural goods for economic markets) can be every bit as refined as that of those in restricted fields (and its products similar), the two worlds co-exist in a symbiotic relationship of opposition:

> What is important is that these two fields of production, opposed as they are, coexist and that their products owe their very unequal symbolic and material values on the market to their unequal consecration, which, in turn, stems from their unequal power of distinction… this system is more or less integrated according to the social formation in question, but, it is always hierarchized (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 129).

The important difference between large-scale and restricted fields is, therefore, not in the aesthetic qualities of their products but in the construction and consecration of aesthetic codes as modes of distinction. Thus, popular and middlebrow culture is 'objectively condemned to define itself in relation to legitimate (restricted) culture; this is so in the field of production as well as of consumption… large-scale production almost always comes up against the breakdown in communication liable to arise from the use of codes inaccessible to the mass public' (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 129). This relationship of opposition underpins hierarchies of cultural value that assign particular judgements of taste to

particular social classes – observable, Bourdieu argued, across all fields of cultural production (e.g. jazz, classical, theatre). Ultimately, large-scale producers are in service to the restricted field by producing products for the market of symbolic goods at the negative end of the cultural value (capital) pole (but often at the higher end of the economic value pole). In its appeal to the average person, the large-scale field provides the necessary foil for the restricted field – the basis for rarefied modes of production that exclude the majority and favour the dominant classes by objectifying dispositions acquired through higher endowments of economic, social and cultural capital. And so, what is successful in the large-scale field is the mark of the sell-out, pedestrian, everyday, crass, mass-produced – considered failure in the restricted field. This 'social game' (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 81) is, according to Bourdieu, largely misrecognised as subjective taste, appearing to most (producers and consumers) as the intrinsic, natural and uncalculating enjoyment of art and culture – whether that be music, visual art, film, television, theatre, dance, socially engaged arts projects or anything else.

1.1.10 Cultural Intermediaries

Key to the value and affects of particular cultural products as modes of social distinction is the work of cultural intermediaries. Bourdieu defined cultural intermediaries as specialists in arbitrating cultural value, usually and most visibly in professionalised occupations that have evolved through the rise of consumer culture during the 20th century - both product and producer of the 'new economy … whose functioning depends as much on the production of needs and consumers as on the production of goods' (Bourdieu, 1984 in Maguire, Jennifer Smith Matthews, 2014, p. 18) For Bourdieu, these 'new occupations' organise around (but are not limited to) the representation, presentation, and supply and of symbolic goods and services (Maguire, 2017, pp. 18–20).

Within this framing, cultural intermediaries are the 'taste-makers' (Bourdieu, 1996, p. 224) 'who create the conditions for consumers to identify their tastes in various goods' and cultural products (Maguire, Jennifer Smith Matthews, 2014, p. 20). This effort can be localised within restricted fields, or widely dispersed across large-scale fields. Importantly, cultural intermediaries must be *recognised* as 'authorities of legitimation' (Bourdieu, 1990 in Maguire, 2017, p. 22), possessing the specific expertise to consecrate what is legitimate and valuable within a given form of cultural production and within a given field/fields. This, Bourdieu posited, involves mobilising their individual habitus and embodied cultural capital in the production of cultural value itself:

> Shaping tastes and matching things to people require that cultural intermediaries frame
> particular practices and products as worthy of their claimed value, involving them in

constructing repertoires of cultural legitimacy. Consequently, cultural intermediaries are not simply taste makers; they are professional taste makers and 'authorities of legitimation' (Maguire, 2017, p. 21).

In *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste* (1984) and *The Field of Cultural Production* (1993), Bourdieu illuminated the interoperations between the work (and products) of cultural intermediaries and their own, personal embodied habitus, in particular, their stocks of cultural capital and subjective dispositions:

> There is no clearer indication of the existence, in all areas, of a legitimacy and a definition of legitimate practice than the careless, but socially corroborated, assurance with which the new taste-makers measure all practices against the yardstick of their own taste, the acid test of modernity (as opposed to all that is archaic, rigid, old-fashioned) (Bourdieu, 1996, p. 224).

This aspect of Bourdieu's outline of cultural intermediaries - as productive agents of taste - revealed the 'subjective dynamics that underpin the reproduction of an economy of cultural goods' (Maguire, 2017, p. 22). In sum, cultural intermediaries are the professional taste-makers who compete for the authority to consecrate what is legitimate and prized within a given field.

Since Bourdieu's initial identification and conceptualisation of cultural intermediaries, research to adopt the concept has followed two, ever broadening trajectories; 'cultural intermediaries as exemplars of the new middle class… (following Bourdieu, e.g. 1984, 1996); and cultural intermediaries as market actors involved in the qualification of goods, mediating between economy and culture' (Maguire and Matthews, 2012, p. 1). This ever-expanding use and interpretation of the term (cultural intermediaries) has led, it is argued, to the dilution of the concepts analytical productivity, to the point where it can appear as simply a catch-all descriptor for almost anybody involved in cultural work (Maguire and Matthews, 2012). In this thesis, it should be noted, a broad interpretation of 'cultural intermediaries' is taken into analysis, but one grounded in the three conceptual dimensions proposed by Maguire and Matthews (2012), that demarcate cultural intermediaries from other actors involved in cultural production/consumption:

1. As 'framers' of cultural goods, presenting these as 'legitimate and worthy points of attachment for intended receivers' (Maguire and Matthews, 2012, p. 3).

2. As 'experts', whose knowledge and skill distinguishes them from 'others involved in the framing of goods and the formation of value' because they draw 'on personal dispositions and cultural capital as the basis of their professional credibility' (Maguire and Matthews, 2012, p. 5) (and as will be seen, potentially voluntary credibility).

3. And as creators of 'impact', 'implicated in the construction of legitimacy, although the primacy of that intended impact will vary between different cases', occupations and positions within particular fields (Maguire and Matthews, 2012, p. 6).

Where this thesis departs from common renderings of cultural intermediaries is in its application to amateur (unpaid, voluntary) arts co-coordinators – *amateur socially engaged intermediaries* - in Part Two. The most common apprehension of cultural intermediaries is as *professionals* – paid individuals who specialise in particular cultural occupations. However, as well as the contestability of the distinction between the professional/amateur along lines of economic renumeration (this will be addressed fully in 2.1.4), this thesis seeks to highlight how amateurs realise similar social impacts to those *discursively articulated* by equivalents in professionalised fields (part 1), and are very much:

1. *Specialists* in the framing of cultural goods.

2. *Experts* who draw on personal dispositions as the basis of their voluntary creative and *altruistic* credibility.

3. Individuals who *impact* schemes of value by 'constituting and circulating categories of legitimate culture and thus, possibly, in challenging and changing them' (Maguire and Matthews, 2012, p. 7).

While this thesis adopts a broad definition of cultural intermediaries (applied to both professionals and amateurs), this is not to dilute the analytical utility of the concept, but rather, to underscore the similarities between (and to respect the value of) their understanding of artistic work (framing) and orientations to the social benefits of arts participation (expertise), albeit from significantly different indices of cultural value (impacts).

1.1.11 Discourse and power

The chapters in Part One, working with Bourdieu, examine how the problematisation of funding inequality and the exigencies of policy attachment construct socially engaged arts as a restricted discursive practice in the UK's funded arts field. As such, Bourdieu's theorising of language and discourse provides a logical point of departure for the analysis that follows. In his studies of cultural

production, Bourdieu encountered discursive practices in the representations made by artists and intermediaries about art, concluding that 'the production of discourse (critical, historical etc.) about the work of art is one of the conditions of production of the work' (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 35). While in these studies he did not focus extensively on the structured and structuring role of discourse itself, elsewhere, particularly in his analysis of academic discourse (Bourdieu, 1996a), bureaucracy (Boudieu, 1994) and language (Bourdieu, 1991b), he addressed the topic directly. He was concerned with the way in which language and discourse operate as a system of power, distinction and dispossession, his most notable theorising presented in *Language and Symbolic Power* (Bourdieu, 1991b)[30].

For Bourdieu, discourse is a powerful mediator of cultural hierarchies and symbolic power – a 'structuring-structure' that determines 'doxic' schemes of perception within fields. Here, the similarities between his theorising and Foucault's (described in *Methodology chapter vii*) are apparent. In their summary of his theorising, Webb et al. capture the strength of Bourdieu's view that

> language 'makes the world', and that is in terms of what language is 'made to mean'. While all forms of language carry their histories with them (in terms of where they have been and what they have meant), they are also in a sense empty of content: people in positions of authority within a field… and different groups… compete with one another in order to impose their meaning on language. And this 'politicising' of language determines how we see and understand life (Webb et al., 2002b, p. 30).

One can see the links between Bourdieu's treatment of cultural products (art) and his treatment of discourse, realised through the application of his overarching analytical tools. Bourdieu highlighted problems with extant approaches to discourse analysis, which he thought too simplistic, and as failing to recognise the interplay between social structure, field and individual linguistic agency. His development was to break from the distinction between langue and parole (Saussure. 1916)[31]. He argued that these approaches have the effect of presupposing an 'idealized language' (Bourdieu, 1991b, pp. 43–65) – a fixed system that neglects both the social-historical conditions that undergird systems of linguistic power, and the generative capacity of individuals to produce and adapt discourse for particular situations. He drew instead on his schematic of field, habitus and capital to locate the structured-structuring properties of discourse. For him, discourse is a form of cultural practice like

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[30] It should also be noted that he was at times critical of the weight given to discourse analysis in some areas of the social sciences (Bourdieu, 1991b, pp. 28–29).

[31] And also the distinction between competence and performance as developed by Chomsky, which Bourdieu argued amounted to the same thing (Bourdieu, 1991b)

others, constructed by the relationship between 'linguistic habitus' (Bourdieu, 1991b, p. 37) and 'linguistic markets' (ibid, pp. 37–38). Linguistic habitus is a subset of the embodied dispositions that constitute habitus, attained through learning to speak within the social environment to which a person is enculturated (family, school, college etc)[32]. Linguistic markets are essential constituents of fields, which are locations of specialised discourses. Different fields operate different linguistic markets, producing specialised discourses that endow particular discursive representations with a particular value. As such, language and discourse are understood as forms of embodied and objectified cultural capital – 'linguistic capital':

> Specialized discourses can derive their efficacy from the hidden correspondence between the structure of the social space within which they are produced – the political field, the religious field, the artistic field, the philosophical field, etc. – and the structure of the field of social classes within which the recipients are situated and in relation to which they interpret the message (Bourdieu, 1991b, p. 41).

Within any given field, at any given time, certain discursive practices are valued above others, and the practical competence of an agent is manifest in their knowledge of the linguistic economy and their ability to produce discursive products that are acceptable, recognised and valued within those markets. Because linguistic habitus locates the speaker within social space, reflecting their endowment of linguistic capital and thus their cultural capital, the more linguistic capital a person has, 'the more they are able to exploit the system of differences to their advantage and thereby secure *a profit of distinction*' (Thompson, 1991, in Bourdieu, 1991b, p. 18, emphasis added). The specialised discourses of a given field result from, on the one hand, the practical requirements of communication – to signify specific things – and, on the other, the social conditions of that field in relation to the linguistic market of the field of classes (society), which privileges the linguistic capital attained by dominant social groups through higher levels of education that afford forms of expression that are institutionally consecrated and unequally distributed.

Agents are able to, and constantly do, consciously/unconsciously tailor language and discourse to particular situations and, thus, it is the rapport between the linguistic market of a given field and the linguistic habitus (competence) of an individual that structures an agent's strategies vis-à-vis language and discourse. This, Bourdieu claimed, overcomes the impasse between the objectivist perspective,

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[32] As described previously, accent and articulatory style are deeply embodied in bodily hexis and thus, for the most part, are pre-reflexive and predetermine a speaker's position within 'the field of social classes' (society as a whole).

which credits individuals with little discursive agency, and the subjective perspective, which fails to account for the complex ways in which social environments set the constraints of discourse. Bourdieu argued that failure to account for the socio-historical development of both linguistic habituses and linguistic markets conceals what discourse is really all about – class struggle through the tacit system of symbolic power that is language – *discursive practice*. In this sense, discourse follows the same theoretical trajectory as that of art described above. The symbolic value of a particular discursive act (written or spoken) is ascribed by the social conditions of its production, historically determined by the tradition of class distinction that affords privileged groups power over the consecration and legitimation of linguistic and discursive practices.

Through examination of the development of the French language, from regional dialects to the *Île de France* (the language elevated to the nation's official and written form), Bourdieu described the social conditions by which the linguistic habitus of dominant classes became legitimated, institutionalised and naturalised within the population. He demonstrated that linguistic unification was not simply a benevolent solution to a practical problem, but a proxy class struggle exercised through the symbolic power of language and its capacity to structure not only what is said, but who is permitted to say it and what is to be thought:

> The purification of thought through the purification of language, would give the upper classes a de-facto monopoly of political power. By promoting the official language to the status of the national language – that is, the official language of the emerging nation-state – the policy of linguistic unification would favour those who already possessed the official language as part of their linguistic competence, while those who knew only a local dialect would become part of a political and linguistic unit in which their traditional competence was subordinate and devalued (Thompson, 1991, in Bourdieu, 1991b, p. 6).

To develop the point, Bourdieu examined the institutionalisation, professionalisation and subsequent dispossession of discourse within the political field, an analysis that is pertinent to socially engaged arts in the funded field because, as will be seen, a very similar process can be seen to unfold. He argued that the political field has undergone a process of professionalisation and autonomisation that has concentrated power and control of public discourse in the hands of a privileged few. As political bureaucracies expanded, the production of political discourse became increasingly specialised and internalised, becoming a field-specific game with its own rules and logic. Over time, this discursive game became routinised in bureaucracies that assumed 'responsibility for training the professionals

who will enter the game, endowing them with the specialist skills and competencies which they will require in order to succeed' (Thompson, 1991, in Bourdieu, 1991b, p. 27):

> [P]rofessionals must acquire a practical sense or 'feel' for the game, that is, a habitus attuned to the specific conditions of the political field. The discourses produced by political professionals are therefore determined by two broad sets of constraints. *One set of constraints derives from the logic of the political field itself, in which professionals are competing with one another, taking stances vis-a-vis one another, etc. In this respect, their utterances acquire a relational status: that is, they make sense only in relation to other utterances issued from other positions in the same field* (Thompson, 1991, in Bourdieu, 1991b, pp. 27–28, emphasis added).

This process, Bourdieu argued, leads to the dispossession of those whom representatives are purported to represent, precisely because the internalised, removed nature of discursive practices generated by the linguistic market of the political field is specialised and exclusive. The second set of constraints that structures discourse, Bourdieu posited, derives from the broader range of social positions, groups and processes that bear upon a field from outside. In the political field, he argued, agents must

> appeal to groups or forces which lie outside the field… by providing non-professionals with forms of representation and self-representation, in exchange for which they give material and symbolic support… to those who claim to represent them in the political field' (Thompson, 1991, in Bourdieu, 1991b, pp. 27–28)[33].

This provides a framework for analysing socially engaged art as discursive practice in the funded arts field. Conceptualising socially engaged art as discursive practice, produced by the linguistic market of the field (which is itself structured by the intersect between 'the internal logic of the field' and 'forces which lie outside the field'), allows analysis to explore how activities ostensibly directed towards tackling inequality become complicit in reproducing that inequality. It should be stressed that, of course, not all forms of specialist language produce inequality, and one must avoid the reductive and totalising interpretations that can accompany Bourdieu's system of analysis. However, as will be seen, the way in which socially engaged art is enacted as a specialised discursive strategy in the funded arts

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[33] I have emphasised these two passages from Thompsons introduction to Bourdieu's *'Language and Symbolic Power'* (1991) because they capture succinctly the theoretical approach that will be taken in 1.2 and 1.3.

is far from benevolent, and serves to transform a problem of unequal cultural value and distribution into a justification for sustaining structures of inequality in arts funding. In the following chapters, I will demonstrate how the process Bourdieu describes above (in relation to the political field) can be seen as structuring socially engaged arts as discursive practice within the funded arts.

Going further, Bourdieu argued that the production of specialised discourses (constrained by the internal logic of the field and the need to appeal to forces outside the field) produces schemes of perception particular to differentiated fields that become, potentially, disconnected from reality, which is to say that what is thought to be real is what *makes sense* within the structure of discourse of a given field:

> The more autonomous a field, the more it produces an autonomous and specific language, representations and practices, and the more the perception of realities is subject to the logic specific to the field. The autonomization of the criteria (aesthetic, religious, scientific, etc.) that govern production, and the importance of these criteria in building a structure of relations specific to a domain of activity, leads the agents who are active within it to perceive the real on the basis of the principles shared in this field. In other words, as autonomy increases, the refraction effect grows and the agents tend to divert, translate, and interpret external phenomena in terms of the stakes, logics and beliefs specific to the field and the positions they occupy within it. The agents of the field then tend to perceive the world – inside and outside the field – through a prism constructed within the field (Summary of Bourdieu, in Hilgers and Mangez, 2015, p. 25).

In this way, as discourses are established and constrained by the linguistic market of the field, so too are perceptions about the nature of things; conscious discursive strategy becomes pre-reflexive knowledge (doxa) and perception – habitus/institutional habitus. Agents may be acting in good faith, while at the same time misrecognising the deeply embedded structures of symbolic power inculcated in the discourses that are routinised in the field and its bureaucratic systems.

An example

To pre-empt the discussion, a compelling example of the symbolic power of language identified by Bourdieu, and the way in which discourses constructed within the linguistic market of the funded arts can marginalise lower-position social groups, is alluded to in Darren McGarvey's critique of 'The Glasgow Effect' (2016), a socially engaged arts commission that saw artist Ellie Harrison receive

£15,000 from Arts Council England to live within the city limits of Glasgow for one year. McGarvey points towards discursive practice as a location of symbolic power and inequality between the funded arts field and the residents of the marginalised communities targeted by Harrison's socially engaged project, in a way that supports Bourdieu's hypothesis that discourses function as a mode of distinction and dispossession:

> Harrison's vision was not shared by many of Glasgow's poorer residents, for whom the Glasgow Effect was not merely a concept but an oppressive matrix of overlapping inequalities. Ellie's cause was not helped by the fact that she chose to use academic language in the vague description of her project, which naturally aroused prejudice among those who had grown wary of jargon – because they associate it with political exclusion and exploitation. This short description[34], without even intending it, was encoded with everything people from deprived communities have grown sceptical of over the years. Culture, participation, the arts; all these things that people claim are accessible, but which always appear to be the exclusive preserve of those who use phrases like 'action research project' and 'sustainable practice' – high status language that sets alarm bells ringing (McGarvey, 2017, p. 202).

1.1.12 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have provided an overview of Bourdieu's analytical scheme, with attention to cultural production and discourse, in preparation for working *with* these ideas to illuminate socially engaged art as discursive practice in the funded field (Part One), and *against* them to highlight how these concepts can obscure intrinsic motivations that structure amateur socially engaged work in locations where economic capital does not underwrite transmuted forms of capital to structure anything resembling a Bordieuan field (Part Two). Analysis of sector literature and interview data, following the heuristic-ethnographic approach, has drawn analysis towards Bourdieu's theoretical approach as a basis for understanding socially engaged arts in the funded field. Alongside this, it will be seen that Bourdieu's schematic for revealing systems of social inequality not only informs contemporary policymaking through its use in academic critique (often commissioned for exactly that purpose – see for example Arts Council England, 2007; 2018; ACE, 2014; Taylor et al., 2015) but, paradoxically, is on occasion selectively co-opted to construct socially engaged arts as a discursive strategy that legitimises modes of distinction and shapes schemes of perception within the funded arts sector.

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[34] Harrison described the work as 'a year-long action research project/durational performance, for which the artist Ellie Harrison will not travel outside Greater Glasgow for a whole year […] By setting this one simple restriction to her current lifestyle, she intends to test the limits of a "sustainable practice" and to challenge the demand-to-travel placed upon the "successful artist/academic"' (Harrison, 2016, cited in McGarvey, 2017, p. 202).

1.2 The problem of inequality and the construction of socially engaged art as discursive practice in the funded field

1.2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, working with Bourdieu, I examine the problematisation of funding inequality in sector and academic literature to argue that, in the funded field, socially engaged arts is both constructed and functions as *discursive practice* that serves extant hierarchies of cultural value and the institutions that legitimise them. Attention to this discourse reveals that socially engaged art is a restricted, discursive practice that serves to maintain the status quo.

The chapter begins with a brief overview of the inequalities observed in cultural funding (1.2.2) that are problematised as a basis for cultural policy and funding strategy (1.2.3). Alongside restricted notions of artistic excellence (1.2.4), discourses of access have framed the conditions of arts funding for decades (Gross and Wilson, 2018). This analysis highlights how procedures of funding are, above all, discursive practices – a structured linguistic market in which socially engaged arts is discursively operationalised in the competition for funding and position within the field (1.2.5). This, I will argue, inculcates a particular system of thought (1.2.6) that underpins 'the myth of non-participation' (Stevenson, 2013; 2016) and socially engaged arts as a discourse that negates inequality and maintains hierarchies of cultural value in the interests of funded institutions and those who occupy them (1.2.7). Analysis then turns to the restricted nature of the linguistic market from which socially engaged arts is constructed as a specialised discourse that corresponds with higher endowments of cultural and linguistic capital, serving to exclude and dispossess (1.2.8). The chapter concludes by locating the role of policy ambiguity in facilitating the disconnect between socially engaged arts as discursive practice and the socially stratifying nature of employment and participation in the funded field (1.2.9).

1.2.2 Funding inequality – a source of discourse

In the funded arts field, discourses about low engagement and funding inequality provide the rationale and justification for socially engaged arts as a publicly funded activity. These discourses respond to an overwhelming body of evidence that highlights ethical questions about the role of the funded arts sector in public life, most notably on what ethical basis the poorest (through greater participation in the National Lottery) should subsidise the cultural interests of a minority of the middle class (Stark et al., 2013). Research demonstrates that, despite the rhetoric of 'access', 'diversity', 'inclusion' (Arts Council England, 2013), 'cultural democracy' (Henley et al., 2018) and most recently 'relevance' (Arts Council England, 2020a), public arts funding has thus far privileged only a small minority.

In terms of ethnic diversity, studies show that the funded sector is far from representative. Only 11% of staff in regularly funded National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) identify as BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic), compared with 16% of the working-age population (ACE annual diversity report 2018) (Arts Council England, 2019a). British Asians (7.5% of the overall population) account for only 3.2% of arts audiences while Black/Black British people (3.3% of the overall population) account for just 1%. However, white people (86% of the overall population) make up 92% of all publicly funded arts audience members (Reynolds, 2015). Geographic inequality has also been identified – ACE's *Rural Evidence and Data Review 2019* revealed that less than 3% of total funding for NPOs went to rural areas (ACE, 2019a) and that, since 1946, public arts funding had favoured London. *Rebalancing Our Cultural Capital* (2013) found that 'combining [...] direct DCMS[35] expenditure with that of ACE produces a benefit per head of population in the capital of £68.99 compared to £4.58 in the rest of England' (Stark et al., 2013, p. 8)[36]. London also benefits from 75% of all UK individual giving and 66% of private investment (Arts Council England, 2016, p. 17). With most public and private investment going to London, Office for National Statistics data shows that 40% of the UK's cultural jobs are based in the capital (Mateos-Garcia and Bakhshi, 2016). *'Panic! 2018 – It's an Arts Emergency'* describes this as a structure of class-based exclusion, noting that 'coming from an upper middle-class background offers significant advantages for people struggling to make it in the capital' (Create London, 2015, pp. 14–15).

Socio-economic disparities have received significant attention from academic circles in recent years (Brook et al., 2018)[37], often drawing on Bourdieu's system of analysis. It has been revealed that more than three quarters of people working in the funded arts sector come from middle-class backgrounds, and data shows a 'class pay gap' (Oakley *et al.*, 2017, p. 1520), whereby those of working-class origin will earn, even after variables such as education and age are accounted for, on average 15% less in London and 10% less across the rest of the UK. Further, people from working-class backgrounds are significantly less likely to enter managerial or leadership roles (Brook, O'Brien and Taylor, 2018, pp. 30–31) .

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[35] Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
[36] See also Dorling and Hennig's 'London and the English desert: the geography of cultural capital in the UK' (Dorling and Hennig, 2016)
[37] For just a few examples see Bennett et al. (2009), Stark et al. (2013), Parkinson et al. (2014), O'Brien and Oakley (2015b), Oakley et al. (2017) and Brook et al. (2018).

It is routinely noted, whether deferring to Bourdieu or not, that the advantage afforded to middle-class cultural workers is wired into the practices and institutional arrangements of the funded arts sector (O'Brien and Oakley, 2015). Typical entry points such as unpaid internships, informal networking and time spent writing funding applications (Bennett et al., 2009) require aspirants to effectively buy in to the labour market in a way that, as Bourdieu theorised, renders economic capital the vital asset for participation. Further, O'Brien and Taylor found that those from working-class backgrounds are more likely to experience unpaid work as 'inescapable and a form of exploitation', while those from upper-middle-class origins see it as a 'choice' or an 'expression of autonomy, asserting the value of their work' (2017, p. 21), suggesting that the sector favours an attitude (disposition of habitus) towards unpaid labour to which the middle classes may be predisposed.

A common theme in research literature is the role of social capital as an asset that affords access to the locations of opportunity and legitimation (Mateos-Garcia and Bakhshi, 2016, p. 30). O'Brien and Oakley highlight how, in the funded sector, unpaid work converts economic capital into social capital, providing access to vital networks that offer 'a multitude of advantages that help ensure that the narrow class basis of the sectors is replicated inter-generationally' (O'Brien and Oakley, 2015, p. 17). McRobbie describes how getting jobs through the grapevine rather than via selection procedures has become normalised in a sector where tight-knit social groups accelerate the career trajectories of the middle classes, 'producing new forms of exclusion… as legal and institutional processes [are] bypassed rather than dismantled' (McRobbie, 2011a, p. 6). McRobbie notes that, by celebrating informality[38], closed networks of social capital have circumvented 'procedures developed by leftist and social democratic authorities to protect against nepotism and corruption and to give equal chances for jobs to people who would otherwise be marginalised' (McRobbie, 2011a, p. 7).

Social stratification in employment is mirrored in patterns of consumption, concurring with Bourdieu's thesis of aesthetic taste as distinction (Bourdieu, 1996b). When it comes to audiences for the funded arts,

> [t]he wealthiest, better educated and least ethnically diverse 8% of the population forms the most culturally active segment of all; between 2012 and 2015 they accounted (in the most conservative estimate possible) for at least 28% of live attendance to theatre, thus benefitting from an estimated £85 per head of Arts Council theatre funding. The same 8% of the

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[38] Informality being an occupational virtue, according to Richard Florida's influential 'creative class' thesis – this will be addressed shortly.

population also accounted for 44% of attendance to live music, benefitting from £94 per head of Arts Council music funding. For the visual arts, this highly engaged minority accounted for 28% of visits and £37 per head (Neelands, Belfiore and Firth, 2015, p. 33).

Analysis of employment and audience data reveals that the funded arts have, since their inception, been dominated by a homogeneous group of predominantly white, middle-class beneficiaries, and that positions of power, influence and (to use Bourdieu's terminology) consecration have been restricted to higher-class factions. As such (and concurring with Bourdieu), the products of the UK's funded arts sector appeal predominantly to white middle-class audiences who share the requisite dispositions to consume them. In contemporary analysis of arts funding, Bourdieu's theorising (whether deployed directly or not) holds well, providing a perspective that reveals how social stratification and exclusion, particularly in terms of social class, has become institutionalised to produce the patterns observed in empirical studies. However, relatively little has been said about the role of discourse as a structuring-structure that facilitates this inequality by co-opting the critique of inequality itself, and marshalling this as a justification for maintaining the status quo *through the construction of socially engaged art in the funded field*. While most analysis highlights structures of inequality in terms of economic, social and cultural capital[39], how this inequality is managed and reproduced by the transfer of tangible problems into discursive practices in the funded field remains under-theorised.

1.2.3 Funding inequality – a routinised problematisation

In 1.1.11, I highlighted Thomson's useful summary of Bourdieu's understanding of how specialised discourses become proxy battles for symbolic power, 'constrained by the logic of the… field itself, in which professionals are competing with one another, taking stances vis-a-vis one another' (Thompson, 1991, in Bourdieu, 1991b, pp. 27–28). The problem of funding inequality is, itself, one of the locations of this competition that generates routinised discourses in the field (this will be revealed fully in 1.4). In the social sciences, 'routinisation' (a term used extensively by Bourdieu) describes a process whereby rules, practices, performances and discourses become commonplace, and absorbed or co-opted into bureaucratic procedures (Turner et al., 2006). Adopting Bourdieu's approach to discourse reveals how the problematisation of funding inequality has become routinised to constitute the logic of the funded arts field, a historically constructed discourse that produces a particular way of thinking, describing and doing within that field (Bourdieu, 1991b; 1993).

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[39] Most commonly understood as the aesthetic knowledge that mediates between the products of the funded field and dispositions of higher-class factions

The problem, and subsequent problematisation, of funding inequality has a long history[40], which can be seen to crystallise as a basis for policymaking in the post-war consensus, finding clarity in the first formal governmental White Paper for the arts: *A Policy for the Arts: First steps* (Lee, 1965). *First steps* emerged from debates surrounding future cultural policy in the late 1950s, in response to criticism levelled by the New Left and influential commentators including Raymond Williams, who argued that 'the Arts Council of the 50s had done much to preserve a patrician culture, and very little to widen access' (Hewison, 1995, p. 119). The Arts Council's then Secretary-General, W. E. Williams, had adopted a retrenchment approach that preserved institutions of high culture (inaccessible to all but a few) stating that '[t]he Arts Council believes… the first claim upon its attention and assistance is that of maintaining in London and the larger cities effective power houses of opera, music and drama, for unless these quality institutions can be maintained the arts are bound to decline into mediocrity' (Williams, 1956, in Hewison, 1995, p. 120).

When Labour won the 1964 general election, the groundswell of opinion in policy circles was that a new, meritocratic and more equitable approach to the arts was urgently needed. Prime Minister Harold Wilson moved arts policy away from its direct relationship to the Treasury and into the Department of Education Science, appointing Aneurin Bevan's widow, Jenny Lee, as Britain's first Minister for the Arts. Her *First steps* white paper acknowledged that arts funding had, until that time, been 'of a relatively modest scale and spasmodic… rather than as a result of a coherent plan' (Lee, 1965, p. 16), and announced increased investment for initiatives supporting young artists, and capital investment for building projects through the Housing of the Arts Fund (Lee, 1965, pp. 12–13). It also signalled a tentative shift towards a more egalitarian view of cultural value within arts policy discourse, in which 'advertisements, buildings, books, motor cars, radio and television, magazines, records all can carry a cultural aspect and affect our lives for good or ill as species of amenity' (Lee, 1965, p. 16).

Significantly, *First steps* problematised the inequality of funding distribution while, at the same time, preserving extant hierarchies of cultural value, directing institutions to balance a 'jealous regard for the maintenance of high standards in art' (Lee, 1965, p. 5) with the 'need to make the best… more widely available' (Lee, 1965, p. 16). This was (as it is now) 'a question of bridging the gap between what have come to be called the "higher" forms of entertainment and the traditional sources – the brass band, the amateur concert party, the entertainer, the music hall and pop group – and to

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[40] See Dewey (1958), Williams (1958), Bourdieu (1993), Belfiore and Neelands (2014) and Belfiore and Bennett (2007) for just a few examples.

challenge the fact that a gap exists' (Lee, 1965, p. 16). Since that time, the problematisation of inequality (Lee's gap) has been consistently present in policy and strategy discourse as both focus and rationale of the funded sector's work – one of the two prime objectives of 'excellence and access' (Gross and Wilson, 2018)[41] that have become routinised through the neoliberal drift of successive Conservative and Labour governments. This will be described further in the next chapter, where the discussion turns to how the pressures of policy appeal contribute to the construction of socially engaged arts in the funded field. For now it can be noted that New Labour continued the neoliberal programme established by the Conservatives in the 1980s, whereby arts would be predicated on economic returns and, if not, on benefits that could be accounted for in economic terms through a system of cultural policymaking that promulgated that 'market mechanisms are critical to meeting social objectives, entrepreneurial zeal can promote social justice' and the government should 'enable, not command, the power of the market… to serve the public interest' (Blair, 1998, cited in Hewison, 2014, p. 11). The key point here is that, since Lee's intervention in 1965, and through successive Conservative, Labour and coalition governments, the 'balancing' of excellence and access has remained the pillar of cultural policy in the UK, and with 'access' the problematisation of inequality has become routinised in sector discourse.

Policy literature, strategy documents and sector discourse abound with examples of the problematisation of inequality. Arts Council's *Equality and Diversity within the Arts and Cultural Sector in England* (2014), for example, acknowledged that

> the dominant influence of socio-economic factors on the scale, diversity, and nature of engagement with the arts and wider cultural sector permeates through much of the evidence base… A correlation can be drawn between higher levels of educational attainment and a propensity to engage in new or 'legitimate culture', with key academic theorists such as Bourdieu (1984) associating different cultural activities with gradations of social status (Parkinson et al., 2014, p. 8)[42].

ACE's 2010–2020 ten-year strategy problematises funding inequality as the basis for *Great Art and Culture for Everyone* (2013), stating that

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[41] Often worded as 'engagement and quality' (Arts Council England, 2013; 2020a)

[42] Here we see directly how Bourdieu's theorising has become 'caught up in the object [it] would take as its object' as described in chapter *Methodology and Research Design vii*.

[d]espite public investment, there remain significant disparities in the level of arts and cultural opportunities and engagement across the country. Those who are most actively involved with the arts and culture that we invest in tend to be from the most privileged parts of society; engagement is heavily influenced by levels of education, by socio-economic background, and by where people live (ACE, 2013, p. 28)[43].

And today, the problematisation of funding inequality underpins ACE's current strategy, *Let's Create* (Arts Council England, 2020a), presented as 'the case for change' (ibid, pp. 8–11):

Many people are uncomfortable with the label 'the arts' and associate it only with either the visual arts or 'high art', such as ballet or opera… there are still widespread socio-economic and geographic variances in levels of engagement with publicly funded culture (Arts Council England, 2020a, p. 9).

These problematisations – routinised in policy since 1965 (and before) – are the call to which funded intermediaries (arts professionals) are invited to respond, made explicit by policy objectives. *Let's Create* organises funding distribution around the three target outcomes of 'creative people', 'cultural communities' and 'a creative and cultural country', and the four investment principles of 'ambition & quality', 'dynamism', 'environmental responsibility' and 'inclusivity & relevance' (Arts Council England, 2020a). Despite shifts in terminology (from 'best' to 'quality', 'diversity' to 'inclusivity', 'innovation' to 'dynamism', 'participation' to 'relevance') *Let's Create* is the latest iteration of a routinised discourse that has, I argue, served to fortify funding inequality. It does not deviate from the core script of *Great Art and Culture for Everyone* (Arts Council England, 2013) or Lee's *First steps* (1965), identifying the same inequalities and presenting the same objectives – 'quality and inclusivity' standing in for 'excellence and access' and, before that, 'the need to sustain… all that is best… and the best must be made more widely available' (Lee, 1965, p.16). As Hewison notes, 'ACE says it cannot continue to operate in the ways it always has done, but that is exactly what it intends to do. It will retain its current structure, and there is no suggestion that it will question its own governance… in reality, [*Let's Create*] is a strategy for its own bureaucratic survival' (Hewison, 2019).

It should be noted (as described previously) that the routinised problematisation of inequality has been informed by decades of academic research, such as the studies cited in 1.2.2, operating across

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[43] This same passage appears verbatim in *The Value of Arts and Culture to People and Society: An evidence review* (ACE, 2014), underscoring the routinisation of not only the problem but also the specific discursive representation and language deployed.

academic and cultural fields. ACE/public-sector funders often commission academic institutions to produce studies intended to inform policy[44], and large-scale Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) research projects often commission representatives from ACE, Tate or other funded institutions as consultants[45]. The boundaries between academic and funded arts discourses are porous, to the extent that both can be said to participate in the problematisation of inequality that constructs socially engaged arts as discursive practice in the funded field.

Beyond academic critique and policymaking, the problematisation of funding inequality has become a preoccupation among professionals within the funded arts sector (Stevenson, 2013) – an occupation in its own right, with job titles including *community engagement officer* and *participation manager*. ACE's consultation with 1,248 sector workers and 197 Arts Council staff found that 95% of respondents agreed that there were 'widespread socio-economic and geographic variances in levels of engagement with publicly funded culture', highlighting an 'imbalance of funding between the north and the south… rural and urban areas… different communities and people from different socio-economic backgrounds' (Arts Council England, 2019b, p. 11). The survey found that sector workers believe that most people associate ACE and funded arts institutions with 'high' or 'elite' types of art (ibid) and are worried about 'the gap' between the sector and 'culture that happens in everyday lives' (Arts Council England, 2019b, p. 15). Respondents were also concerned that reliance on unpaid work creates a barrier to under-represented groups (Arts Council England, 2019b, p. 21), with 84% agreeing that

> there remains a persistent and widespread lack of diversity across the creative industries and in publicly funded cultural organisations… a lack of development opportunities… that are affordable and accessible [and] more needs to be done to make the sector more representative of people from diverse backgrounds, many of whom are excluded from real opportunities to make, produce and programme work which is meaningful to themselves and their communities (Arts Council England, 2019b, p. 11).

These views are formed as much by personal experience of working in the field as by engagement with funding bureaucracy, policy literature and strategy documents (Aziz interview, Cox, 15.10.2019 2019; Webber interview, Cox 24.01.2019). What is striking is the extent to which these views mirror policy objectives and discourses in the academic field (including those of Bourdieu). With such

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[44] For example, King's College London's *Changing Cultures: Transforming leadership in the arts, museums and* libraries (Hoyle et al., 2018)

[45] For example *The Cultural Value Project* (Crossick and Kaszynska, 2016) and King's College London's *Towards Cultural Democracy* (Wilson et al., 2017)

widespread agreement about the existence, nature and structural causes of inequality in the funded arts, one might expect the sector to have, by now, made some progress in addressing these issues. However, as the body of research above demonstrates, little has changed. I argue that one reason (and by no means the only reason) for this stasis is that the problematisation of funding inequality has become an ongoing, routinised discursive practice that structures, and is structured by (in Bourdieu's theorising, a structuring-structure), a particular way of thinking about artistic work that produces socially engaged arts as, above all, a discursive practice that serves the interests of those who dominate the funded field. Further, as will be described below, this discourse is restricted to privileged groups who compete to assert what, within the field, discursive practices of 'access' and 'engagement' and ergo socially engaged arts are 'made to mean' (Webb et al., 2002b, p. 30).

1.2.4 Artistic quality

It is often pointed out that judgements of artistic excellence import all the problems of socially constituted hierarchies of cultural value that Bourdieu's *Distinction* brings to the fore (Gross and Wilson, 2018, p. 1). Together, the objectives of excellence and access, which permeate every corner of policy and sector strategy, set the constraints of the linguistic market and of discursive practice within the field – these objectives must, as Lee put it in 1965, be 'balanced'. However, because positions in the funded arts field are highly restricted, it is only a tiny minority from privileged and middle-class groups who determine what artistic excellence is, inculcating an institutional habitus that directs institutional judgements of aesthetic taste – judgements that are at best limited, and at worst exclusionary.

From a Bourdieusian perspective, the objectives of 'great art' and 'for everyone' (ACE, 2013) stand to varying degrees in dialectic opposition. As described in 1.1, restricted judgements of artistic excellence gain their legitimacy precisely because *they are restricted*, a hypothesis reflected in analysis of social stratification in funded sector production and consumption (1.2.2). Furthermore, restricted art is often encoded with marks of distinction that carry the effect of 'symbolic violence' – not just restricted, but alienating, serving to devalue the cultural interests of those excluded, and reduce other forms of culture and those who participate in them to second-class cultural status (Wilson et al., 2017). Following this system of thought, restricted judgements of 'great art' in arts funding contribute to its exclusivity, and ergo its social exclusion. In the most extreme cases (such as 'The Glasgow Effect' cited

in the previous chapter) the opposition between these two objectives represents irreconcilable challenges to ACE's efforts to provide 'great art' for 'everyone'[46].

The key point I want to make here is that the routinised problematisation of funding inequality is coupled with judgements of artistic excellence that are filtered through schemes of perception (dispositions/habitus) native to the privileged minority who dominate the field, and are thus restricted. The effort to synthesise these objectives underpins the conceptual logic of socially engaged art as a specialised practice of professional intermediaries/institutions within the funded field – a practice that discursively bridges the gap between 'great art' and 'everyone'[47] to provide a rationale and justification for arts funding that has, thus far, failed to bridge the gap between *its* 'great art' and 'everyone' else's (1.2.2).

1.2.5 Bureaucracy and the linguistic market of socially engaged art

To understand how tangible inequalities are transferred into the discursive practice of socially engaged art, analysis must recognise how procedures of funding privilege *discourse above action*. It is surprising how little attention has been given to this fundamental aspect of arts funding, and to the specific role of funding administration (funding applications in particular) in institutionalising and reproducing inequality by co-opting the problem of inequality as discursive practices that maintain the status quo. ACE funding bureaucracy[48] invites applicants to address the problem of funding inequality (presented as policy objectives and investment principles) and, in so doing, consolidates a specific linguistic market by attaching symbolic, cultural *and crucially economic value* to discursive representations that recognise and present solutions to this problem, while at the same time maintaining artistic 'excellence' and 'innovation' (Arts Council England, 2020a). The obvious point is: that which is funded is, in the first instance, a discursive representation of a potential outcome rather

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[46] Another compelling example is Michael Sailstorfer's 'Folkstone Digs' (2014), commissioned as part of the Folkstone Triennial arts festival. 'Folkstone Digs' saw 30 gold-bullion bars worth a total of £10,000 buried in Folkstone Harbour, an area where one third of the children and one in five working adults live in poverty. Stephen Armstrong cites the project in *The New Poverty* (2017) as 'an object lesson in the wrong way to try to save broken communities' (Armstrong, 2017, p. 212). Armstrong describes how Sailstorfer's artwork 'has become a documentary of despair: a performance of Folkstone's unemployed digging. The tragedy is the Triennial was supposed to help regenerate a struggling town, not mock inhabitants' (Armstrong, 2017, p. 206). Armstrong's critique targets the failure of neoliberal approaches to regeneration strategies that aspire to lift people out of poverty (specifically art-led regeneration). See also Hewison (1995; 2014), Mirza (2006), Belfiore and Bennett (2007), Belfiore (2009) and Mclean (2014) for other case studies and examples.

[47] Or, to use the current terminology, to bridge the gap between 'quality/ambition' and 'inclusivity/relevance' (Arts Council England, 2020a).

[48] Here, the term bureaucracy refers specifically to the apparatus through which ACE funding is communicated and distributed: application forms, guidelines, strategy documents, criteria for selection and monitoring/evaluation procedures, along with the institutional structure of governance that produces and circulates these, including Arts Council executives, officers and relationship managers.

than the tangible outcome itself. What is adjudicated, therefore, is the discursive competence of an applicant to find value in the linguistic market arbitrated through bureaucracy by *discursively*:

- Recognising under-served communities and taking action to actively develop and grow relationships with them.
- Reaching out, listening to and involving local communities to inform… work and practice…
- Working in partnership with creative practitioners and organisations who can help… build a meaningful relationship with those communities.
- Building trust and a sense of belonging for under-served communities through removing barriers and increasing access, opportunity, participation, and involvement (ACE, 2021a).

In guiding applicants towards these objectives, funding bureaucracy *prescribes* a set menu of discursive representations – how a project can be described, and what will be entered into the official discourse of the field. The value assigned to these representations comes from the top of the field's structure of power (e.g. ACE managerial staff, cultural leaders, and strategy, policy and research documents) and filters through its governance, funding administration and bureaucracy to produce and reproduce the official discourse of the field. As such, funding bureaucracy regulates the linguistic market that undergirds socially engaged arts as a mode of practice that mediates between notions of 'excellence' and 'access' (*distinction and equality*). This is, in the first instance, a *discursive proposition* advanced to solicit funding by *discursively* addressing the problems of inequality with representations of being inclusive and/or *socially engaged*.

1.2.6 From discourse to logic

By failing to account for the way in which bureaucracy regulates and constrains the linguistic market of the field, recent analysis has tended to emphasise the actions of individuals reproducing inequality through what Brook et al. term 'cultural matching' (2017, p. 5), whereby actors gravitate towards those they consider most like themselves, consolidating executionary networks of social capital. While this certainly plays a role (this will be explored in 1.2.9), by attaching economic capital to prescribed discursive representations, bureaucracy itself institutionalises a system of thought and discursive practice that agents *must* adopt if they are to succeed – *institutional habitus*. In 'Rethinking the state: genesis and structure of the bureaucratic field' (Bourdieu, 1994) Bourdieu provided a compelling account of how bureaucracy 'moulds *mental structures* and imposes common principles of vision and division' among participants to constitute institutional habitus (Bourdieu, 1994 emphisis added). He argued that it is, in part, through bureaucracy and administration – 'the procedures of registration, certified reports or minutes' – that people enter into an 'immediate, pre-reflexive, agreement

between objective structures and embodied structures, now turned unconscious' (Bourdieu, 1994, p. 14).

From this perspective, funding bureaucracy not only regulates the linguistic market that structures socially engaged art as discursive practice in the funded arts field, but also facilitates an 'orchestration of habitus which is itself the foundation of a consensus… constitutive of… common sense' (Bourdieu, 1994, p. 10). The more an individual artist or arts organisation becomes invested in the competition for funding through funding bureaucracy (which takes place primarily on the discursive plane of form-filling), the more the logic of the field (received through funding bureaucracy) is routinised and internalised:

> Ideologies owe their structure and their most specific functions to the social conditions of their production and circulation, that is, first, to the functions they perform for specialists competing for a monopoly over the competence under consideration (religious, artistic, etc)… [and] their most specific characteristics… to the specific interests of those who produce them and to the specific logic of the field of production (commonly transfigured into the form of an ideology of 'creation' and of the 'creative artist') (Bourdieu, 1991b, p. 169).

Thus, funding bureaucracy circulates, reproduces and makes concrete the conceptual logic of socially engaged art within the field, where it functions to solicit/distribute economic capital on the basis of, by its very nature and above all, discursive competence. In other words, the *idea* of socially engaged art is structured by bureaucracy that transfigures the problematisation of funding inequality into the field-specific discursive practice of socially engaged art, which is routinised into an institutional habitus – common sense – within the field.

1.2.7 The problem of non-participation

An example of how the routinised problematisation of funding inequality produces a discourse and logic that favours dominant groups in the funded arts field is presented in David Stevenson's *Understanding the Problem of Cultural Non-Participation: Discursive structures, articulatory practice and cultural domination* (2016). His analysis explores how, in the funded sector, policy discourse has constructed cultural non-participation as a discursive practice that negates the value of 'everyday culture' to the extent that non-participation in *funded culture* is pragmatically understood as *non-participation in culture at all*. Stevenson attributes this to two contradictory discourses operating simultaneously: the discourse of cultural abundance, which adopts a broad definition of culture to

argue that because *everybody* participates in culture it is a policy area of importance, and the discourse of non-participation, which implicitly narrows this definition to those practices legitimised by funding, to argue that there is a problem of *non-participation* that requires professional intervention (Stevenson, 2016). Nested within these discourses is a tacit assumption that the products of the funded field are of greater intrinsic value to would-be participants than the cultural activities they may engage with, legitimising hierarchies of cultural value that, within Bourdieu's theorising, work to exclude. The result is that the value of everyday culture is negated or rendered invisible, while the sector organises around the *discursive problem* of non-participation:

> The way in which the 'problem' of cultural participation has been represented and the conceptual logics which underpin that representation have produced a number of silences which are too often ignored for the sake of pragmatic necessity when constructing evidence-based policy… There is no certainty that an exogenous 'problem' of poor cultural participation exists, and that what policies to increase cultural participation are tackling is an endogenous 'problem' that exists because the Government subsidises certain cultural organisations, and in evaluating this subsidy has conflated parity of uptake with equality of access (Stevenson, 2013, p. 83).

Stevenson demonstrates, convincingly, that in the funded field non-participation is understood not as a problem of distribution but as one of access, framed as *barriers to participation* (i.e. misconceptions, poverty, geography or education) rather than as institutionalised modes of distinction and exclusion and/or a general lack of interest in what the funded sector does (Bennett et al., 2009; Stevenson, 2016). Outreach, engagement, participatory arts and community arts – socially engaged arts – are then initiated to remove barriers, challenge perceptions, reduce economic costs and educate the uneducated. The problem of unequal distribution is thus reconfigured to one of non-participation as a justification for maintaining the status quo:

> There appears to be a belief that equality of opportunity will result in parity of uptake, and that 'success' should be measured as such. What is not considered is the extent to which certain individuals may be faced with an under-provision of the cultural activities that they want to take part in; just the type of structural inequality… the discourse surrounding 'inclusion' obscures (Stevenson, 2013, p. 82).

Stevenson's analysis reveals non-participation as a *discursive practice* constructed by the logic of the funded arts field. He demonstrates that, when confronted with a more egalitarian view of culture and cultural value (marshalled in the discourse of abundance and Lee's *First steps* in 1965 [1.2.3]) professional arts workers recognise non-participation as a rhetorical apparition with little basis in the real world. If one accepts Stevenson's point that non-participation is a myth, because in actuality (as demonstrated by research, i.e. Bennett et al. [2009]) most people participate in cultural activities, but ones that are not necessarily valued within the funded arts field, then legitimate questions can be asked about the purpose of activities organised around the problem of 'non-participation', specifically *socially engaged arts practices in the funded field.*

By drawing attention to non-participation as a discursive practice, Stevenson reveals how funding inequality generates discourses that serve the interests of the funded sector, providing legitimising arguments that sustain the unequal distribution of funding while negating the value of other forms of cultural participation. It is within this discursive framework that socially engaged art is conceptualised, constructed and operationalised to produce what Wilson et al. describe as 'the deficit model' – an approach to the problem of non-participation that privileges the cultural interests of a small, homogenous group of professional intermediaries while 'those who are positioned as non-participants are told, implicitly or explicitly, that they should participate more' (Wilson et al., 2017, p. 19) because their cultural lives are in deficit. Socially engaged art, therefore, addresses not the tangible problem of unequal *funding distribution* but the discursive problem of *deficit*, a problem that derives legitimacy from exclusionary hierarchies of artistic value constructed within the field, and in the interests of a privileged minority engaged in the restricted practice of making 'excellence' discursively 'accessible'. What is perhaps most pernicious, is that the shift from inequality to deficit implicitly attributes the failure of the sector's socially engaged efforts to the character of the supposed non-participant, who unknowingly provides the justification for these practices that devalue the cultural activities that most people participate in and enjoy.

1.2.8 The discourse of engagement and the language of dispossession

The discursive practice of socially engaged art is, *itself,* far from inclusive, restricted to those with the specialist knowledge and linguistic capital to participate, and privileging particular social groups and institutions and those who occupy them – arts professionals. ACE has, by its own admission, a problem with jargon that dispossesses[49] the majority of people who have active, albeit undervalued, cultural

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[49] To maintain consistency with Bourdieu's theorising, I use the word 'dispossess' as Bourdieu does in *Language and Symbolic Power* (Bourdieu, 1991b) when referring to processes of *execution and self-exclusion*, i.e. 'obstacles... put in the way of any form of direct government are... reinforced by the effects of economic and cultural dispossession: the concentration of political

lives. Its 2018 consultation with sector workers acknowledged that 'the Arts Council uses jargon that is hard to understand or meaningless to others [and]… should make [its] language more accessible, particularly for people outside of the sector' (Arts Council England, 2019b, p. 31). Acknowledgement of those 'outside' excluded by 'jargon' (determined by the linguistic market of the field) signals widespread awareness of the role that specialised, restricted discursive practices play in the social stratification of the sector, something Bourdieu's analysis is well attuned to understanding:

> In politics as in art, the dispossession of the majority of the people is a correlate, or even a consequence, of the concentration of the specifically political means of production in the hands of professionals, who can enter into the… game with some chance of success only on condition that they possess a specific competence… such as the mastery of a certain kind of language and of a certain… rhetoric (Bourdieu, 1991b, pp. 175–176).

While Bourdieu is describing the specialised language of the political field and how this dispossesses many from political discourse, he rightly draws a parallel with the discursive operations of restricted arts fields. Arts funding and policy literature is often couched in language, phrases, categorisations and concepts that require internal knowledge and higher levels of education to understand. How concepts such as socially engaged, dynamism and cultural ecology are to be understood and, more crucially, operationalised in the competition for funding may appear self-evident to those in academic and arts circles, but for those without such advantages it may 'dazzle rather than enlighten' (Bourdieu, 1996a, p. 3). As Hewison (2020) notes, ACE's most recent strategy, *Let's Create*, is presented in 'vague generalisations and arcane art-speak… [that] simply don't… connect with most people', resonating with McGarvey's indictment of 'high status language that sets alarm bells ringing' among the subjects of socially engaged funded arts interventions in Glasgow (McGarvey, 2017, p. 202) [1.2.10]).

Bourdieu theorised that specialised discourses such as these owe their specific characteristics as much to the logics of the field in which they are produced as to the social class of those who dominate the production of that discourse in that field:

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capital in the hands of a small number of people is something that is prevented with greater difficulty – and thus all the more likely to happen – the more completely ordinary individuals are divested of the material and cultural instruments necessary for them to participate actively in politics, that is, above all, leisure time and cultural capital' (Bourdieu, 1991b, p. 172); 'Thus dispossessed of the economic and cultural conditions necessary for their awareness of the fact that they are dispossessed and enclosed within the limits of the knowledge authorized by their instruments of knowledge, the utterances and the actions that sub-proletarians and proletarianized peasants produce… are organized according to the principles of logical division which are at the very root of this order' (Bourdieu, 1991b, p. 131); and 'The silence that weighs on the conditions which force citizens, all the more brutally the more economically and culturally deprived they are, to face the alternative of having to abdicate their rights by abstaining from voting or being dispossessed by the fact that they delegate their power' (Bourdieu, 1991b, p. 171).

The homology between the two fields [of social class and the funded arts] means that struggles over the specific objects of the autonomous field automatically produce euphemized forms of the economic and political struggles between classes: it is in the correspondence of structure to structure that the properly ideological function of the dominant discourse is performed. This discourse is a structured and structuring medium tending to impose an apprehension of the established order as natural (orthodoxy) through the disguised (and thus misrecognized) imposition of systems of classification and of mental structures that are objectively adjusted to social structures (Bourdieu, 1991b, p. 169).

While in any specialised field one expects to find technical language (e.g. in STEM subjects – science, technology, engineering and mathematics), arts funding is, with a few eligibility caveats, something that is ostensibly available to all – not exclusively for artists or arts professionals but for anyone who might want to commission arts activities, including non-specialists in adjacent fields (e.g. community development, healthcare) or indeed members of the general public (Arts Council England, 2020a). I want to avoid issuing a blanket dismissal of specialist language as a necessary aspect of cultural work. Indeed, a common criticism of Bourdieu is that his thinking can lean towards totalising, reductive arguments that lack nuance and complexity (this will be addressed fully in Part Two). However, as both Hewison and sector workers have suggested, there is a common perception that the jargon used in strategy and funding literature contributes to exclusion. While a degree of precision and clarity is needed in many specialised artistic practices (as in medicine, law and education), when it comes to *broadening access through public funding*, the fact that so many have highlighted internal jargon as 'meaningless to others… outside of the sector' suggests that Bourdieu's language as symbolic power is at work in the bureaucratic processes of funding. Given the centrality of access and the problematisation of inequality in sector discourse[50], this can be understood as a gradient of distinction (symbolic power) and dispossession that works against the objectives of 'access' and constructs socially engaged arts as discursive practice in the field.

Taking together the discursive function of socially engaged art (to solicit/justify funding) and the exclusionary nature of the linguistic market in which it is constructed, socially engaged art is, under analysis, a discourse produced by privileged groups about others (non-participants whose cultural

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[50] For example, the premise undergirding Arts Council's support to 64 Million Artists is to work towards 'cultural democracy in practice', involving 'everyone in deciding what counts as culture, where it happens, who makes it, and who experiences it', advocating the 'potential benefits of open decision making, co-creation and co-production for arts organisations and their communities' (Henley, cited on 64 Million Artists website, 2022).

interests have little value within the funded field), who are themselves excluded from the discourse of their engagement. Those who have the opportunity to describe and respond to the problem of funding inequality do so in terms that are restricted, because they have the requisite higher endowments of linguistic capital (a conversion of economic, social and cultural capital), reproducing a linguistic market that favours the dominant social groups who populate the funded arts field through the misrecognised symbolic power of language (Bourdieu, 1991b). From this perspective, the seemingly benevolent discursive practice of socially engaged arts engenders a euphemised 'us and the other' categorisation that objectifies 'those communities' (ACE, 2021a) as culturally 'underserved' (ibid) and thus something to be supported/commodified/exploited as justification for the work of the sector, positioning 'them' as lacking cultural 'opportunity, participation and involvement' (ibid) and degrading any cultural agency they may have. The natural order, in which classifications of cultural value remain with a privileged minority, is preserved in language that speaks of engagement but is restricted and, as the location of competition for funding, restricts opportunity, participation and involvement.

This, as described by Stevenson, obscures the possibility that those positioned as 'under-served communities' (ACE, 2021a) might not be under-served but, as research has shown, are simply not interested in the products of the funded field (Bennett et al., 2009; Stevenson, 2013), producing their own 'meaningful relationships' with cultural activities of their choice. The key point is that just as the funded sector privileges certain socially constituted judgements of aesthetic taste in art, it also privileges certain socially constituted discourses *about art* and, further, socially constituted discourses about *socially engaged art*. Because funding is adjudicated (predominantly) on the discursive plane, the specialised discourse of socially engaged art is, following Bourdieu's theorising, the location of both field and class struggles in which dominant groups are afforded advantage by their mastery of language and control over discourse. Put simply, you must speak the language to secure the funding, and the language is acquired by privileged access, which is acquired by higher endowments of economic, cultural and social capital – socially engaged art is, therefore, a restricted discursive practice.

1.2.9 Ambiguity – a Trojan horse for inequality

While, on the one hand, the discursive practice and linguistic market of the funded arts field is prescriptive and tightly regulated by funding bureaucracy, the activities that follow (carried out under the discourse of socially engaged art) are far less so, open to considerable diversity, negotiation and deviation from policy objectives (see Warren and Jones, 2015). What facilitates this disconnect (between discursive practice and realised practice) is ambiguity in policy/sector discourse. Clive Gray's

'Ambiguity and cultural policy' (2015) describes how ambiguous policy statements result from both 'structural conditioning' and 'deliberate choice'[51]. In the funded arts sector, structural conditioning describes the diverse interpretations of nebulous concepts such as *artistic excellence*, *socially engaged*, *relevance* and *community*, dispersed across a wide range of discrete practices within the field[52]. Faced with such complexity, ambiguity 'becomes a convenient mechanism to allow something to be done (or not done) in conditions where there is little prospect of overcoming the entrenched positions that have been adopted by policy participants' (Gray, 2015, p. 4). In this context, 'anything other than a broad statement of policy content is likely to give too many hostages to fortune for actors to be comfortable with, and vagueness in content allows policy statements to act as expressions of intention rather than as deliberate courses of specific action' (Gray, 2015, pp. 4–5).

Let's Create (Arts Council England, 2020a) exemplifies this, expressing objectives not as specific, measurable outcomes, but as vague intentions. For example:

> We want to see communities that are more socially cohesive and economically robust, and in which residents experience improved physical and mental wellbeing, as a result of investment in culture… we will work with a wider range of partners… to support communities to use creativity and culture to create thriving places to live, work, study and visit (Arts Council England, 2020a, p. 37).

This type of ambiguity, as Gray points out, runs consistently through cultural policy, strategy and bureaucracy, rarely supported by specific directives, indices of evaluation or, as Hewison and others have noted, any strategic alterations to institutional arrangements or working practices within the sector.

The element of deliberate choice describes the logical response to 'acute policy uncertainty – where nobody really knows what works and what does not, and nobody knows how to make an effective selection amongst multiple policy options' (Gray, 2015, p. 6). In such circumstances 'the more vague the policy framework… the greater the scope for innovative approaches… Thus ambiguity… could be the "best" solution for policy-makers to adopt in the form of the establishment of trial-and-error opportunities for many actors to take advantage of' (Gray, 2015, p. 6). This advantage, as described

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[51] Gray acknowledged that this is a false dichotomy (in practice, structural conditioning and deliberate choice work together) but that the distinction allows for a 'differentiation between sources for the continued presence of ambiguity even when it produces if not serious problems for policy-makers then, at least, practical difficulties to be contended with' (Gray, 2015, p. 3).

[52] In terms of artform alone: dance, music, visual art, theatre, poetry, socially engaged art etc

above, falls to the privileged few who can decode and operate the restricted discursive practices of the funded arts field. Ambiguity, then, offers funded sector intermediaries generous latitude when it comes to interpreting policy outcomes and investment principles in a subjective manner[53], particularly when it comes to such nebulous concepts as 'artistic quality' (Lee, 1965) and/or 'ambition & quality' (ACE, 2020a) and how these should be 'made more widely available' (Lee, 1965) to achieve 'inclusivity & relevance' (ACE, 2020a). As Gray argues, in such conditions

> cultural policy can be commonly expected to display the characteristics of: a lack of policy clarity (probably the majority of them…); the presence of problems in developing effective mechanisms for policy implementation and evaluation; a lack of effective top-down control of policy by policy-makers; and *an openness to contestation by a large number of actors both internally and externally to the policy sector* (Gray, 2015, p. 10, emphasis added)[54].

Gray's analysis of ambiguity in cultural policy helps to explain how the routinised problematisation of funding inequality has produced socially engaged art (primarily) as discursive rather than realised practice that fails to actualise change when it comes to funding inequality and distribution. The ambiguity of policy objectives in funding discourse provides a discursive 'Trojan horse' for commissioning activities, ostensibly directed towards the problematisation of inequality, that appeal to the interests of privileged groups and shore up extant hierarchies that, as theorised by Bourdieu, serve to reinforce social stratification through distinction.

1.2.10 Conclusion

In this chapter I have sought to work with Bourdieu's theorising to illuminate how socially engaged art is constructed by the routinised problematisation of inequality, and operationalised as a discursive practice in the funded field. This discursive practice fortifies inequality by co-opting and routinising the problem of funding inequality, transforming it into a specialised, exclusionary discourse that justifies the continued funding of socially stratifying institutions and practices – thus reproducing the inequalities that socially engaged arts discursively seeks to address. Attention to discourse as a structuring-structure has revealed the specific role of funding bureaucracy, in regulating the linguistic market and prescribing discursive representations that negate the value of cultural activities that do

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[53] N.B. As described in 1.1, following Bourdieu, the 'subjective manner' in which intermediaries interpret policy outcomes and investment principles is, in part, determined by the operations of distinction as a structuring-structure between habitus and objective social conditions in the field, and therefore corresponds to social class hierarchies.

[54] I have emphasised Gray's words here in preparation for chapter 1.4, where what he describes will be seen by interviews with funded sector intermediaries.

not accord with the restricted judgements of the professionalised field. Over time, as the problem of funding inequality is refracted through the logics and stakes of the field, this discourse has consolidated schemes of perception and institutional habitus – doxa – that underpin the conceptual logics of socially engaged arts. As such, the *idea* of socially engaged arts is restricted, belonging to the logics and beliefs of the restricted funded arts field, and ergo the middle classes who dominate it. Here, Bourdieu's hypothesis that field-specific discourses are proxy class struggles acted out through the symbolic power of language would seem to extend to those discourses ostensibly directed at reducing inequality in the funded arts.

I have also highlighted how ambiguity and dispossession (realised through the symbolic power of the restricted discourse of socially engaged arts) allows the problematisation of inequality to serve the interests, distinction and advantage afforded to those with higher endowments of economic, social, cultural and linguistic capital. This goes some way to explaining how, despite widespread acknowledgement of inequality and the apparent proactive efforts of socially engaged art, the sector fails to actualise change when it comes to the social stratification and lack of diversity in funding distribution. As such, the argument is that, owing to the structural conditions of the field and its linguistic market, socially engaged arts is predisposed to exist primarily as a discursive practice in the funded arts field.

1.3 Policy attachment and the construction of socially engaged art in the funded field

1.3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, using Bourdieu's theorising, analysis revealed how socially engaged arts is a discursive activity produced by the logics, beliefs and stakes internal to the funded arts field. The routinised problematisation of funding inequality provides a rationale for socially engaged art as discursive practice that, paradoxically, serves to exclude, dispossess, and preserve extant cultural hierarchies. In this chapter I extend this analysis to consider how forces outside the field (Bourdieu, 1991b) contribute to the construction and function of socially engaged arts as discursive practice in the funded sector.

The chapter begins by extending the contextualisation from 1.2.2, with attention to how the social benefits of the arts have become the primary rationale for the sector's appeal to actors in the political field (1.3.2). Using Gray's conceptualisation of policy attachment (1.3.3), the analysis explores how deeply ingrained and routinised this instrumentalising logic has become (1.3.4). Section 1.3.5 introduces the argument that discourses of policy attachment have become disconnected from the tangible outcomes of socially engaged activities that follow. Analysis considers how the exigencies of policy attachment can compromise the veracity of evidence used to solicit and justify arts funding on the basis of purported social benefit. The disconnect between discourse and practice is explored further by examining how policy attachment leads to a tendency to overstate the positive (1.3.6) and negate negative impacts of the funded sector's work (1.3.7). The chapter concludes with a summary of how the disconnecting discourse of policy attachment underpins schemes of perception that structure socially engaged arts as discursive practice in the funded field (1.3.8).

1.3.2 From benefit to justification – how arts funding has become an instrument of social policy

Arts funding is contingent upon the value that successive governments place upon it. As such, the funded sector (and its advocates in the political field) have, for decades, been 'making the case' (Arts Council England, 2020b) – *which is to produce a discourse* – that appeals to the Treasury (Matarasso, 1997; Belfiore and Bennett, 2007; ACE, 2014). This has played a significant role in consolidating the logic of the linguistic market that constructs socially engaged arts as a specialised discursive practice particular to the funded arts field. Arts funding has over the course of decades been increasingly predicated on auxiliary social impact rather than artistic production/consumption in and of itself[55]. By

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[55] There is also a broader context to be noted: advocacy for the social potential of art goes back a long way. Aristotle believed that music 'arouses moral qualities' (Carey, 2005, p. 96) and 'dramatic catharsis' has the power to heal troubled minds (Belfiore and Bennett, 2008). Throughout the 18th century, the idea that art can 'mitigate the savagery of mere desires' became

the time that thinking about the societal potential of art reached Lee's *First steps* (Lee, 1965), investment was already considered to offer a variety of social benefits beyond mere enjoyment and the catharsis of art and culture. Lee sought to mitigate unpopular rationales for subsidising 'high art' (which had become difficult in the post-war social contract), particularly in the face of what she described as 'certain sections of the press, [who] by constantly sniping at cultural expenditure, made philistinism appear patriotic' (Lee, 1965, p. 20), advocating a more egalitarian approach (1.2.2) that potentially solicited a range of public social benefits. In so doing, *First steps* represents a key moment in the development of contemporary discourses about the social benefits of arts funding, officially constituting into policy not only the objectives of excellence and access but also the notion that art can and should be used as an instrument of the state for improving and civilising depressed cities, towns and people:

> [W]e [cannot] ignore the growing revolt, especially among the young, against the drabness, uniformity and joylessness of much of the social furniture we have inherited from the industrial revolution. This can be directed, if we so wish, into making Britain a gayer and more cultivated country (Lee, 1965, p. 20).

By the late 1960s, the idea that the arts could be used to tackle urban and economic decline was officially adopted in the policies of 'Community Development' and 'Planning for People' (Lees and Melhuish, 2015, p. 4). The community arts movement that had evolved alongside this placed community and togetherness at the centre of artistic work. Matarasso describes this movement as a 'contested practice developed by young artists and theatre makers seeking to reinvigorate an art world they saw as bourgeois at best and repressive at worst' (Matarasso, 2013, p. 215). Community arts engendered the ideals of cultural democracy, campaigning for activities and groups thought to have been excluded, and persuading policy to adopt the idea that arts funding can and should contribute to broader community involvement and social cohesion (Jeffers, 2014).

The challenge that community arts brought to the cultural establishment was, it is argued, of a middle-class constitution: 'the student revolts were of the privileged, rather than the oppressed… the mood of violence adumbrated through the arts' (Hewison, 1995, p. 149). While often celebrated as a 'radical movement' (Matarasso, 2011), this was (and remains) a practice by and for the usual beneficiaries

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orthodoxy in western intellectual thought (Hegel, 1920, cited in Carey, 2005, p. 97). Carey describes a 'transference of spiritual values from the sacred sphere to the secular', wherein galleries become 'temples' evoking 'the emotion experienced upon entering a House of God', thus elevating art to 'the great instrument of moral good' and artists to 'the founders of civil society' (Shelley, 1930, cited in Carey, 2005, p. 97).

(described in 1.2.3) and, as many commentators have argued (see Belfiore and Bennett, 2008; Matarasso, 2011; Hewison, 2014; Jeffers, 2014; O'Brien and Oakley, 2015), any subversive potential it might have had was neutered when it was folded into 'participatory arts' under the neoliberalising programme of the Thatcher government, which emphasised 'value for money' as the guiding principle of cultural policy and the measure by which the social value of the arts would be evaluated (Hewison, 1995). The Arts Council's 1984 strategy *The Glory of the Garden* (Arts Council of Great Britain, 1984) was compelled to enact stringent funding cuts (particularly to community arts programmes), making the aim to 'bridge the gap' between professionalised 'higher forms' and the amateur participation advocated in *First steps* (Lee, 1965) a marginal concern, as the professional sector pursued a strategy of survival. As Hewison notes, 'the [arts] council solved the "problem of amateur versus professional" by concluding [in the early 1980s] that their resources were so stretched that only the "professional" could be helped' (Hewison, 1995, p. 251).

Thatcher's emphasis on enterprise, promulgated by then ACE Chairman William Rees-Mogg, ushered in an epoch wherein the benefits of arts investment would be measured in strictly economic terms. The National Audit Act 1983 meant that publicly funded bodies would now be compelled to demonstrate value for money as statutory policy, guided by the neoliberal regimes of consumer capitalism that characterised Thatcher's conservative administrative programme[56]. As Rees-Mogg later stated in an article in *The Times*, 'Arts grants should primarily be a consumer and not a producer subsidy' (Rees Mogg, 1995, cited in Hewison, 1995, p. 249), capturing the thrust of cultural policy to come. For the arts professionals charged with maintaining excellence and access (ACE, 1981, cited in Hewison, 1995, p. 251) this meant a shift from 'community' to 'participatory' art, which Matarasso describes as 'both symptom and indicator of a profound change… that saw individual enterprise promoted at the expense of shared enterprise and a recasting of the citizen as a consumer engaged in transactions rather than relationships. The path from "community art" to "participatory art", whilst seen as merely pragmatic by those who made it, marked and allowed a transition from the politicised and collectivist action of the seventies towards the depoliticised, individual-focused arts programmes supported by public funds in Britain today' (Matarasso, 2013)[57].

Matarasso highlights the integration of discourses from community arts into cultural policy, carried on the tide of neoliberalism towards an instrumental, top-down approach to the social potential of

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[56] Another notable development in arts policy at this time (and which prevails today) was the introduction of 'Challenge Funding', whereby ACE grants were conditional upon match funding from local authorities, ushering in the familiar match funding contingency.

[57] Matarasso's view is shared by many commentators and academics – see Matarasso (1997), Belfiore and Bennett (2008), Jeffers (2014), Gross and Wilson (2018) and Hadley and Belfiore (2018).

arts participation, and a new framework for articulating the value of the arts to other policy concerns, notably urban regeneration. By the mid 1980s 'the concept of public art and arts participation as a vehicle for social and community engagement began to occupy a significant place within the discourse of British urban regeneration, drawing into the mainstream ideas from the community arts movement and participatory arts developed during the 1970s' (Lees and Melhuish, 2015, p. 4). Numerous studies (most notably *The Economic Importance of the Arts in Britain* [Myerscough, 1988]) advocated, in starkly economic terms, 'the multiplier effects' of investing in the arts to attract businesses to struggling towns and cities, 'supplying local politicians with arguments that justified cultural spending as a means of renewing the vitality of their cities' (Hewison, 1995, p. 278) [58].

By the time New Labour took power in 1997, initiating its 'golden age for the arts'[59] with much needed increases to arts budgets, 'enjoyment' and 'delight' were no longer considered sufficient justifications for a government now fully committed to New Public Management (NPM) techniques, audit culture and the continuing collapse of boundaries between commercial and social realms (Hesmondhalgh et al., 2015, p. 110). The neoliberal creed that the social benefit of the arts would be best achieved through individual freedom within free-market, consumer-capitalist regimes was now, as Hewison observed, so ingrained in policy and social consciousness that it passed almost without question as something of common sense (Hewison, 2014, p. 3). As Tony Blair famously proclaimed in 1996, 'the battle between market and public sector is over' (Blair, cited in Hewison, 2014, p. 10).

By the turn of the millennium, the work of 'making the case' (*discourse*) was now firmly wedged within the social policy framework of New Labour's 'third way', an approach based upon 'competitive individualism within a moral framework such that everyone has the chance to compete. It feeds hefty doses of individualism, competition, and materialism into the traditional Social Democratic ideal of community' (Bevir,2005, cited in Hewison, 2014, p. 12). Hesmondhalgh et al. conclude that New Labour's approach to the arts tended to ignore rather than challenge the tensions between 'excellence' and 'access' which, as described in the previous chapter (1.2.4), provide the conditions for funding predicated on 'engagement' to be subverted into exclusionary hierarchies of cultural value:

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[58] Many of these studies have been widely criticised as 'advocacy research' – lacking credibility. This will be addressed in 1.3.5. For examples see *The Economic Importance of the Arts in Britain* (Myerscough, 1988), *City Centres, City Cultures: The role of the arts in the revitalisation of towns and cities* (Bianchini, 1988) and *Urban Renaissance? The arts and the urban regeneration process in 1990s Britain* (Bianchini, 1989).

[59] 'The golden age' refers to Blair's speech to cultural leaders at Tate Modern in 2007 when he predicted that New Labour's support for the sector would be looked on as a 'golden age for the arts'. The term is often used by academics and commentators to describe both the increases in funding (which are contested) and the neoliberal conditions that accompanied this funding. See Mirza (2006), Belfiore (2009) and Hewison (2014)

New Labour politicians tended to deny that contradictions between excellence and access existed. What they really meant was that they were committed to both the big international institutions and to more grassroots and participatory cultural activities. In order to make good on this double commitment, Labour had to find more money for culture, which… they actually did… However, the price to be paid for this commitment… was that Labour enthusiastically embraced the general international trend towards NPM techniques, highly influenced by neo-liberal distrust of the public sector and the public realm. It also drew on economistic notions of the goals of cultural policy. The influence of neo-liberal thought was apparent here… cultural policy was informed by a version of the longstanding attempt to use art to form good citizens, but now inflected by neo-liberal notions of the citizen-subject as ideally entrepreneurial, self-reliant and self-creating (Hesmondhalgh et al., 2015, p. 110).

Within this policy environment, arts funding needed to be justified on its social, rather than its intrinsic, value, and this needed to be understood in terms of *value for money.* When it came to public arts funding, policymakers wanted to see a wider range of multipliers across a wider range of social policy concerns. As former Culture Secretary Chris Smith candidly acknowledged:

When I was Secretary of State, going into what always seemed like a battle with the Treasury, I would try and touch the buttons that would work. I would talk about education value… economic value. If it helped get more money flowing into the arts, the argument was worth deploying (Smith, 2003, cited in Belfiore, 2009, p. 349).

Smith describes an effort to articulate the value of the arts by advocating its benefit to other *policy sectors*, shifting emphasis to auxiliary outcomes in an environment where the intrinsic properties of the arts were no longer considered worthy in and of themselves (Hadley and Gray, 2017). This is another key moment in the development of discourses about the social benefit of the arts. Increased budgets meant increased instrumentalisation, which meant articulating value in terms of *economic value offered to adjacent policy sectors*, these now expressed in the bureaucracy of NPM as targets and key performance indicators. For artists and small arts organisations this meant adopting 'new legitimations' (Hesmondhalgh et al., 2015, p. 109) based upon the value for money provided to distant social objectives, for example 'teaching prisoners how to write or… encouraging artistic participation on the part of young people who might otherwise commit crime' (ibid). For larger cultural institutions it meant repositioning as 'merit goods' (ibid) – social assets within the free-market realm, propped up

by subsidies to 'fill the economic gaps' (ibid) – these justified by the social/economic benefits provided to policy areas such as urban regeneration and the night-time economy (Hesmondhalgh et al., 2015), increasing the sector's involvement with processes of gentrification set in motion under the Thatcher government of the 1980s. Advocacy for the arts as a vehicle for urban regeneration gathered momentum through the 1980s and 90s, with influential reports and planning theories such as Comedia's *The Creative City: A toolkit for urban innovators* (Landry and Bianchini, 1995), which positioned the cultural and creative industries (CCIs, including the funded arts sector) as a solution to the problems of post-industrial decline:

> In the urban competition game, being a base for the… cultural industries… has acquired a new strategic importance. Creative people and projects need to be based somewhere. A creative city requires land and buildings at affordable prices, preferably close to other cultural amenities. These are likely to be available in urban fringes and in areas where uses are changing, such as former industrial zones (Landry and Bianchini, 1995, p. 12).

Landry's toolkit pre-empted Richard Florida's highly influential *The Rise of the Creative Class: And how it's transforming work, leisure and everyday life* (Florida, 2002). Florida broadly followed Landry's *Creative City* script (clustering creative industries in post-industrial zones, placemaking through investment in cultural facilities and the attractive sociability of the 'creative milieu'), emphasising what he argued to be a 'new social class':

> My theory says the regional economic growth is driven by the location choices of creative people – the holders of creative capital[60] – who prefer places that are diverse, tolerant and open to new ideas (Florida, 2002, p. 221).

The influence of Florida's thesis has been widely documented and problematised (see Peck, 2005; Scholette, 2006; Krätke, 2012; Kong et al., 2015; d'Ovidio and Rodríguez Morató, 2017). Florida's formula promised to transform depressed urban areas into 'entertainment machines' (Florida, 2002, p. 256) 'for both cultural production and consumption' (Bagwell, 2008, p. 33)[61]. City planners the world over set about culture-led regeneration programmes, deploying public funds to cultivate the '3 T's - Talent, Technology and Tolerance' (Florida, 2002, pp. 249–252), providing 'people climates' (ibid)

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[60] Florida's 'creative capital' can be understood in Bourdieusian terms as a species of cultural capital. Interestingly, like Putnam, Florida did not engage with Bourdieu's theorising in his creative class thesis.

[61] Intercity competition was at the heart of Florida's thesis. The Richard Florida Group facilitated this through a profitable city-ranking consultancy (Landry operates a similar 'Creative City Index'), which measures a city's potential to attract 'creative class people'. For a fee, 'urban innovators' can compete, organising themselves into winners and losers of creative city leagues.

in which the highly mobile creative class could 'construct and validate their identities as creative people' (Florida, 2002, p. 242). Florida prescribes 'proper street scenes' (ibid) where 'creative class people' (ibid) can entertain themselves as 'tourists in their own city' (Florida, 2002, p. 186) in an environment 'where there will be many people of exotic appearance; foreigners in long skirts and bright robes… similar to a costume party, where people put on new identities… and there is a delicious sense of adventure in the air' (ibid)[62].

Culture-led regeneration gave the UK's funded arts sector a role in post-industrial regeneration, providing a powerful narrative for the sector as an agent of economic growth. Who better to mediate between 'street scenes… different ethnic groups and races' (Florida, 2002, p. 226) than professional cultural intermediaries interoperating between government policy, local authorities, private developers and the creative class? A significant outcome of these endorsements was increased investment in cultural 'flagships' (Evans, 2005; Comunian and Mould, 2014; Lees and Melhuish, 2015). New arts venues and large-scale initiatives (e.g. cities of culture, galleries) became the cornerstone of regeneration strategies charged with fostering 'innovation', 'economic impact', 'social inclusion' and 'vibrant communities' (Arts Council England and Powell, 2007)[63]. These flagship arts projects consolidated the professionalised, top-down approach to instrumentalising the potential social benefit of the arts – the ideals of community art now fully integrated into the neoliberal trickle-down economic structures of 'the third way' (Hewison, 2014; Hesmondhalgh *et al.*, 2015; Neelands *et al.*, 2015; Oakley, 2015; Warren and Jones, 2015; Topp and Elikington, 2018)[64].

The economic crash of 2008 brought the comparative opulence of New Labour's 'golden age' to an end, as successive governments slashed arts budgets in response to the downturn. By the arrival of the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition in 2010, the cultural infrastructure for supporting smaller arts programmes constructed during New Labour's tenure was 'becoming a weight, as public and private support concentrated on the larger institutions in the cities, especially London' (Hewison, 2014, p. 172). The most notable interventions under Conservative-Liberal Democrat stewardship were funding cuts, the mantra of entrepreneurship (amounting to *look elsewhere for funding*) and further

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[62] According to Florida, tolerance can be gauged by the presence of gay people ('the canaries of the creative economy'), and even 'Panhandlers' (p. 183), 'bag ladies' (p. 228) and 'significant body piercings and tattoos' (p. 228) can contribute to the street theatre that attracts the creative class.

[63] Notable examples include Tate Modern, Tate Liverpool, Tate Margate, The Millennium Dome, HOME Manchester, BALTIC, Sage Gateshead, The Highbury Initiative (Birmingham) and The Public (West Bromwich).

[64] There is a tendency to over-simplify New Labour's approach as purely neoliberal. As Hesmondhalgh et al. note, increasing public arts funding for its social potential was '"an implausible palliative"… hardly neo-liberal in any coherent sense of that term' (Hesmondhalgh et al., 2015, p. 99). Chris Smith's effort owed as much to the idealism of community arts as to the instrumentalising pressures of policy attachment.

advocacy for moving public institutions into commercial or third sector realms. Early efforts to promote a US-style 'patronage' model for funding the arts, whereby tax relief schemes would be used as leverage to inspire philanthropic giving (Cummins Jr and Katz, 1987) – 'the year of philanthropy' (Hunt, 2011, cited in Brown, 2011) – failed to plug the gap left by funding cuts and by 2012 the programme had 'disappeared without a trace' (Hewison, 2014, p. 169).

In the years that followed, the effect of David Cameron's 'Big Society' was that the funded arts sector continued to rehearse the rhetoric of the economic/social benefits of the arts (ACE, 2013) while being compelled to do more with less by adopting 'creative' and 'entrepreneurial' approaches to the challenges of austerity (Mould, 2018). The Big Society, a vaguely articulated effort to develop a post-Thatcherite brand of 'compassionate conservatism' (Bochel, 2016) that reasserted a traditional commitment to small-state governance through 'a mix of conservative communitarianism and libertarian paternalism' (Walker, 2013), promoted an approach to social policy that further integrated 'the free market with a theory of social solidarity based on hierarchy and voluntarism' (ibid). Cuts to publicly funded institutions were recast as opportunities for communities to take control away from central government and local authorities. This idea was embraced by the Royal Society of Arts' 'deeply idealistic' *Arts Funding, Austerity and the Big Society: Remaking the case for the arts* (2011) as a solution to the longstanding problems of inequality that characterised arts funding:

> All arts organisations need to think of themselves as community institutions, where people connect socially as well as culturally, with arts spaces being used as public spaces as much as possible… If the arts fuel the Big Society more directly, they will also be fuelling the arts. We are already seeing social networks used by artists, musicians and writers to aggregate small donations to fund their work – so called crowdfunding – in which artists would raise money for a well-defined project within a specified time limit and with the goal of raising a particular minimum sum (Knell and Taylor, 2011, p. 34).

Despite cuts, threats of privatisation and creeping dependence upon the voluntary sector, the language of funding and discourses about the social benefit of the arts remained much the same – firmly attached to the economic value offered to other policy areas on the basis of broader social benefit.

Since *First steps*, the funded sector has become tethered to '[p]ublic good instrumentalism focus[ing] on the… positive economic and social outcomes flowing from the arts, and active participation in the

arts' (Knell and Taylor, 2011, p. 18). This discourse has been sharpened (by the creep of neoliberalism and dwindling resources) into a professionalised discursive framework that instrumentalises the sector to adjacent policy areas, this providing the conceptual logic (alongside the problem of inequality – 1.2) that constructs socially engaged art in the funded field. And despite New Labour's repositioning of the arts as a policy area worthy of attention, the problem, and problematisation, of inequality has remained. As Hewison noted, 'there has been growth in the size of the cultural sector and the importance of the economic role that it plays, but it may be that those whom the administrators of public funding for culture serve are principally themselves, since they have the cultural capital to occupy professional-executive positions, and are members of the class that is the principal beneficiary of publicly funded culture' (Hewison, 2014, p. 214). As will be seen in analysis below, policy research and sector literature reveal a notable disconnect between socially engaged arts as discursive practice and the observed social impacts that follow.

1.3.3 Policy attachment and instrumentalisation

The process whereby the funded arts sector is compelled to articulate its value to other policy areas (described above) is conceptualised by Clive Gray as 'policy attachment', wherein

> [e]ndogenous pressures… serve apparently instrumentalizing purposes… Actors within the cultural sector associate their own activities with those that are to be found in other policy sectors altogether (Gray, 2002). The reasons for pursuing such a strategy are normally where these other sectors have more resources (particularly financial ones) available to them than are to be found in the cultural sector… or where the other policy sectors have greater political significance associated with them… In either case the process of attachment allows the cultural sector to gain access to either scarce resources or political credibility that would otherwise be unavailable to it (Gray, 2008, p. 217).

This captures succinctly how, through 'the need to appeal to groups or forces which lie outside the field… [for] material and symbolic support' (Thompson, 1991, in Bourdieu, 1991b, pp. 27–28 [1.2.10]), the funded sector has become instrumentalised towards various social policy objectives beyond the experience of art itself. It has been argued that the extent to which the sector has adopted discourses of policy attachment, particularly in response to austerity, has taken it to the precipice of 'hyper-instrumentalism' wherein 'active management of instrumentalising pressures, as part of a politics of policy survival… might turn in to a politics of policy extinction if "culture" becomes simply a means to a non-cultural policy end' (Hadley and Gray, 2017, p. 96). Indeed Belfiore argued that 'if the logic of

the instrumental view of culture… is taken to its extreme (but intrinsically consequential) conclusions, there would be no point in having a cultural policy at all' (Belfiore, 2002, cited in Hadley and Gray, 2017, p. 96). Belfiore describes how the force of policy attachment has left the sector 'lacking in confidence when it comes to articulate its own value' (Belfiore, 2012, p. 13) and in a 'rhetorically weak position' (ibid) in developing arguments for funding beyond its cost-benefit to other policy areas:

> In this context, the possibility of a constructive notion of cultural value that does not derive legitimacy from exchange value becomes undermined. When market logic is transformed into a 'universal common sense' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 2001), is there any space in public policy for values beyond economic value? The unresolved challenge of articulating non-economic values in the context of public policy is indeed the real legacy of New Labour, and the other face of the 'golden age' its administration represented for the arts and culture in Britain (Belfiore, 2012, p. 13).

Here, Belfiore highlights two important points. Firstly, policy attachment has rendered the exchange value of arts participation, as an instrument for other policy areas, 'common sense' within the funded field. Secondly, the challenge for the sector is one of *articulation* (see also Stevenson, 2013; 2016) – finding alternative ways to *describe* value within the constraints of neoliberal policymaking frameworks. This brings analysis back to the discursive operations of the field, and how these are shaped by policy attachment. The necessity to 'appeal to groups or forces which lie outside the field' (Thompson, 1991, in Bourdieu, 1991, pp. 27–28) can be understood as structuring a linguistic market that assigns value (economic, symbolic) to certain discursive representations, this underpinning the conceptual logics of socially engaged art as a vehicle for policy attachment. Crucially, as described in the previous chapter, in funding bureaucracy policy attachment is, in the first instance, exercised on the plane of discourse, and the practices that follow may *or may not* realise purported outcomes.

1.3.4 The routinised discourses of policy attachment

Discourses of policy attachment have become routinised in funded arts (Bourdieu, 1993) as described in 1.2. The routinised discourse of policy attachment (alongside the problematisation of inequality) can be seen extensively in sector strategy, funding bureaucracy and (as will be demonstrated in the next chapter) the representations made by actors in the field. *Great Art and Culture for Everyone* (2013) for example, directed the sector to express its value in terms of what can be offered to other policy areas, such as community and social cohesion:

Arts and cultural organisations that understand the role they play in their local communities…
by helping resolve conflicts, and by building the social capital of communal relationships… can
become part of the essential fabric of their communities – and demonstrate the public value
of arts and culture (ACE, 2013, p. 32).

Let's Create (2020) positions 'cultural communities' as one of its three target outcomes (described in
1.2), articulating the sector's role in bringing communities together and (despite criticism that will be
addressed shortly) remaining firmly attached to its offer to urban and economic regeneration,
incubated 20 years previously:

We will make the case for investing in appropriate new cultural buildings to drive local
economic regeneration. In all of this work, Arts Council England will use data to build and
share a more sophisticated picture of local investment, and to operate effectively as an expert
national development agency that is able to invest at scale in order to seize opportunities and
deal with big challenges (Arts Council England, 2020a, p. 13)[65].

AHRC's *Understanding the Value of Arts & Culture* (Crossick and Kaszynska, 2016) found that 'the value
of participatory arts in building social capital and community resilience still underpins much work',
citing various mission statements containing ambitions to 'help people and communities transform
their lives through creative activity and the arts' (Crossick and Kaszynska, 2016, p. 82). In *The Arts
Dividend* (2016), ACE CEO Darren Henley rehearses policy attachment with noteworthy zeal, making
the case for public funding by systematically outlining the sector's instrumental potential to various
policy areas in strikingly neoliberal terms: 'the learning dividend', 'the feel-good [health] dividend',
'the enterprise dividend', 'the reputation dividend' and also 'the place-shaping dividend' which, by
way of example, presents the routinised discourse of policy attachment by articulating the arts' value
to policies of regeneration, advocating the sector's

power to regenerate, define and animate villages, towns and cities, including those places
where there has historically been little arts infrastructure or activity. Some of the country's
most notable regeneration programmes have culture at their heart. Investment in arts and

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[65] Here, the problematic power relations described in 1.2.8 can be seen woven into the discourse of policy attachment; ACE
is positioned as the 'expert development agency' investing in the top-down instrumentalisation of the sector towards 'local
economic regeneration' on behalf of those who are unable, presumably, to seize the 'opportunities' for themselves.

culture should be made in all parts of the country, enabling centres of artistic excellence and creativity to thrive throughout England (Henley, 2016, p. 109)[66].

It is striking how deeply ingrained and routinised policy attachment is in sector discourse. For example, (staying with the theme of culture-led regeneration) the tenets of Landry and Florida appeared almost verbatim as the guiding principles for Birmingham's Highbury Initiative – a culture-led regeneration programme spanning the 1990s and 2000s that employed Charles Landry as its consultant. Strategy documents explicitly aspired to 'winning the talent war to attract the most creative people' by being 'open minded, risk taking and tolerant' (Landry and Bore, 2001). Birmingham was imagined as 'a stage' on which 'culture has a critical role to play… as a catalyst, not only to make connections between the centre and local neighbourhoods, but also communities across the city' (ibid). Twenty years later *Investing in Culture: The opportunity to capitalise on our cultural assets* (2018) commissioned by GBSLEP[67] (and written by two of the city's prominent funded sector leaders[68]), mobilised the same arguments for arts funding as a vehicle for making the city 'magnetic to young wealth creators' (Topp and Elkington, 2018, p. 4) and 'winners' in the 'global city indexes that now exist' (ibid). The synthesis of arts funding and urban regeneration discourses in Birmingham exemplifies the broader trend of policy attachment within the funded field, contributing to a linguistic market and logic that structures socially engaged arts by attaching economic capital to discursive representations imported from other instrumentalising policy areas.

1.3.5 Advocacy research and the disconnecting discourses of policy attachment

The linguistic market created by policy attachment – which, I argue, alongside the problematisation of inequality (1.2), structures socially engaged art as discursive practice – is exemplified and reproduced by what scholars have criticised as 'advocacy research' (Belfiore, 2006). While there is plenty of research to demonstrate that cultural participation *in general* produces a range of social benefits, what characterises advocacy research (commissioned or produced by institutions in the funded field), is that it is directed, it is argued, to *persuade* rather than enlighten on the basis of policy attachment, and to the benefit of those active in the funded field (Belfiore, 2006; Mirza, 2006; Belfiore, 2016; Merli, 2018). As such, advocacy research is a prime location for producing and circulating the discourse and conceptual logic of socially engaged arts as a discursive practice, disconnected from the observable impacts of the funded sector's efforts.

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[66] It is relevant to the discussion that follows (1.3.5) that the arguments presented in *The Arts Dividend* are drawn predominantly from 'personal reflections'.
[67] Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership
[68] Gary Topp, Director of Culture Central (NPO) and Rob Elkington, Arts Connect (University of Wolverhampton)

During New Labour's 'golden age', the demands of evidence-based policymaking opened a supply chain of research produced to support the effort to 'get money flowing into the arts' (Smith, 2003, cited in Belfiore, 2009, p. 349), a process carried forward as ACE and others continued to 'make the case' (Mirza, 2006; Hewison, 2014; Lees and Melhuish, 2015). Policy thinktank Comedia was particularly influential, producing studies (some cited in 1.3.2; see also footnote 59) that delivered the arts to policymakers as 'low cost… effective routes to a wide range of policy objectives' (Landry et al., 1996, p. 1). *The Social Impact of the Arts: A discussion document* (1993) for example, highlighted various ways in which the arts could be instrumentalised towards a range of policy outcomes, including 'social cohesion', 'community empowerment', 'local image and identity' and 'health and wellbeing' (Landry *et al.*, 1995). A number of influential studies followed[69], evidencing how the arts (which implicitly means the funded sector) can, among other things, 'help people extend control over their own lives' and 'raise their vision beyond the immediate', and 'encourage adults to take up education and training' (Matarasso, 1997, p. 11). Matarasso's *Use or Ornament?* was one of the most influential of these, establishing a near-consensus among policymakers that art can and should be instrumentalised to address a catalogue of social policy aims (Merli, 2018, p. 1)[70]. The section entitled 'Community and social cohesion', for example, presented numerous case studies to highlight how arts participation can: 'Reduce isolation by helping people to make friends'; 'Develop community networks and sociability'; 'Promote tolerance and contribute to conflict resolution'; 'Help validate the contribution of a whole community'; 'Promote intercultural contact and co-operation'; 'Help offenders and victims address issues of crime'; and 'Provide a route to rehabilitation and integration for offenders' (Matarasso, 1997, p. 36).

These arguments are familiar; the arts provide 'cost-effective' solutions to complex social problems through the development of social capital (Putnam's bridging and bonding) – a view that has become 'common sense' (or 'doxa' in Bourdieu's vernacular) in the funded field. However, Matarasso's study, like others of its oeuvre, has imported a confidence about the funded sector's social impact that is at best uncertain and at worst misplaced, producing a discourse about socially engaged arts practices

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[69] See *Use or Ornament?* (Matarasso, 1997), *Realising the Potential of Cultural Services: The case for the arts* (Coalter, 2001), *The Art of Regeneration: Urban renewal through cultural activity* (Landry et al., 1996) and *Cultural Policy and Urban Regeneration* (Bianchini and Parkinson, 1993).

[70] The influence of Matarasso's *Use or Ornament?* has been noted in various studies and critiques – see Hewison (2014, p. 72) and Belfiore (2009, p. 348). As Merli points out in her critique, the report 'was cited by the then Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Chris Smith, in speeches at the Fabian Society conference at the Playhouse Theatre, London, on 19th September 1997, and at the University of Hertfordshire in Hatfield on 14th January 1998 (Smith, 1998)' (Merli, 2018, p. 1).

built not on the tangible effects of the funded sector's socially engaged efforts, but in response to the demands of policy attachment.

Weak evidence

Under scrutiny, *Use or Ornament?* has been strongly rebuked for failing to 'produce a well-founded understanding of the social impact of the arts' (Merli, 2018, p. 7), deploying a flawed research design, not applying methods rigorously, and drawing on conceptual foundations that are questionable (Merli, 2018)[71]. This is by no means an isolated example. As ACE itself conceded:

> Most of the studies… cannot establish causality between arts and culture and the wider societal impacts… There is little research that quantifies the savings to the public purse that are achieved through preventative arts and culture interventions, or other contributions to public services (ACE, 2014, p. 8).

DCMS's CASE[72] review highlighted the same problems, finding 'no evidence of the differential impacts of different arts activities' (Taylor et al., 2015, p. 77) and that 'demonstrations of the impact of the arts on wellbeing as a whole remain quite weak and subjective' (ibid). Crossick and Kaszynska highlight the recurring difficulty of identifying causality between social capital, arts participation and health improvement, concluding that 'the role of the arts in nurturing social capital in a health context has been highlighted by many (Parr, 2006; Secker et al, 2009), but… it is not easy to establish the place of social capital as a mediator between arts and health (Crossick and Kaszynska, 2016, p. 105). Belfiore has extensively explored and critiqued the widespread acceptance of evidence that a) fails to establish a causal link between investment and the social benefits claimed, and b) fails to demonstrate that the funded sector is any more effective at addressing social concerns than the amateur/voluntary sector and/or other institutional frameworks. For Belfiore, the majority of evidence marshalled in sector advocacy research is compromised by a number of common evaluation and methodological issues:

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[71] Despite a spirited defence, in which Matarasso points out that the report's influence 'may simply be because its publication coincided with the complex evolution of cultural policy, practice and values… [and so] may be a symptom rather than a cause' (Matarasso, 2003, p. 342). *Use or Ornament?* certainly exudes a persuasive tone, with a clear intention to promote the arts to policymakers in neoliberal terms. The extent to which this coloured the research findings is a source of debate (see Matarasso, 2003; Merli, 2018).

[72] The Culture and Sport Evidence (CASE) programme was a 'three-year joint programme of research led by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) in collaboration with the Arts Council England, English Heritage, the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council and Sport England' (CASE, 2010, p. 2). The report aimed to bring together and develop 'evidence and analytic tools and methods for addressing fundamental policy questions in the domain of engagement in culture and sport…[collating] understanding of what drives people to engage, what the impacts of that engagement might be, and how we might value that engagement for economic appraisal' (CASE, 2010, p. 4).

- Over-reliance on anecdotal rather than qualitative evidence.

- Failure to account for potential negative impacts.

- Lack of longitudinal studies[73].

- Conflating of 'active' with 'passive' participation − where the perceived outcomes of participatory projects… are assumed for passive engagement.

- Failure to acknowledge the role of aesthetic criteria in decision making.

- Lack of engagement with ethical questions – where the deployment of cultural projects to address complex issues 'might be seen as a convenient means to divert attention from the real causes of today's social problems' (Belfiore, 2006, pp. 30–33).

Some of these issues can be attributed to the short-term, underfunded working conditions of a sector 'where establishing a control or comparison group is likely to be impractical for projects without the assistance of external researchers' (Secker, 2006, p. 33). Furthermore, measuring nebulous concepts such as 'wellbeing' and 'community cohesion' is notoriously difficult in any context (Crossick and Kaszynska, 2016) and, further still, a lack of evidence does not mean there is no causality between participation in funded arts projects and the social benefits observed. However, this also means that causality *cannot be assumed*, nor can the notion that the socially engaged efforts of a socially stratified funded sector are entirely benign.

Compromised methods

The demands of policy attachment undoubtedly influence the selection, scrutiny and interpretation of evidence presented in advocacy research and project evaluations. The extent to which policy attachment can compromise sector-driven advocacy research, evaluation and discourses (about the positive impacts of the funded arts sector) is exemplified by *Arts and Regeneration: Creating vibrant communities* (Arts Council England and Powell, 2007), a report that set out to illustrate the benefits of incorporating arts projects into urban regeneration initiatives. The research examined nine case studies to highlight 'the ways art and artists are able to introduce enquiry, delight and responsiveness to initiatives that can sometimes threaten to overwhelm the very communities that they are intended to reach' (Arts Council England and Powell, 2007, p. 4). Examples in the report included a housing estate where a singing project 'generated confidence and cohesion, as participants were taken on a process of learning and discovery that was beyond their own expectation [and] expanded the participants personally, socially and creatively' (Arts Council England and Powell, 2007, p. 15) and 'an

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[73] Evaluations are typically undertaken immediately after an activity, when 'the alleged life-changing effects of the experience… are likely to be completely missed out' (Belfiore, 2006, p. 31).

arts-led regeneration programme which focused on the positive engagement of the community's hard to reach young people… where 60% [of participants] reported new skills and experiences, some of which were life changing' (ibid, p. 11). The report did not, however, detail the research methods that informed these claims, methods that the commissioned researchers found troubling, to the point that (in their words):

> We had nearly walked off the project as ACE were pursuing an increasingly 'no warts at all' approach, wanting a promotional document which they could use to develop relationships with developers and the wider private sector. [We] were used by ACE as researchers with editorial control entirely with the client. Not a happy process (Powell, D. email, 29.06.2021).

> It was the thinnest report we did in 20 years of practice… We found ourselves with a very tightly controlling client who… kind of wrote the report for us… We were increasingly uncomfortable about the extent to which the Arts Council wanted very little analysis; they didn't want any kind of critical stuff. This wasn't heavily evidential-based… it was data-lite… What we did was to interview the artists – we didn't do very much secondary checking. We relied on whatever data they had to hand, we didn't ask them to do any further testing or consultation or evaluation. It was a really thin piece of work (Powell, D. interview, Cox 05/08/2021).

This example demonstrates the issues highlighted by Belfiore (also Secker, 2006; Gray, 2008; Crossick and Kaszynska, 2016; Jancovich and Stevenson, 2020) in practice. It can be concluded that the pressure of policy attachment can certainly compromise research to produce and legitimise discourses that are somewhat detached from what is or can be observed. While pragmatically organised to persuade the Treasury and others to invest as a matter of survival, advocacy research brings an air of veracity to weak and compromised evidence of the social benefits assumed to flow from funded socially engaged arts projects and, in so doing, legitimises projects that have failed, or may fail, to actualise the social impacts upon which funding is justified.

1.3.6 Overstating claims

The disconnect between socially engaged arts as discursive and realised practice can also be seen in the way in which sector discourse, owing to the exigencies of policy attachment, tends to overstate the social benefits of the funded sector by conflating culture *in general* with the funded arts *in particular* (see Stevenson, 2016). Case studies from, for example, amateur groups or art therapy in

clinical settings are often cited in policy literature and sector advocacy to suggest that the same outcomes can be expected from ACE-funded NPOs and their projects. *Use or Ornament?*, for example, drew on both voluntary and funded case studies, but did little to differentiate between these in its effort to identify 'the social impact of participation in the arts at amateur or community level' (see also Arts Council England, 2007; 2020a; Matarasso, 2012; ACE, 2014; 2019; Henley, 2016). This common practice ignores important differences that may influence social impacts, such as the way in which funding and professionalisation introduce power relations that may affect how participants experience participation, particularly those maligned by social inequality and exclusion – a point that will be developed shortly (1.3.7).

While claiming the social benefit of culture *in general*, sector advocacy implies that investment in its institutions is an investment in *all of culture* through the rhetorical utility of the 'ecology metaphor'[74] – a ubiquitous yet seldom scrutinised feature of sector discourse that vastly expands what can be claimed by funded institutions. 'The ecology of culture', notably theorised by John Holden (2015), is, on the one hand, an approach to analysis that recognises the 'complex interdependencies that shape the demand for and production of arts and cultural offerings… showing how careers develop, ideas transfer, money flows, and product and content move, to and fro, around and between the funded, homemade and commercial subsectors' (Holden, 2015, p. 3). For Holden, the ecological approach is 'explicitly non-hierarchical' – 'all parts of the cultural system are interdependent and, in this sense equal, and equally valuable: all parts are needed to make the whole' (Holden, 2015, p. 12). On the other hand, despite Holden's effort to redistribute value to cultural practices outside the funded sector, the ecology metaphor has been adopted within sector discourse as a discursive device that pushes questions of exclusion aside to claim outcomes that are tenuous at best.

For example, the Arts Council's response to the geographic inequalities highlighted by *Rebalancing Our Cultural Capital* (Stark et al., 2013) (see also Hill, 2014; Dorling and Hennig, 2016; Mateos-Garcia and Bakhshi, 2016) used the ecology metaphor, not only to negate the critique but also to justify its own ongoing London bias as 'investment… to benefit the whole arts and cultural ecology… in a strategic way, taking careful account of how the many parts of our cultural networks interconnect and work with each other' (Arts Council England, 2014, p. 4). ACE's use of the ecology metaphor implies that, by privileging the wealthiest, whitest 8% in London, it is strategically catalysing cultural life for

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[74] For clarity, by 'ecology metaphor' I am referring to common language and terminology that appears in discourses in the funded sector, where investment in funded institutions is articulated as investment in a 'cultural ecology' to imply far-reaching auxiliary impacts. In this common usage, the metaphor is presented in ambiguous, undefined ways – see Knell and Taylor (2011) and Arts Council England (2013; 2014; 2020a; 2020b).

all. However, there is little evidence of an ecology that demands that the objectified cultural capital of a privileged minority be prioritised, or that ACE's investment decisions are any more effective at stimulating cultural activity elsewhere than, say, amateur arts, commercial arts or cultural activities available through other institutional frameworks (i.e. education, local authorities or health services). Numerous analyses of the role of the funded arts sector in regeneration schemes (see Evans, 2005; Comunian and Mould, 2014; Kong et al., 2015) have noted that 'placemaking' flagships (usually justified on the basis of irrigating cultural ecologies – creating jobs and networks etc) often damage local communities, sponging up rather than distributing resources, and diluting whatever cultural assets an area might have:

> While these mega facilities consume large amounts of public resources, their benefits accrue only to a small group of individuals or particular communities (Kong et al., 2015, p. 8).

When it comes to the trickle-down benefits that funded flagships claim, local people, artists and amateur groups are often left to wither. In 'Gentrification and the artistic dividend: the role of the arts in neighbourhood change' (2014), Grodach et al. conclude that 'simply incorporating arts facilities and arts districts into urban redevelopment schemes has created privatized bubbles that serve primarily tourists and the upwardly mobile creative class while excluding some residents and even artists themselves' (Grodach et al., 2014, p. 5). Roberta Comunian and Oliver Mould's study of BALTIC, Gateshead, demonstrated a 'weak connection between local practitioners and cultural flagship developments', concluding that while 'public investment in arts and culture has been promoted as impacting on local creative economy, [it] often ignores the potential and possible links with the [local] creative industries' (Comunian and Mould, 2014, pp. 2–17).

Taken to its extreme, but logical, conclusion (as it arguably is in ACE's *This England* [Arts Council England, 2014]), the ecology metaphor discursively masks inequality by assuming that the funded arts benefits all of culture, allowing the sector to claim all of culture as a benefit of the funded arts – a narrative deployed to legitimatise the unequal distribution of funding as a strategic imperative, this supported by the notion that the products of the funded field are of superior quality and value to the cultural activities that most people choose to engage with (the deficit model, as described in 1.2.4). When set against the inequalities described in 1.2.2, the ecology metaphor (in funded sector discourses) works to further increase the distance between funded socially engaged art as a discursive vehicle for policy attachment and the tangible impacts of activities that follow. Under examination, the ecology metaphor is revealed to be part of the discursive apparatus that satisfies the demands of

policy attachment by augmenting the social benefits claimed, while at the same time shoring up the traditional, socially stratified hierarchies that devalue other forms of cultural participation, rather than impacting the endogenous problems of a publicly funded sector that privileges the privileged.

1.3.7 Negating the negatives

As Belfiore, Stevenson and others have noted, the demands of policy attachment are such that drawing attention to negative outcomes risks compromising the efficacy of advocacy. To this end, the disconnect between socially engaged art as discursive practice and the social impacts of funded arts projects is exacerbated by a tendency to deny failure and negate negative potentialities. AHRC's recent Failspace Project (Jancovich and Stevenson, 2020) found that in the funded arts sector reporting failure is 'not welcome in formal evaluation processes, which tend to focus on celebratory facts and figures about a project's success and conceal or brush-off negative outcomes or issues' (Jancovich and Stevenson, 2020). Crossick and Kaszynska also describe how, owing to the need to 'make the case', practitioners experience pressure to produce favourable data 'because continued funding of projects needs reports of positive outcomes' (Crossick and Kaszynska, 2016, p. 68). Similarly, Stevenson observes notable silences when it comes to the negative impacts of funded activity and the potential benefits of everyday culture (Stevenson, 2013, p. 83).

While advocacy in the funded field is inclined to accentuate the positive, critical scholarship has revealed that instrumentalised socially engaged arts projects initiated within the funded field can, and often do, produce negative outcomes. In fact, there is plenty of evidence to suggest that the sector's commitment to exclusionary notions of artistic quality (described in 1.2.4), its deficit approach (described in 1.2.7), the myth of non-participation (also described in 1.2.7) and (as will be discussed) the symbolic effects of policy attachment are counterproductive when it comes to objectives such as 'inclusion' and 'community cohesion' – objectives that provide the justification and conceptual logic for (and which are implied by) the discursive practice of socially engaged art. As described in 1.2.4 and 1.2.8, the way in which socially engaged arts discourses are constructed within the funded field engenders a form of symbolic power that is far from benevolent (Bourdieu, 1991b) – a restricted discourse that serves to exclude, alienate and dispossess. Policy attachment also contributes to this. Those identified as needing to be 'socially engaged' must, by necessity, be problematised as 'anti-social' if they are to be effective subjects of socially engaged art as a vehicle for policy attachment (e.g. hard-to-reach young people, young offenders, the mentally unwell). Their cultural preferences must also be understood as lacking when it comes to soliciting worthwhile social benefit. Their aesthetic knowledge must be assumed to need improvement through activities discursively structured

towards policy attachment, which, as described in 1.2, is an economic matter restricted to a privileged few in the funded field. In other words, through policy attachment the socially engaged efforts of the funded sector become inculcated in what has become known in contemporary scholarship as 'the poverty industry' (Armstrong, 2017; McGarvey, 2017), attributing the failings of social policy to the character of marginalised individuals:

> Recent developments have tended to instrumentalise and ghettoise community provision, not least by compelling participants to operate according to a top-down social policy framework (including social inclusion). More often than not, discourses of access and participation – incorrectly articulated as 'community initiatives' – work to conceal what one writer describes as 'the institutional conditions of access and the political limits of coming to voice'. Such rhetoric tends to depoliticise community activity by attributing problems to the character failings of individuals, thus directing attention away from the contribution of structural factors (Cultural Policy Collective, 2003, p. 32).

One such structural factor that receives little acknowledgement in sector advocacy is the class-based symbolic power of Bourdieu's distinction, exercised through arts-led regeneration on a city-planning scale. As Gary Bridge noted:

> Cultural capital is increasingly being used (alongside the more established ideas of economic and social capital) as a way of thinking about both the competitiveness of European cities and the potential for neighbourhood regeneration… The valorisation of one set of tastes in economic, symbolic and social terms results in the displacement of other tastes ('working-class' or 'ethnic'). The valorisation of gentrification, for example, is the valorisation of a certain Anglo White aesthetic, as well as a middle-class one[75] (Bridge, 2006, pp. 727–728).

Blackshaw and Long (see also Peck, 2005; Vickery, 2007; Mclean, 2014; Oakley, 2015; Pritchard, 2016) highlight how culture-led regeneration programmes marginalise those without the appropriate endowments of cultural capital to participate in the *culture of* regeneration, where,

> [l]ike a club founded on the active exclusion of undesirable people, the fashionable neighbourhood symbolically consecrates its inhabitants by allowing each one to partake of

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[75] For clarity, although Bridge does not specify what is meant by 'Anglo White aesthetic', it can be assumed he is referring to the cultural activities that accompany processes of gentrification, whereby certain types of arts venue, coffee shop etc, that appeal to the 'creative class', work to dispossess and alienate the urban poor (see Peck, 2005).

the capital accumulated by the inhabitants as a whole. Likewise, the stigmatised area symbolically degrades its inhabitants, who, in return, symbolically degrade it. Since they don't have all the cards necessary to participate in the various social games, the only thing they share is their common excommunication (Blackshaw and Long, 2005, p. 18).

The funded arts sector is, of course, not entirely responsible for the various problems of gentrification, but the role of arts funding and NPO flagships in producing the symbolic cultural capital that Blackshaw and Long describe has been noted. In *Against Creativity* (2018), Oli Mould describes how publicly funded initiatives have been deployed in gentrifying processes through 'art-washing' (Pritchard, 2017) – where art is used to mask and legitimise social inequality. In London, for example, ACE NPOs were drafted in to facilitate the transfer of Balfron Tower from social housing to private luxury flats. Shortly after acquiring the brutalist icon from Tower Hamlets Council, Poplar HARCA (a housing association) evicted low-income residents in its effort to maximise profit. The 'jamboree of gentrification' (Harling, 2017) that followed involved leasing former social housing homes (described then as 'end of life' properties) to artists as workspaces, and the 'Balfron Season' (Abrahams, no date) – a programme of immersive arts performances and exhibitions that lent an air of creative cool to a process of social cleansing:

> Bow Arts [an NPO] and Poplar Harca… commissioned an artist to produce their master artwash event, in which the community were encouraged to stand on their balconies as a photograph was taken of the tower, from a distance. Few residents chose to take part, and many boycotted the event as a way of protesting their impending evictions. They were not being offered any possibility to express their opinions on the 'regeneration' of their homes that would later see a raft of star architects and designers drafted in, whilst Poplar Harca ruthlessly set about dismantling the entire community, using a host of tactics that would send most people with a conscience into a state of shock (Harling, 2017).

The 'end of life' council properties were, inevitably, reborn as expensive private housing, with prices starting at £500,000 for a two-bedroom flat (Field, 2019). Such incidents, alongside the body of research that critiques the role of arts funding in regeneration schemes, find little reflection in sector advocacy, despite widespread awareness and soul-searching among artists, whose precarity within culture-led regeneration schemes often leaves them priced out, moving nomadically from one 'meanwhile space' (Moore-Cherry, 2017) to the next. It has been observed that artists (often cast by commentators as the 'gentrifying foot soldiers of capitalism' [Pritchard, 2016]) tend to lose out in the

long run, when their symbolic value has been expunged and land values have increased (as with Balfron Tower). Spaces initially provided as affordable studios are quickly revoked and artists, unable to sustain themselves in the gentrified neighbourhoods that their presence brought into being, are forced to move to pastures new. Despite such negative potentialities, sector advocacy, and the discourses from which socially engaged art is constructed as a vehicle for policy attachment, remains committed to arts-led regeneration schemes that often sustain precarity for cultural workers and contribute to the displacement of those at the sharp end of gentrification. The crucial point here is, as noted in Evans' *'Measure for measure: evaluating the evidence of culture's contribution to regeneration'* (2005), discourses about socially engaged art tend to paper over negative potentialities and/or the sector's failure to deliver the social benefits upon which funding has been predicated:

> In practice, local community involvement and the sense they might have of their 'place', is the least evident in this process, as the professional regeneration and cultural intermediaries control the territory and the rhetoric required to maintain the credibility of the expectations of culture-led regeneration (Evans, 2005, p. 976).

Attachment to policy objectives such as community cohesion and regeneration provide the conceptual logic from which socially engaged art is constructed as a discursive practice[76], a practice that, as David Powell put it, insists on being 'no warts at all' (Powell, D. email, 29.06.2021). The exigencies of policy attachment produce a discourse that, out of necessity, draws a rhetorical veil over uncomfortable realities, constraining what can be said about the impacts of the funded sector's efforts (at least in the official narrative of policy, strategy and funding applications), and consolidating schemes of perception that owe more to policy attachment than to what socially engaged arts projects initiated within the funded field are actually doing in/for society. As such, there is again an observable disconnect between discourse and realised practice.

1.3.8 From discourse, to perception, to commodification

Policy attachment imports a wide range of ideas and discursive representations into the linguistic market of the funded arts field: art for health; art for regeneration; art for community cohesion; art for conflict resolution; art for crime reduction and so on. While, for most, such social benefits will be informed as much by personal experience as by funding bureaucracy, it is the latter that formalises

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[76] As evidenced by *Arts and Regeneration: Creating vibrant communities* (ACE, 2007) (and other examples provided), in the funded field the role of the funded sector in regeneration is often understood as one of social engagement – 'to introduce enquiry, delight and responsiveness to initiatives that can sometimes threaten to overwhelm the very communities that they are intended to reach' (Arts Council England and Powell, 2007, p. 4).

policy attachment into the particular logic of socially engaged art by attaching symbolic and economic capital to discursive representations directed towards auxiliary policy concerns. As such, just as with the problematisation of inequality described in 1.2, policy attachment becomes a prism through which field participants 'perceive the real' (Hilgers and Mangez, 2015, p. 25) on the basis of shared stakes within the field. Socially engaged art is a *logical* response to the demands of policy attachment – a discursive vehicle for instrumentalising funded arts projects towards various policy outcomes. However, the routinisation of policy attachment (through socially engaged discursive practice) produces particular assumptions, perceptions and doxic beliefs (Bourdieu, 1995a) about the role of the funded arts sector and the social benefits that follow. As described above, bureaucracy, research, evaluation and other official discourses can be seen to overstate positive impacts and negate negative potentialities, demonstrating how processes of policy attachment structure and constrain the linguistic market of the field. It is through this distorted and distorting prism (where the *assumed* social impacts are exaggerated and/or sanitised) that actors negotiate their creative work and construct socially engaged arts as a discursive activity directed towards funding and detached from observed realities.

In sum, as Bourdieu theorises, policy attachment structures a system of thought that, in a sense, commodifies social problems in the interests of actors and institutions in the funded field. While likely undertaken in earnest, socially engaged programmes discursively directed at 'crime reduction' and 'community cohesion', for example, unavoidably commodify complex social problems to the benefit of funded institution and, in so doing, write these problems as subject identities upon would-be participants as justification for funding their participation – this will be seen in responses from intermediaries active in the funded field in the next chapter (1.4).

1.3.9 Conclusion

In this chapter, by demonstrating how socially engaged art is constructed as a vehicle for policy attachment, analysis has extended the argument that, in the funded field, socially engaged art is predisposed to function as discursive practice that serves extant hierarchies of cultural value and the institutions that legitimise them. Attention to the routinised discourses of policy attachment reveals how discursive representations imported from policy objectives elsewhere have attained a symbolic and economic utility in the field, expanding and constraining its linguistic market and structuring the conceptual logics that produce socially engaged art. Despite the widespread conviction that the sector solicits 'life-changing' experiences, reduces crime and catalyses 'cultural ecologies', there is no certainty that funded socially engaged activities are any better at achieving these aims than

amateur/voluntary arts or activities delivered through other institutional frameworks; the evidence base is weak, and evaluations are compromised, selective and overstating. As such, the conceptual logic and discursive foundations of social engaged arts in the funded field are questionable. Further, as Bourdieu's analysis suggests, the discursive practice of socially engaged arts engenders a structure of power that, paradoxically, compromises the sector's ability to achieve the social policy objectives it has attached itself to. Nonetheless, as will be seen in the next chapter, field participants strategically deploy socially engaged arts as a discourse of policy attachment, presenting the assumed social benefits of their work in the competition for funding, reputation and position in the field.

1.4 Socially engaged art: discursive competition for capital and position

1.4.1 Introduction

This chapter concludes Part One by developing the argument that, in the funded field, socially engaged art is primarily a discursive activity structured by the problematisation of inequality and policy attachment (as described in 1.2 and 1.3). Bourdieu's analytical approach is applied to interviews with intermediaries who, when describing their participation in the funded field, rehearse the problematisation of inequality and policy attachment, and signal the disconnect between socially engaged arts as discursive and realised practice. Analysis reveals how the conceptual logic that structures socially engaged art as discursive practice is organised around the competition for funding.

I focus here on two case studies. As described in *Methodology and Research Design, vii*, Fasil requested to remain anonymous, and so, because of the interconnections between his work with Deep Urban Arts (DUA) and Curator Jessie Webber's work with THERE Gallery (THERE), pseudonyms are used for both, and, at the request of Fasil, comments from my interviews with him have been paraphrased. These case studies are representative of other funded sector intermediaries interviewed[77]. Because they both situate their work in the same neighbourhood area (referred to here as Stoke Prior in Southern City), they both describe their work as socially engaged, and they are both primarily engaged with visual arts, they reveal how the logic inculcated by the problematisation of inequality and policy attachment produces similar representations and discursive strategies with respect to socially engaged art. The chapter begins by presenting a brief introduction to Jessie and Fasil and their work (1.4.2) before examining how funding bureaucracy requires them to adopt administrative structures that influence the way in which they conceptualise their work (1.4.3). Section 1.4.4 explores how the funded sector is a competitive field where competition takes place (predominantly) on the discursive plane. Section 1.4.5 looks at how, when describing their socially engaged work, intermediaries enter into discursive competitions over equality and policy attachment, often through claims of being *authentically connected to community*, demonstrating that these representations have acquired symbolic value in the linguistic market of the field and, as such, are a prime location of discursive competition (1.4.6).

Analysis then turns to how value for money (alongside connectedness to community) influences the way in which intermediaries articulate their socially engaged work (1.4.8) – another competitive discourse that can be attributed, in part, to policy attachment. Section 1.4.9 examines the salience of

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[77] For example, GAP Project, Friction Arts and others listed in chapter *Methodology and Research Design vii*, Table 1.2.

strategies deployed in the funded field and how the competition for economic capital leads intermediaries to strategically exaggerate and/or censor aspects of their work/experience, demonstrating how the field produces discourses that are not necessarily a reflection of realised practice. The chapter concludes with responses to the 'ecology of culture' (Holden, 2015), with intermediaries, again, describing the pressure to produce discourses that are not representative of the nature of their experience, which serves to reinforce the rhetoric while downplaying the role of Bourdieu's social capital in soliciting advantage (1.4.10).

1.4.2 Introducing the interviewees and interviews

For the analysis that follows, the reader should have some contextual knowledge of the case studies, their work and the interview interaction. While there are many differences between them (background, ethnicity, aesthetic taste etc), there are a number of important commonalities. Firstly, they both work in the funded arts sector as independent intermediaries engaging with funding on a regular project-to-project basis. Secondly, they are based in the same neighbourhood and are often in competition with one another for the same funding. Thirdly, they both describe their work as socially engaged, situating this within a number of conceptual spaces:

- Physical space – Venue (they both have physical venues), Neighbourhood and City
- Sociocultural space – Local communities
- Aesthetic space – Contemporary art (THERE Gallery), Urban (DUA)
- Field – in relation to other actors in the funded arts sector

Locality

THERE Gallery and DUA's HERE venue are situated in the same locality and make similar claims to being representative of communities in that area. It is therefore useful to provide some contextual information about the area, which is one platform upon which their funding discourses are staged. The area is a peripheral urban neighbourhood noted for being 'super-diverse' (Warren and Jones, 2015) and having high levels of unemployment, child poverty, crime and health problems (Brandham, 2015). The area frequently features in local government reports as 'an area of social deprivation' (Brandham, 2015; Warren and Jones, 2015), ranked in the top 10% of the most deprived wards in the UK. It has been the location of several high-profile incidents that have gained media attention around complex issues relating to multiculturalism, anti-terrorism and Islamic radicalisation.

The area is a short distance from a major NPO, which will be referred to here as The Arts Centre (TAC)[78], one of the city's largest funded arts organisations, and from Westside (pseudonym), a district of 'state-led gentrification' (Porter and Barber, 2006), where redevelopment strategies have focused on 'high-quality housing and urban environments… as a means of attraction of the middle classes to the inner city' (Porter and Barber, 2006, p. 7). Westside has followed the path of other culture-led regeneration schemes (1.3), with post-industrial buildings being provided as meanwhile spaces for artists and independent businesses (bars and shops), paving the way for property developers and infrastructure projects. As such, Westside has a high number of arts spaces and boutique shops, and is a popular destination for Richard Florida's creative class (Porter and Barber, 2006).

Fasil Aziz and Deep Urban Arts (DUA)

Fasil is best known for his fusion of urban and Islamic art forms, for which he has gained a strong reputation as a Muslim artist (Aziz interview, Cox 12.02.2018), an identity which, as will be seen, he feels imposes restrictions on his agency as an artist/cultural intermediary, and which can be seen as an example of the 'burden of representation' placed upon artists of colour in the funded arts field (Mercer, 1994). Fasil is founder and director of a regularly funded organisation (referred to here as DUA) that aims to promote collaborations using the arts to engage and connect with local and diaspora communities. Despite being presented as an organisation, DUA is often Fasil the individual – for reasons that will be addressed shortly, it is difficult to separate DUA *the organisation* from Fasil *the artist.* One of DUA's most visible projects has been HERE, a venue for performances, debates, networking and artistic production. Fasil operates across funded, commercial and voluntary domains. Through DUA, he receives public funding from ACE and other sources for activities including public murals, cultural events and occasionally participatory workshops. Fasil also receives commissions from private sector companies, primarily for corporate outdoor visual arts work.

Jessie and THERE Gallery

Jessie is founder and director of THERE Gallery, a contemporary art space that was, for the majority of this research, based a short distance from DUA's HERE venue (they now both occupy a recently renovated building in Stoke Prior). As well as exhibitions, THERE delivers community engagement projects and training opportunities for developing arts professionals. THERE developed from the

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[78] TAC is one the city's longstanding ACE National Portfolio (regularly funded) Organisations (NPOs). The centre evolved from community arts collaborations with residents in the late 1950s and was established formally in 1962. The initial focus was on youth theatre, and the venue was cited in Jenny Lee's *First steps* as a 'most progressive … [and] adventurous scheme' (Lee, 1965, p. 10). Since then, the venue has shifted its focus from young people and has expanded to a multi-artform programme, adopting a typical NPO structure (mixed commercial, local authority, ACE and public funding) and appealing predominantly to the normative audiences described 1.2.2.

friendship between founders Jessie and Ruchi Kulkarni [pseudonym] and the network of friends they established as graduates:

> I met Ruchi, my business partner, at… uni, and when we finished we'd got this MA in philosophy and were like, 'what do we do?'… and there was nowhere in Westside where, because that's where all the arts spaces were… I felt like I liked going to, and none of it really was the kind of art that I wanted to see, and I said to her [Ruchi], 'it would be amazing to do this' and she's the kind of person who's like 'brilliant, let's do it' and I was like 'fuck, I've just agreed to do it, I guess we'll have to kind of pull it off now' (Webber interview, Cox 24.01.2019).

Jessie and Ruchi drew on support from their wider social network, who volunteered time and donated materials to transform a former warehouse into a gallery, studio and café space. THERE started as the collective endeavour of an informal group of friends, motivated by mutual interests, but became more professionalised as Jessie engaged with public funding[79]. Initially, THERE's main source of income was a café but, overtime, the artistic work became increasingly dependent on public funding (Webber interview, Cox 25.04.2019). Jessie has developed THERE into a small regularly funded organisation with a number of voluntary and paid positions, with people employed as and when funding is available. Jessie has also taken temporary jobs with arts NPOs (including TAC) when funding, and therefore employment through THERE, has not been secured. THERE is described in its own promotional material as an 'artist-led space… on a social mission to challenge the traditional role of visual art spaces in Southern City', providing 'access to high quality art experiences and… making Southern City more inclusive by actively rejecting the exclusivity often found in the visual arts sector' (THERE, 2021):

> We are focused on investing in and engaging with community members of the Stoke Prior area that are often overlooked. We use our space to provide our community with art focused events, activities and volunteering opportunities. We believe that art holds transformative power for mental wellbeing, bridging community gaps and increasing employability (THERE, 2021).

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[79] Ruchi stepped back from leading the organisation but is still involved as a board member.

The heuristic approach to interviews

Before moving to the analysis, acknowledgement should be made of the heuristic approach to interviews described in *Methodology and Research Design vii.* These interviewees were selected because they work in contexts similar to my own in the funded arts sector. Because of the conversational style of the interviews, responses were candid, but they were framed by the interaction as it evolved. Interviews were semi-structured and at times involved comparisons with my own experience. In this sense, responses have been co-created with the interviewer, reflecting as much my own experience (a location of legitimate inquiry) as that of interviewees (*Methodology and Research Design iv, v*). It is important to note that conceptualising responses as *discursive practices structured by participation in funding processes* came later in the analysis stage (explication and creative synthesis phases [Sultan, 2019, p. 94]). At the time of the interviews, the focus was on the history and nature of *their* (the interviewees') work, what socially engaged art is and means to *them*, and how inequality manifests in the funded arts sector.

It will be seen that interviewees often highlight the disconnect between socially engaged arts as discursive and as realised practice in the funded field – usually in their critique of others. These critiques, and expressions of value, were introduced by the interviewees and were not directed by comparison with my own experiences, although these themes would have been suggested by the nature of questions about inequality in arts funding. Questions about cultural ecologies were purposefully introduced by me, in an effort to see how intermediaries situate their work in relation to other arts practices inside and outside the funded field. Also, interviewees (particularly Fasil) often have portfolio careers, involving work in funded and commercial contexts. The interviewees' responses here are specifically in relation to their work in the funded arts and are therefore not representative of the full complexity of their lives as artists.

In the analysis below, interview responses demonstrate the construction of socially engaged arts as discursive practice *in the funded field*. The discussions are indicative of how socially engaged art functions as a discursive practice constructed in a competitive environment, where artists/intermediaries negotiate the problematisation of funding inequality and policy attachment. I want to avoid inferring a totalising and reductive account, which can accompany Bourdieu's theoretical approach – an issue that will be fully examined in Part Two. The aim is neither to pass judgement on intermediaries who pragmatically negotiate funding, nor to call into question the integrity of their work. The extent to which interviewees (or those they compare themselves with) challenge inequality and/or realise the purported social benefits of their work is difficult to ascertain

and, as will be seen, is mired in ambiguity, strategy and contradiction. However, the heuristic approach to the interview situation has drawn out candid responses that have led the analysis to examine socially engaged art as discursive here in Part One.

1.4.3 Administrative structures – thinking professionally

The way in which funding bureaucracy shapes discourse, perception and practice can be seen in how independent intermediaries establish themselves as bureaucratic entities for the purposes of receiving funding. For valid reasons[80], funders require recipients to adopt governance procedures: a board of trustees, registration as a charity, community interest company (CIC) or company limited by guarantee, a bank account with two signatories and a formal constitution. Fasil and Jessie have both adopted these structures to receive public funds, establishing THERE and DUA as bureaucratic nodes so as to house their work within the funded field. Fasil described how, as an independent artist, he was unable to progress his career without establishing a formal bureaucratic entity, and thus initiated DUA so that he could apply for funding from Arts Council and other sources (Aziz interview, Cox 02.11.2018). Adopting these formalising structures engenders a perceptual shift – Fasil and Jessie described a sense of 'becoming professional' and 'being taken seriously'. The sense of 'becoming' and 'changing' (in terms of both practical arrangements and perception) was common among interviewees when describing their entry into the funded field:

> There wasn't any structure to it… it sort of became more and more professional and we started to think of it more like a business… Obviously, once we started the gallery, we started having funding and we invested in audience development… we spent more time thinking about who we could target and who we wanted to come to our events (Webber interview, Cox 24.01.2019).

Like other interviewees, Jessie and Fasil describe a feeling of legitimation resulting from the bureaucratic shift from artist to organisation and the funding that follows. To use Bourdieu's terminology, funding 'consecrates', assigning value, status and positionality to administrative entities within the bureaucracy of the field (Bourdieu, 1993, 1994a). Crucially, Jessie and Fasil also describe a shift in thinking: 'thinking about who we could target' (Webber interview, Cox 24.01.2019) and becoming 'more professional' (ibid). In these introductory statements, Jessie and Fasil reveal that by pragmatically adopting the administrative structures required, they began to adopt a particular way of thinking about their work. Although ostensibly independent, they began to adjust to what can be

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[80] As with most public funders and publicly funded institutions – to protect against fraud and misuse of public funds

understood in Bourdieusian terms as the 'institutional habitus' of the funded arts field[81]. This does not, by itself, constitute the logic that produces socially engaged art as discursive practice, but it certainly can be seen to play a role in standardising organisational structures, perceptions and a sense of hierarchy at the point of entry into the field.

1.4.4 Competition through discursive practice

A core component of Bourdieu's theoretical framework is the structuring work of competition (1.1). Indeed, his analytic scheme has been criticised for producing an 'imbalance towards structural ends… by reducing human nature as "egoist and selfish", being solely motivated by competition for goals and status' (Pérez, 2008, p. 7) – an issue that will be examined in Part Two. However, here, the way in which intermediaries describe their socially engaged work in the funded field reveals (in Bourdieusian terms) the structuring influence of competition imbued with funding selection procedures. Interviewees routinely described themselves as competing with others, particularly larger NPOs, whom they believed to have unfair advantage:

> The problem is that… we shouldn't be in competition. I don't know how much we are because I don't even want to understand all the politics that go into the funding landscape, but we shouldn't be in competition because we are not the same. There's no apples and pears. But also, I think TAC could do a much better job at being less higher-up people, and more, not like THERE, but caring more (Webber interview, Cox 25.04.2019).

Expressing frustration with the competitive nature of the field, Jessie describes feeling lower in hierarchy than larger institutions and posits that, as a small organisation, they 'care more' (ibid). Intermediaries often demarcate themselves in this way, criticising others (particularly larger organisations) and highlighting their difference *from* these. The regularity of this discursive structure (even in conversations that were not about funding or competition) follows Bourdieu's hypothesis that, in restricted fields of cultural production, to '"make one's name" means making one's mark, achieving recognition of one's difference from other producers, especially the most consecrated of them' (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 106). Crucially, this is a *discursive exercise*. Throughout interviews, intermediaries identified the production of *discourse* as the primary location of competition. For example, when addressing imbalances of power, Jessie describes unfair advantage in terms of power over *discourse*:

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[81] As described in 1.2.6, 'the procedures of official registration (Bourdieu, 1994, p. 12)… molds *mental structures* and imposes common principles of vision and division' (Bourdieu, 1994, p. 7) – funded vs unfunded, professional vs amateur etc.

The problem you have with this unfairness is, obviously, compared to an organisation like [anonymised NPOs][82] etc, we're never gonna have the same strength of application because we're just a bunch of artists trying to do something cool, and obviously we don't have the know-how of writing an application of that strength, so it isn't fair (Webber interview, Cox 25.04.2019).

The unfairness, for Jessie (as with Fasil and others), is that better funded NPOs are able to produce stronger funding applications – *stronger discourses* – effectively buying the symbolic capital afforded by a higher level of discursive competence. The crucial point is that, as Bourdieu hypothesises, the funded field is highly competitive and (as will be seen in the analysis below) this competition takes place to a significant degree on the discursive plane.

1.4.5 The problematisation of inequality and policy attachment structuring discourse

Interviewees describe producing discourses that are *prescribed* by funding bureaucracy for the purposes of securing funding (see 1.2). Jessie is candid when explaining her funding success:

Jessie: Obviously with that whole community angle, that was really important, and a kind of artist development angle as well…

Researcher: Is that why, do you think, funders fund you?

Jessie: Oh, the area. I mean they told me that, so it's not just my opinion. For both City Council and Arts Council. We were in a priority neighbourhood at the time. Now, other areas of Southern City are much poorer than Stoke Prior, but that's still a draw (Webber interview, Cox 25.04.2019).

Even in short statements like these, interviewees reveal the linguistic market of the field, highlighting established discourses, the value of which has been arbitrated by the problematisation of inequality and policy attachment and circulated by funding bureaucracy: the *'community angle'* responding to 'cultural communities' and 'inclusivity' (Arts Council England, 2020a) and the *'artist development angle'* responding to 'creative people, ambition and quality' (Arts Council England, 2020a, pp. 28–29), alongside a comprehensive engagement with policy attachment through culture-led regeneration –

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[82] A notable, large NPO in Southern City – the city's contemporary art gallery.

being *'in a priority neighbourhood'*[83]. In interviews, Jessie is aware of and conversant with local regeneration programmes, issues of gentrification and the strategic value of working in a regeneration area. For her, as with the other funded intermediaries interviewed, these discursive practices are vital to success in the funded field because, as she puts it:

> It's so part of the rhetoric. You know, everybody's talking about celebrating diversity, the Arts Council has got this whole diversity charter, everybody's comparing, you know, how diverse are you as an organisation. So, it's very what's happening right now… That's why we got [targeted Arts Council programme][84] funding in the first place. It's because we could say 'well, we're doing that, we're helping you with your creative case for diversity' (Webber interview, Cox 25.04.2019).

In their responses, interviewees demonstrate 'the rhetoric' structured by the problematisation of funding inequality (primarily in terms of ethnicity and class) and/or policy attachment circulated through funding bureaucracy, revealing the conceptual logic that structures their socially engaged representations:

> We called it a community café because we wanted to make that difference. To us the Westside spaces [other NPO institutions] felt very elitist. So, community was the opposite of elite, I guess. So that idea was just: this is for everybody. But we never really, at the time, understood what that word 'community' meant in a funding sense. So, what then started happening was… we started realising community has a bigger meaning for us as well, and that's brilliant because, like women would come in, who would on the street wear the full niqab, and they would come in and feel safe to remove them and to have coffee with their friends without us doing anything (Webber interview, Cox 24.01.2019).

This extract carries common discursive themes that emerged in discussions about socially engaged art. Inequality is problematised by the opposition between 'elite' and 'community'. This was a constant feature in interviews, recalling Bourdieu's theorising that asserting difference is a vital

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[83] As described in 1.2, these routinised discursive practices are traceable to the 'need to sustain and strengthen all that is best in the arts' and 'the best being made more widely available' (Lee, 1965, p. 16).

[84] The title given to this targeted Arts Council programme has been redacted with respect to the anonymity requested by Fasil. The programme was a multi-million pound investment that sought to address ACE's 'Creative Case for Diversity' and increase the number of diverse-led organisations within the National Portfolio (ACE, 2022).

strategy for attaining position and status[85]. Jessie then signals that 'community' has a specific meaning (value and function) within the linguistic market of the funded field, revaluated 'in a funding sense' (ibid). The selection of 'women in niqabs' signals the value associated with diversity and community as symbolic assets attributable to the problematisation of inequality and policy attachment[86]. Here, Bourdieu's conceptualisation of the linguistic market draws out the structuring work of the problematisation of inequality and policy attachment through funding bureaucracy, in the way in which independent intermediaries think about and articulate the value of their work. The key point is that this problematisation (routinised in the official discourse of bureaucracy – 1.2, 1.3) is cultivated into the discursive practices of independent intermediaries through their participation in funding procedures (as well as through sector sociability, of course). Warren and Jones' study entitled *'Local governance, disadvantaged communities and cultural intermediation in the creative urban economy'* (2015) made similar observations, identifying how discourses of intermediaries in the funded sector mirror policy objectives imported from elsewhere and can be predisposed to function *solely as discursive practices*:

> Even where funding applications are directed by pragmatism there is at least a degree of complicity between intermediaries and the creative economy growth and inclusion drive which needs to be acknowledged. What is striking in the aims and objectives of the case studies are the ways in which 'independent' cultural practice start (sic) to action the same kinds of objectives as local state cultural policy… inter-cultural community projects and regeneration activity mirrors national government pilots around the localism agenda and local policy on community cohesion in a multi-cultural city… In fact, by continually negotiating degrees of artistic independence from policy objectives, a question can be raised of whether the relationship between creative practitioners and the state has been rendered a kind of 'cynical realism' (Zizek, 1989), where tactical manoeuvring by non-state intermediaries in the creative industries is a new form of lip-service to the treasury that hands out the funds (Warren and Jones, 2015, p. 1748).

The 'tactical manoeuvring' (ibid) Warren and Jones describe is, I argue, exercised (at least in part) through the discursive practice of socially engaged art, structured by the exigencies of policy

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[85] It is interesting to note that at no point did intermediaries compare themselves with, or consider themselves in competition with, forms of cultural participation that exist outside the funded field (amateur arts, voluntary arts, computer games, television, crafts, hobbies etc).

[86] 'Community' and 'diversity' were often used ambiguously and interchangeably – as they are in policy literature (1.2, 1.3). Also, there was little consideration that the 'communities' to be engaged might simply have no interest in engaging, or have fulfilling cultural lives without engaging, with the funded activities.

attachment that shape how intermediaries conceptualise and articulate their work as socially engaged in the competition for funding. As Warren and Jones note, although on the plane of discourse there is apparent alignment between the aims of socially engaged intermediaries and government policy objectives, ambiguity and distinction (described in 1.2.9) allow for 'degrees of artistic independence from policy objectives' (ibid) to be negotiated, which is to say, they allow for a disconnect between socially engaged art as discursive and realised practice, as evidenced by the empirical studies cited in 1.2.2. What statistical data reveals is that, in practice, socially engaged art in the funded field has done little to affect the issues it discursively seeks to address and can thus be seen as primarily a discursive exercise through which intermediaries compete over claims to equality (the problematisation of inequality) and social benefit (policy attachment) as a proxy struggle for economic capital in the funded field.

I want to inject a note of nuance here, to avoid the potential reductivity of a Bourdieusian analysis. The sense given by interviewees (most of the time) is that they act in good faith, responding to the funding criteria they are presented with (described in 1.2 and 1.3) and interpreting these with both a degree of subjectivity and a desire to help the communities in which their work is situated. Their intentions appear well-meaning, their work often directed towards achieving positive social ends (e.g. through certain types of exhibition that platform 'diverse artists', or through engaging with local issues) and they do not see their representations to funders as merely 'lip-service' (Perry, Smith and Warren, 2015b, p. 1748). However, they are also conscious of and reflective about the necessity to produce particular discourses for the purposes of funding, articulating their work as socially engaged in relation to these, and (as will be seen) there is considerable disagreement over what these discourses should be made to mean (Webb, Schirato and Danaher, 2002b, pp. 30, 149–151). Furthermore, it should be acknowledged that none of the statements given in interviews were taken from funding applications, suggesting that the conceptual logics inculcated through participation in funding bureaucracy extend to schemes of perception beyond. In other words, there is an institutional habitus to be observed among these ostensibly independent intermediaries operating with relative autonomy. This will become more apparent as the analysis unfolds.

1.4.6 Connectedness to communities – stakes of the competition

Interviewees compete over notions of authenticity with respect to being connected with, or representative of, particular groups, communities and/or localities. Questions of authenticity and integrity are prevalent because they are symbolically representative of key funding objectives, and also because intermediaries are keenly aware of the disconnect between socially engaged art as

discursive and as realised practice in the funded field (1.2.2). In 2016, THERE and DUA (Jessie and Fasil) applied for the same targeted Arts Council funding programme. Jessie described (above) how she was able to secure this funding by appealing to ACE's diversity charter in an area identified as disadvantaged, predominantly Muslim and a priority neighbourhood. She extended her case by signalling how, as a 'grassroots' organisation (as opposed to an elite institution), THERE are meaningfully connected to the local community, providing the niqab anecdote to qualify the legitimacy of this claim. For Fasil, losing out to THERE was not just a disappointment but an injustice, signalling 'connectedness to community' as a proxy struggle for position and economic capital[87]. Fasil described how he felt that the decision by ACE to select THERE for funding was misguided, and how the 150k grant would have provided greater financial security and status in the funded field. His comments were critical of THERE (and at times deeply derogatory), and questioned the authenticity of THERE's connection with communities in Stoke Prior. At the heart of Fasil's critique was the question of who should be permitted (and publicly funded) to represent communities in Stoke Prior, advocating DUA (himself) as the organisation most representative of these communities, citing ethnicity as a point of disjuncture (Aziz interview, Cox, 15.10.2019).

Considering the observed inequalities of arts funding, as described in 1.2.2, Fasil's critique of the disconnection between funding objectives and the local Muslim neighbourhoods is potentially legitimate, thus providing a platform for him to position DUA/himself in order to respond to the problematisation of inequality – in terms of who gets funding and where that funding should go. The key point, though, is the element of competition, articulated as a competition for funding – economic capital – that is vital to agency, progress and status in the field. This competition is exercised through claims to authenticity with respect to connectedness to community – Who should represent? Who has a real connection with the communities? – these representations structured by the problematisation of inequality and policy attatchement, and entered into the linguistic market through ACE's funding bureaucracy, which sets the terms of the discourse. As such, from a Bourdieusian perspective, connectedness to community can be understood as a form of symbolic capital that commodifies particular groups and localities, the value of which is arbitrated by the problematisation of inequality and policy attachment. In this way, connectedness to community was one of the most ubiquitous and contested discursive activities mentioned by interviewees when describing their socially engaged work in the funded field:

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[87] Again, questions about this particular funding programme funding were not asked, but they were introduced by Fasil in his description of funding inequality and of his socially engaged work.

You know, 'community group' always sounds so nice, but these are individuals, residents who live on the street, who recognise me, who know my name, who have my number in their phone... I know it's the first time that they go to a gallery because we talk to them... that's what you get in a grassroots organisation, isn't it? You speak to the people. You are there, you welcome them, you talk to them, and you also see how they develop – and in very practical terms – because we need to collect data and show exactly this to the councils, the different ones [ACE, City Council]. You do questionnaires and you ask questions like 'Before you started a placement or a workshop, how do you feel? How confident do you feel to be here? ' And then you ask the same question after a six-week workshop series, and you see that they judge it better... I know people by name, and I find out that Linda [pseudonym] got a job now, after being a single stay-at-home mum, English not being her first language, that kind of thing – it's personal stories[88] (Webber interview, Cox 25.04.2019).

Fasil makes similar representations, presenting connectedness to community as an asset in the competitions between himself and others in the field, whom he criticises for lacking authenticity. In interviews, he criticises the majority of funded arts organisations in Southern City (and beyond) as tokenistic, suggesting that their motivations are disingenuous and that their claims to being connected to communities are fabricated for the purposes of securing funding – a common remark made among intermediaries in the funded field. In a revealing moment, Fasil acknowledged that others in the field make the very same claims to connectedness to communities as he does, before going on to describe how he, unlike others, produces change-making projects that authentically represent communities in Stoke Prior as well as Muslim communities in general – this presented as the primary difference between himself and other intermediaries in the funded arts sector (Aziz interview, Cox 02.11.2018). These representations (which appear frequently in interviews) are common because being connected to communities has attained symbolic value, and thus currency, in the linguistic market of the field. In interviews, claims to *authentic* connectedness to community and 'caring more' are pitched against competitors, often by scandalising inauthenticity and the gap between discourse and practice in the work of others:

Jessie: Westside Arts [pseudonym for a local NPO] are running this... big piece of public artwork that they're setting up, and obviously as part of it they have to tick some engagement boxes, so they've employed [local arts professional], and she called me up and said 'look, we

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[88] Jessie draws attention to the reliance on anecdotal evidence, and to how the notion of 'caring more' is pitched as a point of difference, alongside the underlying 'them' (the community) and 'us' (professional intermediaries) distinction highlighted in 1.2.8.

don't have any groups in Stoke Prior, can you link me up?' and I said to her, 'I really respect you as a person, don't take this personally but, you know how hard it is to set up these connections? You know how many years I worked for this, and how much money we have invested in this?' I'm not gonna just – in something that to me sounds like a load of bollocks, that they're just ticking a box – I'm not just gonna send this out to my networks because it's basically undermining the work that we do, and I don't think it went down very well. I mean, she was laughing, I think she understood that I was being cynical… it's protecting yourself, isn't it?… They're only doing that because the funders expect it of them.

Researcher: Do you think they are consciously bullshitting?

Jessie: Absolutely! And I know this. I know this from people I've worked with who have worked at Westside Arts. And across the range as well. I worked with someone who helped them do a marketing audit and I know for a fact that the figures were just like 'well double that because it doesn't sound good enough'. And also, the language that is being used! I also know from, like working with curators, that it is very much like, 'oh, you're Muslim so that's nice, that ticks that box' and it isn't really about anything worthwhile (Webber interview, Cox 25.04.2019).

Jessie condemns the work of a larger NPO competitor as inauthentic 'box-ticking' – as discursive practice produced *for* funding – in contrast to THERE's more caring, authentic connectedness. One can see here how language is a location of contention and competition, and that the disconnect between discursive practice and the activities of field participants is a topic of conversation, scandal and distinction. There is also (as with Fasil [above] and others) an element of territorialism when it comes to who should be seen to connect with particular communities. 'Protecting yourself' appears to take priority. In this anecdote, the groups in question were, presumably, denied the opportunity to decide for themselves whether the proposed project would be of value to them, and so, paradoxically, the battle for connectedness to community is a battle for the control of territory and discourse that leaves out those who are symbolically commodified from the very discourse of their engagement – reduced to discursive objects in the linguistic market of a field from which they are excluded (described in 1.2 and 1.3).

Here, again, I want to register some nuance. In such a competitive and hierarchical environment, perhaps defensive strategies such as those Jessie describes are unavoidable for participants seeking to make meaningful connections with marginalised communities and to subvert the perceived

tokenistic 'box-ticking' of larger, less caring organisations. There is a sense in Jessie's statements that she is, to some extent, protecting potential audiences/participants from the worst appropriating excesses of the field – and 'rejecting the exclusivity often found in the visual arts sector' (THERE, 2021). Either way, connectedness to community is clearly a symbolic asset and a location of discursive skirmishes.

Fasil expresses the value of his work in very similar terms, highlighting his access to, and familiarity with, the area's Bangladeshi community as a point of difference and value. He described, in strikingly negative terms, a particular project that involved him working together with larger NPOs in Southern City. The ACE-funded project was organised to connect with the city's Bangladeshi and Pakistani communities, but, according to Fasil, none of the partner NPOs were representative of, or experienced in working with, these groups. He asserted that he, as the person most connected to that community, was crucial to the project but that the larger NPO partners had not acknowledged or valued his contributions (Aziz interview, Cox 15.10.2019).

Fasil's statements, which centred around his value as a Muslim artist of Bangladeshi heritage, revealed the complexity and contradictions of, and the limits set on, his participation in the discursive practice of socially engaged arts. The problematisation of funding inequality places him, *in his singularity*, as an artist of Bangladeshi heritage (and therefore outside the normative white, middle-class demographic of the field), in the crosshairs of the sector's symbolic market, compelling him to assert his connectedness to specifically Bangladeshi Muslim communities. However, due to his being lower in the institutional hierarchy, Fasil also described having little influence, agency or value when it came to this large funding initiative, ostensibly directed towards engaging the very communities he is compelled to represent. As a Muslim artist working in this context, his agency appears to be limited to what his ethnicity and faith symbolise within the field (in relation to the problematisation of inequality and policy attachment), rather than based on what he does with his work or his potential to work within a broader range of social contexts.

1.4.7 Identity, difference and the burden of representation

Interviewees often described ethnicity, faith, gender and/or other personal characteristics as being drawn into the discursive battles for funding, foisted upon them by the problematisation of inequality in the field. For Fasil, identifying *himself* as (specifically) a *Muslim artist* imposes certain limitations. In interviews, he described a sense of being marginalised and/or pigeonholed, a sentiment that was strong among minority artists/intermediaries participating in the funded field, highlighting some

troubling aspects of the logic that produces socially engaged arts. The problematisation of inequality and policy attachment creates symbolic value and competition around connectedness to communities, which often implicitly means diversity. This is experienced by members of minority groups as, in Kobena Mercer's words, 'a political economy of racial representation where the part stands in for the whole, [and] the visibility of a few token black public figures serves to legitimate, and reproduce, the invisibility, and lack of access to public discourse, of the community as a whole' (Mercer, 1994, p. 240). Fasil's account certainly followed this course, revealing how the problematisation of inequality produces a limited and limiting range of discursive representations/possibilities that impose 'the burden of representation' (Mercer, 1994) upon him – not just as an artist, but as 'the Muslim' artist (Aziz interview, Cox, 02.11.2018). And, because of Fasil's necessity to assert his 'difference from other producers' (Bourdieu, 1993), he is inevitably perceived as, or expected to be, representative of others. Mercer writes:

> Such expectations would not arise in a situation where such events could be taken for granted and normalized. But because they are not—because our access to spaces is rationed by the effects of racism—each event has to carry the burden of being representative (Mercer, 1994, p. 236).

Not only does this mean that Fasil's ethnicity is drawn into the symbolic market as, potentially, an asset (determined by the problematisation of inequality in the sector, and so in this sense, a burden and limitation), but his value as an intermediary is shifted to what *he can represent*, rather than what he does, placing further limitations on what he is expected to do. For Fasil, like others interviewed, marshalling aspects of identity (e.g. ethnicity, faith, sexuality) is made a pragmatic necessity – an uncomfortable and invasive requirement necessitated by the problematisation of inequality and policy attachment that structures the logic of socially engaged arts as discursive practice in the field. For the intermediaries interviewed in this research, whether they encounter the inequalities described by Fasil or not, success depends on their ability to *represent* 'connectedness to community' as a symbolic guarantee for their socially engaged practice. This takes place on the plane of discourse, particularly in funding bureaucracy, through which 'agreement between objective structures and embodied structures' is organised (Bourdieu, 1994, p. 14) (as described in 1.2.6).

1.4.8 The economic case

It is striking how often *value for money* was expressed when intermediaries described their socially engaged work. Despite not being asked this question, interviewees repeatedly presented the

economic case for their work, often alongside the perceived challenges faced by smaller, less powerful operators in the field:

> The [ACE] panel reads the application and even if the application is 99% perfect… it's a risky organisation because we've only got… less than 10% match funding in place, which obviously, as an NPO you're never gonna be in that position… It's unfair because it felt to me like TAC is always going to get NPO funding… and that's the thing that's unfair, because we have to, you know, we have to rip our butts open to get 5k out of the Arts Council and what we deliver for those 5k is so much more, what you get for it you can't compare to what TAC does with their money (Webber interview, Cox 24.01.2019).

Value for money was often presented as a location of competition, and an important outcome of socially engaged work – more frequently, in fact, than outcomes including health improvement, diversity, skills development, audience feedback, participant numbers, reduced crime rates and further education. Fasil, for example, routinely introduced the economic case for his work, describing his value, and the value of what he does, in terms of *value for money in relation to other actors and NPOs in the field*, claiming that, for the money he receives, he produces five times more than any other organisation. However, what he produces five times more of was not specified but was, rather, ambiguously related to connectedness to community in statements made in response to questions about equality in the arts sector (N.B. specific questions about value for money were not introduced by the researcher).

In any occupation, one would expect cost and remuneration to be a concern. However, more often than not, money was discussed as *value for money in comparison with others in the field,* and in relation to issues of inequality and social benefit, revealing vividly the underlying logic that structures socially engaged work as discursive practice in the funded arts. The extracts above exemplify how consistent and deeply embedded concerns received through policy attachment and funding bureaucracy infuse with the way in which intermediaries think about their artistic work to produce particular discursive practices that are, as Bourdieu theorised, to a considerable extent underwritten by economic interests.

1.4.9 Strategy, exaggeration, censorship

As can be seen throughout the discussion so far, there is a strategic approach to the production of socially engaged art as a discursive practice in the funded field. This strategy is directed by the

problematisation of inequality and policy attachment, which structures the linguistic market and the discursive competition over connectedness to community and value for money. Interviewees often critiqued others for *strategically overstating* claims to social benefit/equality (see examples above) but also, occasionally, highlighted how they *themselves* overstate the nature of their work. In one interview, Fasil described feeling that he may have misled others about the scale of his work, and how, in the funded sector, this is a strategic necessity, before restating the economic claim that he delivers five times more than others. Fasil describes producing *discourse* that strategically presents DUA as a larger organisation than it is, acknowledging a disconnect between what is discursively implied by DUA and what it is in actuality.

The bureaucratic entity created for the purpose of receiving funding (described above in 1.4.2) (DUA, THERE) assists this overstatement by *implying* an organisation rather than an individual when, as Fasil explained, much of the time what is being funded is a single individual (Aziz interview, Cox 15.10.2019). The company name allows 'we' and 'I' to be used interchangeably in a way that is suggestive of something collective, diffusing potential questions that might accompany the funding of individuals (see below). A survey of the interview data shows that it is often difficult to ascertain whether/when the interviewee is referring to themselves individually or to a group implied by 'THERE' or 'DUA'. Fasil goes on to reveal the salience of discursive competence, describing how he has commissioned a professional bid-writer to apply for funding on his behalf – a common strategy whereby specialists are employed to produce the requisite discourse for funding bureaucracy, referred to by Jessie as 'the know-how' (Webber interview, Cox 25.04.2019). The existence of professional bid-writers in itself highlights the specialised and restricted nature of the linguistic market and the discursive practices of the funded arts field. For Jessie, discursive strategy also requires self-censorship, imposed by the perceived hierarchies of power operating within the funded field:

> It's difficult. I'm torn between shouting about what's been happening and not doing that because you also don't really want to piss people off to the point where you're never going to get funding again, because you're sort of on the blacklist... It's all politics. Obviously, you have to be playing your cards right (Webber interview, Cox 25.04.2019).

Within official discourses of the field (funding applications etc), Jessie does not want to compromise her position by being honest about how she feels regarding the perceived unfairness and contradictions of funding decisions. While there is no official 'blacklist', Jessie believes there would be negative consequences if she aired certain grievances, suggesting that self-censorship is a strategic

necessity in deference to institutional hierarchies. This is, indeed, why Fasil requested in the final stages of this research project that his interview data be redacted. The key point, made clear by responses from these interviewees, is that discursive strategy (the effort to reflect the best version of prescribed discursive representations) is consuming, and the pressure to compete (to produce a winning discourse) can lead to exaggeration, self-censorship and, thus, a disconnect between how things are, how they are to be said, and how they are said to be.

1.4.10 Social capital, not cultural ecology

In the previous chapter I described how the 'ecology metaphor' acts as a discursive device that enables funders and institutions to negate inequality and failure while exaggerating secondary benefits that are far from certain (1.3.6). Analysis explored the disconnect between ecology rhetoric and what has been observed by critical research, which is that celebrated trickledown benefits often fail to trickle beyond the privileged few in positions within NPOs. Interviewees in this research feel they have benefited little from ACE's cultural ecology. Crucially, Jessie describes producing a discourse that confirms the ecology rhetoric, while in practice feeling let down by ACE and larger NPOs which, in her view, sponge up rather than distribute opportunity:

> We know that that doesn't happen... it's none of the big organisations. Not as far as I'm aware. Like I say, I don't understand all the politics because I'm also not sure I want to because it grosses me out really... It makes me really angry, so I try not to find out too much. I always do. You know I try not to dig in too deeply – it's just upsetting... I can't think of any organisations that really help us you know. I think they might help when we do a funding bid, and it says '[anonymised NPO] are mentoring us', but actually they haven't mentored us. It just sounds nice when I do a bid (Webber interview, Cox 25.04.2019).

Jessie candidly reveals how, in the official discourses of the funded field, NPOs *must* be confirmed as supporting her work, even though (as was the case for many interviewees) this has not been the case. What interviewees describe as enabling them is precisely what the ecology metaphor, as well as Putnam's bridging and bonding social capital (often adopted in funded discourses [1.2.5]) obscures – the organising work of Bourdieu's social capital. Interviewees routinely describe how their work is supported by strategic *social* relationships. Jessie and Fasil both operate within the tightly interconnected funded arts world in Southern City. They frequently refer to particular friendships that solicit opportunity and influence. The suggestion that THERE's 2018 exhibition at TAC could be seen as an example of the cultural ecology in action (in the way proposed in funding literature) is firmly

rejected by Jessie, who says that this opportunity was made possible only through personal connections:

> Jessie: [That happened] only because I know [curator at TAC] and because when I emailed, she read it, and said yes.

> Researcher: Would you have got it if you didn't have that personal connection?

> Jessie: I don't think I would have had the show, no. No way. I can't see it.

> Researcher: Isn't that a form of nepotism?

> Jessie: Well yeah, those are really uncomfortable conversations, but you know, I think there is nepotism everywhere, at every level (Webber interview, Cox 25.04.2019).

Fasil similarly highlights, throughout the interviews, the importance of his personal social connections. He describes a large network of informal enablers who have supported his work and he disagrees with the notion that funding operates in the way that the ecological metaphor implies. He navigates the difficult issue of social capital by describing his friendship with an influential figure at ACE (anonymised) as advantageous, but not unfair, while, at the same time, claiming that he has been unfairly punished because of this personal friendship. Fasil, when requesting that his interview data be redacted, intimated that revealing such relationships could be damaging to his reputation, highlighting the extent to which official discourses must be protected, and must not reveal certain realities that can advantage/disadvantage actors in the field. Whatever the case, for better or worse, Fasil senses that his personal relationships have influenced funding outcomes. Again, there is nuance to be recognised. Bourdieu's rendering of social capital can imply that friendships are only strategic matters, and therefore can be understood only in terms of capital accumulation (a problem that will be addressed in Part Two). Such a view can overlook how friendships can exist beyond capital and transcend use value, particularly when there is an alignment of lived experiences. The friendships Fasil describes may well be genuinely felt, rather than being a consciously pursued strategy for advantage. However, it is also made clear by interviewees, concurring with Bourdieu's theorising (1.1.5) and research highlighted in 1.2.2, that these personal relationships influence advantage/disadvantage in the funded field, a reality sanitised by the naturalistic, benevolent discourse of the cultural ecology,

which negates the realpolitik of social capital in the funded sector[89]. If, as Jessie puts it, a 'strong application' – which is to say discourse – involves affirming the ecological rhetoric by discursively demonstrating support from NPOs, then having friends inside these organisations would certainly help. Thus, strategic management of social capital is vital, while for obvious reasons it is omitted from the official discourse of the field – another significant point of departure between discourse and practice in the funded field[90].

1.4.11 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have sought to demonstrate how the problematisation of inequality and policy attachment (consolidated by funding bureaucracy [1.3]) structures the linguistic market of the field, and how, in response to this, independent intermediaries describe and evaluate their socially engaged work – i.e. claims to being *authentically connected to communities* and expressing *economic* value when it comes to the work's *social* benefits. These discursive representations are entered into competition in efforts to attain symbolic profits, even in conversations outside the framework of funding bureaucracy, suggesting an institutional habitus to be observed among ostensibly independent agents. When it comes to socially engaged arts in the funded field, Bourdieu's analytical approach to language and power reveals how the discursive practice of socially engaged art is a competitive arena for the acquisition of symbolic capital, power and, ultimately, economic capital, arbitrated by the problematisation of inequality and policy attachment. The exigencies of competition and 'negotiation of artistic independence' (Warren and Jones, 2015, p. 1748) produce socially engaged art as a discursive practice, predisposed to being disconnected from purported objectives and outcomes.

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[89] This is also assisted by the discursive interchangeability of an organisation and an individual, as described previously.

[90] I.e. not an arrangement between Jessie and a friend, but a collaboration between THERE and TAC

Part Two

Introduction

In Part One, working with Bourdieu, I have outlined how socially engaged arts is constructed and mobilised as discursive practice in the funded field. Analysis has highlighted how funding bureaucracy shapes schemes of perception and inculcates an institutional habitus within the funded sector. Attention to the problematisation of inequality, policy attachment, the operations of distinction through ambiguity, and the restricted nature of the linguistic market, reveals that, in the funded sector, socially engaged arts exists primarily as a discursive practice that shores up hierarchies of cultural value and social inequality. These structural conditions make it difficult for socially engaged practices in the funded field to actualise equality when it comes to funding distribution. Bourdieu's theorising was well attuned to this analysis, focusing as it does on the competitive world of arts funding, in which artists/intermediaries jostle for position, recognition and, ultimately, financial security by adopting and operationalising prescribed discursive representations as the basis of their socially engaged work.

Here, in Part Two, analysis turns to unfunded *amateur socially engaged arts* – a seldom described form of artistic practice that exists *outside* the restricted funded field[91]. In undertaking this research, I identified arts activities that are altruistically directed to the benefit of others – social benefit – but develop from an entirely different system of value to the discursive practices encountered in the funded arts field described in Part One. In fact, the intermediaries who organise these activities do not really describe their work as socially engaged at all (community arts, participatory arts); are entirely detached from policy pressure; do not organise themselves by competition; and, while not unaffected by questions of inequality, address it in very different ways. These amateur socially engaged arts activities have received little attention from either academic research or cultural policy and, as will be seen, manifest very differently to the discursive practice that characterises socially engaged arts in the funded field.

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[91] N.B. As described in the introduction and *Methodology and Research Design*, a number of terms are commonly used to describe unfunded, non-commercial arts activities: voluntary, amateur, everyday, homemade, grassroots, unfunded, vernacular etc. While these terms carry certain connotations, this thesis, for clarity, uses the term 'amateur', consistent with the majority of literature on the topic.

Part Two focuses on research questions 3 and 4:

3. Can amateur arts be understood as 'socially engaged' and, if so, how do amateur socially engaged arts practices organise and sustain themselves?
4. What does amateur socially engaged work tell us about the relationship between cultural policy, funded institutions and amateur participation?

In answering these questions, analysis will work *against* Bourdieu, locating the limits of his theoretical scheme and advancing an alternative approach to understanding cultural work that moves beyond the problems of economic determinism that limit Bourdieu's analysis to formalised competitive fields. The thesis proposes, instead, an approach combining Dewey's 'Art as Experience' (Dewey, 1958) with ideas developed in contemporary kinship studies, to reveal the importance of family and friendship in structuring amateur socially engaged arts practices. In so doing, the chapters that follow shed light on under-researched modes of cultural production, critique Bourdieu's approach and identify alternative ways of thinking about amateur arts, the social benefits of the arts more generally, and cultural value.

2.1 Amateur socially engaged art: an unseen practice

2.1.1 Introduction

In this chapter I present an overview of the current state of knowledge regarding amateur participation and socially engaged arts in unfunded contexts. The purpose is to set the scene for the chapters that follow, enabling analysis to recognise, critically evaluate and move beyond the limitations of Bourdieu's theorising (which was nevertheless very useful in Part One) and to challenge common assumptions that have rendered amateur socially engaged arts elusive to analysis. The chapter begins with an overview of Bourdieu's theorising of amateur participation (2.1.2), before working through contemporary analysis of such participation – analysis that often defers to Bourdieu. The discussion notes that amateur arts is relatively under researched (1.1.3), before exploring the key studies of amateur participation in the UK (2.1.4) and its commonly understood motivations (2.1.5, 2.1.6, 2.1.7). Towards the end of the chapter, the discussion turns to the devalued, marginalised status of amateur arts (2.1.8) and to how the assumptions contained within common theorising contribute to this, obscuring amateur arts' social benefit and function and the motivations that drive the activities examined in the following chapters (2.1.9).

2.1.2 Bourdieu and the amateur

Bourdieu's influential theorising, including his less commonly deployed thinking on language and discourse, was effective in Part One, revealing the construction of socially engaged art as a discursive practice, organised by the competition for economic capital in the funded field. But what happens when economic capital and social status are not part of the equation? As Bourdieu is a central protagonist in theories of cultural production and consumption (and thus also in Part One of this thesis), consideration should be given to his theorising of amateur participation as a gateway to the discussion that follows – ideas that have often found their way into the relatively small number of studies to have addressed amateur arts in the UK (i.e. Hennion, 2007; Crossick and Kaszynska, 2016; Stevenson, 2016; Walcon and Nicholson, 2017).

In studies that (directly or indirectly) apply Bourdieu's thinking to amateurism, his version of social capital is often difficult to reconcile with the work of amateur groups, and so is often replaced by Putnam's bridging/bonding capital (described in 1.1.5) and/or Robert Stebbins' conceptualisation of 'serious leisure', which will be described shortly (2.1.7). It is often argued that Bourdieu's theorising is insufficient when it comes to amateur activity and that he overlooked the specificities of amateur participation in his influential works on taste and cultural production (Hennion, 2007; Bennett et al.,

2009; Ramsden et al., 2011; Nicholson, 2015). Antoine Hennion argues that Bourdieu adopted a 'totally passive view of the amateur' (Hennion, 2007, p. 2) to produce an analysis in which,

> [a]t worst, the amateur is a 'cultural dope' who is wrong about the nature of what she/he does; at best, she/he is the passive subject of an attachment, the real determinants of which are unknown to her/him and, despite her/his resistance, are revealed in cold statistics. Her/his relationship with culture or the objects of her/his passion is the subject of a purely negative analysis – which shows that this attachment is not what it believes itself to be. From Bourdieu's and his followers' point of view tastes are radically unproductive: the objects are simply random signs, the subjects are merely reproducing the hierarchy of social positions. Taste is culture's way of masking domination (ibid).

I think this critique is itself reductive, but nevertheless valid, as will be seen, when it comes to activities that are not underwritten by economic capital or governed by institutions dominated by particular social groups, as in the funded arts sector. While it is true that Bourdieu paid scant attention to amateur participation in his most influential works, he drew significant inspiration from his early wide-ranging study of amateur photography. *Photography, a Middle-brow Art* (1990a) argued that different social groups engage with photography in class-determined, socially stratified ways[92]. In its common, everyday use among peasants and the working and middle classes, photography performs the practical function of documentation:

> While seeming to evoke the past, photography actually exorcizes it by recalling it as such, it fulfils the normalising function that society confers upon funeral rites, namely, at once recalling the memory of the departed and the memory of their passing, recalling that they lived, that they are dead and buried and that they continue on in the living… Unable to free itself from the functions to which it owes its existence, it cannot create its own goals and fulfil the specific intentions of an autonomous aesthetic (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 31).

This captures Bourdieu's positioning of everyday amateur participation. Relevant to the analysis that follows is that, in his study of amateur photography, he is constantly confronted with matters of kinship, i.e. family life, funerals, weddings, holidays and family events. For Bourdieu, this represents the aesthetic limits of everyday photography, which he argues follows a strict set of rules that regulate

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[92] This study presented a template for his later theorising in *Distinction* (Bourdieu, 1996b), *The Rules of Art* (Bourdieu, 1995b) and *The Field of Cultural Production* (Bourdieu, 1993), which include some of his most widely adopted concepts.

what can be photographed, how it can be photographed and who its audience should be[93]. Bourdieu calls this 'the popular aesthetic' (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 80) – the recording and representation of family and friends symbolically organised in settings that solicit high 'symbolic yield' (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 36) (i.e. the family in their finery organised in front of a church at a wedding, an historic monument, or a dramatic landscape on holiday). The popular aesthetic is governed and limited by this 'family function' (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 35) and, therefore, according to Bourdieu, unable to solicit aesthetic value – cultural capital – beyond the specific meaning it has within the family framework:

> [T]he most widespread photographic practice is as it is and only thus because of the social function vested in it… the social function that allows it to exist also defines the limits of its existence, and means that it cannot be superseded by another more intense and demanding type of practice (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 32).

Bourdieu's 'popular aesthetic' is folded into his theory of aesthetic taste as class-based distinction. He argues that peasants and the working and lower-middle classes actively reject 'artistic photography' because it is too ambiguous to solicit the requisite meanings determined by the family function. In short, without the specialist competencies required to decode artistic photography, they simply do not get it. Bourdieu underscores this by describing (at length) the dispossessed and dispossessing (1.2.8) attitudes of peasants towards artistic photographs – attitudes that are class-determined and decidedly hostile. Peasants and lower socio-economic groups, according to Bourdieu, are bound to the family function and perceive artistic photography as the meaningless timewasting of privileged city dwellers (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 50). For peasants and the working class, by and large, photographs that do not conform to the popular aesthetic become objects of derision, serving to confirm their own class position by rejecting the aesthetic diversions of others. In this way, they unconsciously comply with their own subjugation in a system where aesthetic taste reproduces class distinction. Bourdieu provides little room for manoeuvre here, in what seems to be a totalising view of aesthetic experience among lower-class factions. If working-class people engage with photography beyond the family function, it is with photography that conforms to antiquated classical themes (i.e. landscapes and babbling brooks) – the closest they get to the aesthetic games that constitute the rules of art (Bourdieu, 1995b).

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[93] It will be seen that kinship is itself experienced aesthetically in, and structures, amateur socially engaged artistic practices, something Bourdieu's analysis fails to grasp.

Bourdieu's treatment of the amateur camera club (which, in Bourdieu's canon is the nearest equivalent to the groups examined in the following chapters) abandons the family function in favour of the exchange value of symbolic and cultural capital among the lower-middle classes. The aesthetic choices made by amateur photographers are subconscious efforts to establish a status equal to that of the contemporary (ergo higher-status) artist. Bourdieu asserts that members of amateur camera clubs actively 'break the ties that bound photography to the family institution' (Castel and Schnapper, 1990, in Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 103) in an effort to achieve an autonomous, consecrated practice that resembles the aesthetic schematics of the fine arts, and to solicit the cultural capital of the privileged classes. In other words, while the popular aesthetic (everyday photography) is determined by its family function, amateur photography is determined by the rejection of this, in an effort to accrue ascending cultural capital. As such, whether consciously or not, the amateur adheres not to their own aesthetic experience (Dewey, 1958)[94] but to a set of socially determined, pre-reflexive rules appropriated from the 'noble aesthetic' of the consecrated arts (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 146):

> [T]hey ignore the question of creative freedom and technical experimentation in order to defend aesthetic correctness… they have achieved their aims when they are able to recognise, in the natural world, the prestigious themes of a scholarly tradition which they thus attempt to appropriate (Bourdieu, 1990a, pp. 145–146).

For Bourdieu, amateur participation is motivated (usually unconsciously and misrecognisedly) by up-classing, in a kind of trickle-down economy of symbolic cultural capital. The aim is social ascent, which necessarily jettisons the popular aesthetic, along with its family function, in order to appropriate capital from the fine arts in the hope that its social status might rub off (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 165). Bourdieu goes so far as to specify that amateur photographers are 'deviants' from their native social class, usually lone single men who participate strategically so that they might ascend:

> Individuals who take it upon themselves to treat photography as an artistic activity can only be a minority of 'deviants', defined socially by their greater independence from the conditions that determine the practice of the majority, not only in its existence but also in its objects, its occasions and its 'aesthetic' and by a particular relationship to scholarly culture linked to their position in social structure. The very reasons that turn the privileged classes away from photography may in fact incline certain members of the middle classes to seek in it a

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[94] Aesthetic experience will be an important concept for the analysis that follows. It will be described in detail in 2.4. For now, briefly, I am referring to the way in which individuals experience life aesthetically (including but not limited to art), an idea entirely invisible to Bourdieu's analysis.

substitute within their reach of the consecrated practices that remain inaccessible to them (Bourdieu, 1990a, pp. 145–146).

What draws people to amateur photography, Bourdieu argues, is its *social ambiguity*. Owing to the availability of photographic technology, the range of photographic professions (e.g. local wedding photographer, lab technician, artist) and the subsequent range of social statuses conferred upon these, the camera club provides an ambiguous space for the amateur to 'exploit this proliferation of different statuses, using it as social "camouflage"… [which] assures those who engage in it, if not of up-classing, then at least of the hope and promise of up-classing' (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 161) and the opportunity to 'rub shoulders with the artistic milieux' (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 165). Amateurs participate because 'the practice of photography as an amateur constitutes the only means of raising a status which is always low at the moment of entry… and which has every chance of remaining so' (Bourdieu, 1990a, p. 168).

In contrast, the privileged classes are indifferent to amateur photography. They take family photos (adhering to the constraints of the popular aesthetic) and sometimes participate in artistic photography, but are less invested in the game of 'up-classing' because they already occupy dominant social positions and possess the cultural capital afforded to recipients of elite education, engagement with the fine arts and so on. As such, artistic photographers from privileged backgrounds tend to bypass the camera club, fast-tracked into high-status professional photographic work:

> [T]he family fortune is not restricted to the communication of capital. One also inherits one's family connections and its reputation, which in its turn creates connections. The extent of this network of family connections and the distinction of those connections act as a protective milieu, firstly because it enables one to find work more easily and, from the moment of entry into the profession, to practice the most prestigious specialisations, but even more so because the acquaintances communicated by one's family or acquired through one's family function as a springboard into high society and into society photography (Bourdieu, 1990a, pp. 165–166)[95].

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[95] While Bourdieu was describing 1960s French society, these observations match the social stratification of employment in the funded sector discussed in 1.2.5. Owing to favourable endowments of economic, social and cultural capital, the privileged and middle classes are predisposed to the funded field. It is notable that unpaid work in the funded field is never described as 'amateur', concurring with Bourdieu's notion that privileged artists circumvent the world of amateur participation, whether they are paid or not.

For this reason, working-class and lower-middle-class amateurs are doomed to fail in their effort to 'up-class', because the underlying forces of economic capital and the 'protective milieu' (objectified social capital) ensure that only those from privileged backgrounds have any realistic possibility of becoming professional photographic artists. In sum, within Bourdieu's system of thought, what motivates amateur participation is social ascent. In a decidedly reductive analysis, amateurs reject the popular aesthetic and family function to mimic the fine arts in an effort to up-class. Aesthetic choices are organised around this and this alone. It will be seen in the chapters that follow that this is not the case for participants in this research, for whom kinship, which Bourdieu tethers to the limitations of the popular aesthetic, is experienced aesthetically to structure complex socially engaged artistic practices that have little to do with social ascent.

Here, then, we encounter the limitations of Bourdieu's scheme, which, while effective in the funded field (where art and economics are intrinsically bound by funding procedures), imposes the logic of economism on practices that, as will be seen, cannot be understood in this way. When it comes to amateur socially engaged art, experiential aesthetic concerns – that have little to do with social class – become increasingly important in the motivations and actions of participants and intermediaries. As Georgina Born notes:

> Bourdieu insistently refuses to address the object and its aesthetic properties and to allow them to play a part in the unfolding analysis… the effect is to subsume the formative role of aesthetic traditions and particular art objects within an account of competitive conflictual relations between actors. In this way any concern with the substantive meaning and power of particular aesthetic formations is evacuated in favour of a synchronic focus on the agonistics of position-taking (Born, 2010, p. 178).

For Bourdieu, if amateurs *feel* they are accessing a meaningful aesthetic experience, it is because they *misrecognise* the true nature of aesthetic taste as distinction. As such, the sole function of the amateur club is reduced to providing a forum for the enterprise of up-classing. The aesthetic and sociable nature of amateur groups – for Bourdieu, a working/lower-middle class activity – is defined by its relationship to the inequalities of social hierarchisation, and denied any specificity beyond this:

> Bourdieu is ambiguous about the extent to which the popular aesthetic… should be understood primarily in terms of a class-determined lack (of education, knowledge of aesthetic codes and so on), or whether, given these inequalities, it should be grasped as

equally embodying distinctive types of knowledge and practices of distinction as the bourgeois aesthetic – that is, should be granted its own positivity (Born, 2010, p. 177).

A key point noted by Holdsworth et al. is that 'Bourdieu's grand structure for the rules of art locates non-professional practice as outside the field of cultural production (i.e. any of its subfields) altogether' (2017, p. 6). As can be seen above, Bourdieu also implicitly asserts that amateur participation is motivated by the desire to solicit respectability *within* the professional field. In Bourdieu's analysis, it is therefore unclear whether amateurs have any impact or role within professionalised fields or, indeed, whether they can be considered as carrying out activities belonging to any discernible field at all. As Lahire notes:

> Field theory devotes much energy to shedding light on the big scenes where stakes of power are played for, but little to understanding those who build the stages, assemble the scenery, clean the theatre, photocopy documents or type letters, etc. Ultimately a great majority of the actors in our societies are left off-field by an analysis in terms of field that privileges study of the 'major competitors' – in whichever type of domain the competition takes place – and their specific stakes (Lahire, 2015, p. 74).

Unlike in the funded field, economic gain is not a prominent motivation for most amateur participants, and so the system of conversion, in which social and cultural capital are underwritten by economic capital, is undermined. The role of economic capital (via policy attachment and advocacy) in structuring socially engaged arts *as discursive practice* has no equivalence in altruistic amateur socially engaged activities that cannot be explained by 'the brutal fact of universal reducibility to economics' (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 24).

2.1.3 The absence of amateur participation in contemporary research

Despite its tendency towards economic determinism, Bourdieu's account of amateur photography is in step with (and often used in) the majority analysis that addresses amateur participation in contemporary UK contexts. Contemporary analysis (see Stebbins, 2006; Pérez, 2008; Nicholson, 2015; Holdsworth et al., 2017; Walcon and Nicholson, 2017) almost always describes amateur participation as being motivated by a desire to replicate the aesthetic standards of professionalised cultural production, and to acquire social capital – although this is usually understood using Putnam's more communitarian bridging and bonding social capital (see 1.1.5).

Studies of amateur participation usually begin by noting a lack of research[96]. This is attributed to the exclusion of amateur participation from cultural policy and sector evaluations, which, by compelling funded institutions to demonstrate social benefit as a condition of funding, privileges professionalised practice and so 'participation in amateur creative processes [is] not included in their rubrics of participation' (Holdsworth et al., 2017, p. 6). However, as described in 1.3.6, policymakers have not been unconcerned with amateur participation, particularly when it provides compelling data for sector advocacy (Matarasso, 1997; 2012) and potential solutions to the challenges of austerity (Knell and Taylor, 2011). The most comprehensive effort to address the lack of research was undertaken by DCMS in 2008. *Our Creative Talent* (OCT) (Dodd et al., 2008) identified 49,140 amateur arts groups, with 5.9 million members and an additional 3.5 million helpers – a total of 9.4 million participants. These groups held 710,000 performances/exhibitions per year, attracting 159 million attendees and generating an estimated income of £543 million (Dodd et al., 2008, p. 10). The report suggested that these figures were conservative, owing to a methodology that asked groups to self-select:

> Given the close relationship that many voluntary and amateur groups have with other group activities such as faith groups, community groups and so on, it is likely that many may classify their group according to associated group activity as opposed to the art group. This is particularly likely for minority faith groups (Dodd et al., 2008, p. 15)[97].

Another notable study, *The Role of Grassroots Arts Activities in Communities: A scoping study* (Ramsden et al., 2011) aimed to identify the state of knowledge regarding small, unfunded community arts groups (Ramsden et al., 2011, p. 2) by collating disparate, loosely connected research. Its primary finding, inevitably, was that there is a 'lack of research into the contribution grassroots or amateur arts organisations make in communities', with the authors noting that policy 'has paid scant attention to a sector which is diverse in scope, rich in passion and talent, and vast in… knowledge and skills' (Ramsden et al., 2011, p. 6). The study concluded that amateur activities 'tend to be visible predominantly to their members and participants' and marginalised by policy and academic research (Ramsden et al., 2011, p. 48):

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[96] This includes an absence of empirical data and a neglect of qualitative understanding, attributed to a lack of interest on the part of cultural and academic institutions. This itself is described in terms of problematic hierarchies of cultural value (see Dodd et al., 2008; Ramsden et al., 2011; Holden, 2015b; Nicholson, 2015; 2017).

[97] The statistical data in *Our Creative Talent* was supplemented with 145 telephone interviews, providing a body of qualitative material to inform the statistical findings. Because the study sought to attain an overview of a vast and undocumented field, topics were addressed in brief, broad strokes.

Amateur arts activity is unregarded, unstudied and poorly represented, largely because its artistic content is perceived to be weak and its politics retrogressive and exclusionary. Such arts activity is visible as community activity, but invisible in the arts literature (Ramsden et al., 2011, p. 8)[98].

Despite efforts to redress the balance (notable studies include Billington et al. [2011], Nicholson [2015; 2017] and Holdsworth et al. [2017]), the overall body of research remains small, and lacking in scope and diversity.

2.1.4 Not about money

As well as a notable lack of research, there is no stable, consistent definition[99] of what amateur arts (or related terms such as grassroots and community) actually refers to. However, the most consistent and salient feature of amateur/grassroots arts is that it is 'not about the money' (Powell, P. interview, Cox 21.09.2019). People volunteer in activities 'governed or organised by those also participating… which members attend for reasons such as self-improvement, social networking or leisure, but primarily not for payment' (Dodd et al., 2008, p. 12).

Some complexity should be acknowledged here. It is often noted that while economic capital is not a primary motivator, it does determine who participates. Participation requires time and money (weekly subs, equipment etc) and so, as Bourdieu's theorising might suppose, many amateur activities tend to be dominated by people from middle-class backgrounds (Dodd et al., 2008; Ramsden et al., 2011; Storey, 2017) – although some have argued that 'the impression of amateur theatre as a largely middle-class pursuit is over-exaggerated' (Holdsworth et al., 2017, p. 11). Research also finds that many amateur groups incur considerable overheads (venue costs, sets, equipment) that are met through ticket sales, donations and fundraising. Volunteers often manage large budgets and organisational structures that require levels of expertise every bit as refined as those of their equivalents in funded or commercial sectors (Matarasso, 1997; Dodd et al., 2008; Holdsworth et al., 2017). Furthermore, while participants and organisers volunteer, amateur groups often employ professionals (accompanists, directors, choreographers, technical staff, performers etc) and hire specialist venues, contributing to the financial sustainability of professional sectors and blurring the economic distinction between these worlds (Matarasso, 1997, 2012; Stebbins, 2006; Holden, 2015)[100].

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[98] The 'weak… retrogressive and exclusionary' perception of amateur participation will be addressed in 2.1.8.
[99] Often studies do not specify what they take to be the parameters of 'amateur', 'grassroots' or 'voluntary'.
[100] The distinction is, in fact, very blurry – research into funded/commercial employment frequently reveals that (as described in 1.2.2) 'professional' work is often unpaid as:

While the differentiation between professional and amateur remains primarily economic, analysis should treat the paid/unpaid distinction as two poles in a multidimensional system of motivations and contextual factors. Within this, social capital is considered to be one of the most powerful drivers of unpaid amateur participation.

2.1.5 Social capital

Studies exploring the drivers and forces that structure amateur participation tend to adopt Putnam's bonding and bridging social capital to describe how making friends and expanding social networks motivates many to get involved (Dodd et al., 2008, p. 23). As described in 1.1.5 and 1.3.4, Putnam's social capital appears regularly in both funded sector literature and studies of amateur participation to describe relationships that appear less mercenary than Bourdieu's social capital supposes. Putnam's attention to social integration has proven germane to researchers examining relationships in amateur participation that often do not correspond to Bourdieu's view that making friends is ultimately a strategy of distinction and social ascent (Walcon and Nicholson, 2017). Walcon and Nicholson for example, utilise Putnam's social capital to describe the particular sociability of amateur theatre groups, which appears less concerned with social status than with the experience of sociability itself:

> There is a reciprocity between sociability, social capital and the artistry found within the amateur theatre sector. In terms of social capital, it balances evenly between what Putnam terms 'bridging social capital' and 'bonding social capital'… The intensity of working in the theatre can create a strong 'bonding capital', particularly where there are economic imperatives to generate a profitable programme of work and maintain a theatre building. But this is often matched by social capital that is welcoming and outward-looking, a 'bridging' social capital that aims to give something back to the theatre and to the local community (Walcon and Nicholson, 2017, p. 10).

It will be seen in the following analysis that sociability and artistry interoperate in ways that are more complex that Putnam's bridging and bonding social capital allows, leading to deeper consideration of the aesthetic experience of volunteerism as a vector of socially engaged artistic work. The centrality

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a) An essential point of entry through internships (Hesmondhalgh, 2007; McRobbie, 2011; 2013)
b) An expectation to meet workloads that exceed levels of remuneration in a sector characterised by competition, precarity and low pay (Perry et al., 2015)......

.....Furthermore, 'professional' productions often include unpaid performers (e.g. the community cast in a pantomime) and professionals often work unpaid in successful commercial activities (e.g. performing at festivals or as a support act for exposure).

of Putnam's social capital in amateur arts research raises questions about how the funded sector's instrumentalised efforts (to solicit 'community cohesion' etc) relate to amateur activities – especially given the sector's disposition to function as discursive, rather than realised, practice (Part One). Which activity is most productive of social capital? What is the difference in the social impact of the social capital produced by, for example, an amateur theatre group compared with a funded initiative? These questions are difficult to appreciate when discourses in the funded field devalue and obscure amateur activities. Taking into account the analysis given in 1.3, it can be argued that, in making their case to the Treasury, it is not in the interests of funded institutions to draw attention to beneficial social capital (with any unique qualities) produced through amateur participation specifically.

2.1.6 Serious leisure and the imitation of professionalised practice

Our Creative Talent found that 75% of participants join amateur groups because of their appreciation of the artform (Dodd et al., 2008, p. 43). Many studies note feelings of fulfilment gained from the hard work undertaken to attain aesthetic standards equal to those of professional productions (see Matarasso, 1997; Dodd et al., 2008; Ramsden et al., 2011; Walcon and Nicholson, 2017). This is often understood using Robert Stebbins' conceptualisation of 'serious leisure' to account for the graft, sacrifice and conflict that amateurs undergo[101]. For Stebbins, serious leisure is 'the systematic pursuit by an amateur, hobbyist, or volunteer [of an] activity that is sufficiently substantial and interesting for the participant to find a career there in the acquisition and expression of its special skills and knowledge' (Stebbins, 2006, p. 5). An important, often overlooked, feature of Stebbins' serious leisure (see Blackshaw and Long, 2005; Matarasso, 2012; Holden, 2015; Walcon and Nicholson, 2017) is that it manifests in three forms: 'amateurism', 'hobbyist pursuits' and 'career volunteers', differentiated by the balance between *self-interest* and *altruism*:

> While amateurs and hobbyists… help on occasion… helping is only a minor goal; it is but a secondary consequence of their self-interested search for leisure with durable benefit. There may be considerable self-sacrifice… but this is done primarily for personal reasons and only secondarily for altruistic ones… volunteers reverse these values. They gain durable personal benefits from these endeavours but helping remains their chief aim. Amateurs and hobbyists struggle through the difficult requirements of their leisure because they are expected to be devotees and because hard work engenders feelings of accomplishment. When volunteers labour they do so with the conviction that they are needed and that to weaken in the face of

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[101] See Ramsden et al. (2011), Matarasso (2012a) and Holden (2015).

adversity is to let down others, disappoint them, or leave serious personal or social problems unresolved (Stebbins, 1982, p. 265).

Another difference, Stebbins suggests, is the proximity of amateurs, hobbyists and career volunteers to professional institutions. Amateurs and professionals, Stebbins suggests, are bound together in the 'Professional-Amateur-Public (P-A-P) system' (Stebbins, 1982, p. 258) in which amateurs commission professionals in training and performance, share audiences, pursue standards set by professionals, encourage professional standards by mimicry, provide training grounds for those who become professional and so on[102]. In this way, Stebbins' P-A-P system corresponds closely with Holden's 'ecology of culture' described in 1.3.6 (Holden, 2015). In contrast, volunteers are 'outsiders' who perform 'delegated work' on behalf of professional institutions. A defining feature of Stebbins' volunteers is their particular role *within* professional institutions, where they undertake

> delegated tasks… offered to them by their superiors who are employed in the organization in which the volunteers serve… This turns volunteers into 'outsiders' in work organizations or agencies otherwise composed of insiders… volunteers are neither facsimiles of professionals, as amateurs are, nor bureaucratized workers. Rather, they are a special class of helper in someone else's occupational world (Stebbins, 1982, p. 265)[103].

These distinctions are important, but they are rarely explored in research that often assumes amateur participation is explained by Stebbins' *amateurism* – organised around self-interest, the building of social networks (Putnam's social capital) and a striving towards professional standards (cultural capital). Some studies occasionally detect altruistic tones (see Walcon and Nicholson, who cite the motivation of 'giving something back' [2017]), but these are rarely (if ever) investigated in any depth. The attributes of Stebbins' 'volunteers' are largely excluded when serious leisure is evoked in studies of amateur participation (whether the term 'voluntary' is used or not). 'Helping others and contributing to resolving serious personal or social problems' (ibid) are not considered to be motivations for amateurs initiating artistic work that is self-organising and does not involve performing delegated tasks as outsiders within 'someone else's occupational world'.

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[102] According to Stebbins, hobbyists have no such relationship. They are less committed and have a more passive, distant relationship to professionals and institutions. From an institutional perspective, 'their role is that of "non-work"' (Jackson, 1993, p. 214).

[103] It should be noted that the notion that amateurs are 'facsimiles' – imitations – of professionals is a consistent insinuation in academic and policy discourse.

Although Stebbins is often deployed as an alternative to Bourdieu (see for example Matarasso, 1997; 2012; Holden, 2015; Holdsworth et al., 2017), the similarities between Bourdieu's assessment of amateur camera clubs and Stebbins' amateur form of serious leisure are notable. Both view amateur participation as an effort to achieve professional aesthetic standards (cultural capital), both view the accumulation of social capital as a primary motivation and structuring force and, importantly, both perceive aesthetic experience and social benefit as consequential. For Bourdieu, aesthetic concerns are simply misrecognised signals of social distinction; for Stebbins they are the markers of the professional standards aimed for (indistinguishable from Bourdieu in this sense). Indeed, neither has much to say about aesthetic experience at all. The two differ when it comes to the purpose and agency of the amateur. For Bourdieu, amateur participation is a strategy of social ascent and distinction, while for Stebbins it is directed towards more intrinsic ends, such as 'self-actualization, self-enrichment, re-creation or renewal of self, feelings of accomplishment, enhancement of self-image, self-expression, social interaction and belonginess (sic), and lasting physical products of the activity' (Stebbins, 1982, p. 257) – *personal rather than social benefit*.

Stebbins' focus on companionship and community sits well with Putnam's social capital (Blackshaw and Long, 2005, p. 14), but consequently fails, as Rojek (2000, cited in Blackshaw and Long, 2005, p. 14) and others argue, to account for how amateur groups function in terms of power. For example, Siisiäinen (2000) finds that amateur groups often operate in far more complex, and often exclusionary, oligarchic and bureaucratic, ways than Stebbins envisages (Blackshaw and Long, 2005, p. 14). Furthermore, the communitarian spirit of Stebbins' P-A-P system (like the 'ecology of culture') assumes benevolent, mutually beneficial relationships, ignoring the inherent imbalance of power between the professional field and amateur groups – structures that a Bordieuan analysis brings to the fore. As presented in 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3, the power to legitimate cultural value and discourse, including the official discourse and theoretical understanding of amateur participation, lies with intermediaries in the professional arts and academic fields.

2.1.7 The negative connotation of 'amateur' and its relationship to funding

Studies often highlight that amateur participants are cogent of a negative connotation associated with their activities (Ramsden et al., 2011, p. 33). Indeed, as the discussion above has demonstrated, academic literature implicitly affirms this by routinely highlighting the *aspiration* to, or *mimicry of*, professional standards, which inevitably assumes and writes upon amateurs a lower standard and

status[104]. The origin of this negative perception is often attributed (in part) to machinations of professionalised cultural fields, particularly the hierarchies of cultural value institutionalised by public funding and enshrined in cultural policy:

> [B]eing an 'amateur' is always caught up in relation to being 'not-amateur', as what is amateur, vernacular or everyday is produced in relation to the cultural value of 'not-amateur'… being an 'amateur' and the cultural practices of amateur creativity are by and large pejoratively devalued through their relation to the professional, subsidised art world and their neglect by cultural policy (Holdsworth et al., 2017, p. 6).

Research identifying the low status conferred upon 'amateur' participation is detecting, I argue, the outbound effects of the discursive practices of the funded field described in Part One. For example, Stevenson's analysis of the contradiction between discourses of abundance and non-participation (1.2.7) demonstrates how actors in the funded field *require and produce* an implicit, strategic devaluation of many cultural activities; thus, a primary function of the discursive practices of socially engaged art (in the funded field) is to inflate the cultural and social value of this field and, implicitly, devalue that of other activities, including amateur participation (see also Walcon and Nicholson, 2017; Ramsden et al., 2011; Holden, 2015; Crossick and Kaszynska, 2016; Storey, 2017; Wilson et al., 2017). In this sense, it is not uncommon for studies of amateur participation (particularly those that discuss the negative connotation implied by 'amateur') to be directed towards the funded arts, holding a mirror to the systems of distinction and social stratification that privilege the cultural interests of the dominant group who occupy that world:

> That these groups have the power to classify cultural practices under conditions that put their own tastes to the fore and in terms of their own distaste of the tastes of others, means that they ultimately subject less powerful social actors to a kind of symbolic violence, which not only legitimises the systems of meaning constructed in their own interests, but also maintains extant structures of social inequality. Understood in this light the civic communitarian value of trust as a form of social capital [Putnam/Stebbins] becomes problematic, because as Bourdieu shows us it will inevitably be exploited for gain, in the practice of symbolic power (including symbolic violence) and symbolic exchange (Blackshaw and Long, 2005, p. 18).

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[104] I have not encountered a single study that acknowledges how professionals also aspire to professional standards – and frequently fail in that effort.

Studies of amateur participation that highlight structures of inequality within the funded field (a valid discussion to which Part One of this thesis hopes to contribute) often overlook or render invisible/insignificant the nature and specificities of amateur participation, for the sake of making the point (see Stevenson, 2013; Nicholson, 2015; Storey, 2017). For this reason, here in Part Two, analysis makes a concerted effort to go further, identifying structures of artistic practice rooted in kinship and volunteerism that are overlooked and not understood within the extant body of research. I want to underscore two important points here:

1. Research routinely highlights how the discursive practices of the funded field write upon those activities that are excluded and, in so doing, contribute to the low status of amateur participation (Stevenson, 2016; Holdsworth et al., 2017; Jancovich, 2017; Walcon and Nicholson, 2017; Hadley and Belfiore, 2018).

2. By turning analysis of amateur participation towards the inequalities of the funded field (often through the deployment of Bourdieu's scheme), research often, itself, contributes to the marginalisation of amateur activity by paying scant attention to its complexity, nuance and specificities. In these cases, amateur participation is defined only by its devalued relationship to professionalised work in the funded field.

2.1.8 The invisibility of the amateur socially engaged intermediary

As a result of what I have described above, the possibility that amateur arts might be motivated by altruism, directed towards the social benefit of others (following the course of Stebbins' career volunteerism, but in a self-organising rather than a delegated way), is rarely (if ever) considered. Similarly, the role of social capital (Bourdieu's or Putnam's) leaves little space for deeper forms of aesthetic experience rooted (as will be seen) in kinship to play a role. In fact, in the course of this research I have found little mention of these structures of practice at all. Extant research asserts that amateur groups are not particularly interested in the wider social benefit of their work. *Our Creative Talent* found that 'participating for social benefit was, perhaps surprisingly, one of the lowest ranking reasons for [organisers] joining, with an average of only 6% of groups identifying this as the main reason' (Dodd et al., 2008, p. 23). As described in 1.3, the social benefit of the arts is considered to be primarily a funded sector concern: evaluated by, and attributed to the work of, funded institutions[105]. As such, the body of research that has been produced regarding the social benefit of the arts has a notable funded-sector bias, speaking primarily to concerns of policymakers and in the interests of

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[105] As described in 1.3, the exigencies of policy attachment, and ergo economic capital, produce advocacy for the arts as a vehicle for addressing social issues (such as health, wellbeing and social cohesion), dominated by, and in the interests of, the funded sector.

funded institutions. Because of this, the critique of instrumentalism discussed in 1.3.3 and 1.3.7 can be taken as a critique only of cultural policy and the funded sector, not of amateur arts organised for broader social benefit[106], which has its own specificities, e.g. *it is not underwritten by economic competition.* This invites two important questions. Firstly, can the same critique be levelled against unfunded, self-organising cultural activities that are not constructed by policy attachment and are removed from direct economic interest? Secondly, if social capital as a vehicle for other social benefits is an objective of both funded and amateur activities, on what basis should amateur participation be excluded from cultural policies' rubrics of participation?[107]

Such questions highlight the significant gaps in knowledge when it comes to the social role and value of amateur participation. On the occasions that amateur activity is brought into discussions about the instrumentalisation of cultural policy and funded socially engaged work, it is (as described above) marshalled to demonstrate that social capital is also produced by amateur groups, questioning the value and veracity of funded socially engaged work. In this way, research about amateur participation ends up, again, *being about policy and the funded sector while its specificities get overlooked*. What is absent from most research is any notion that amateur groups might adopt a socially engaged, instrumental mode or, to put it more directly, what is missing is the existence of the groups identified here - in the chapters to follow. Apart from the motivation to mimic professional standards and make friends – self-interest – amateur groups are envisaged as having little social conscience, and no nuanced systems of aesthetic knowledge or altruistic values that sustain them. The assumption is always that any wider social benefits of amateur participation are *unintended consequences* or, as Putnam puts it, 'a valuable by-product of cultural activities whose main purpose is purely artistic' (Putnam, 2000, pp. 411–412, cited in Crossick and Kaszynska, 2016, p. 59).

2.1.9 Conclusion

In this chapter I have sought to provide an overview of what has been theorised about amateur participation and of how both academic and sector research contribute to the marginalisation and narrow understanding of amateur participation. I have traced dominant theoretical ideas through research and policy literature, with particular attention to Bourdieu's influential repertoire. While not exhaustive, this presents the key themes and ideas relating to amateur participation. Four key points can be summarised:

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[106] N.B. The critique is that the inherent imbalance of power between the funded field and those it positions as non-participants engenders a form of symbolic violence in sector-driven socially engaged arts, while at the same time rendering art itself a policy irrelevance.

[107] See Stevenson (2013), McAndrew et al. (2017) and Wilson et al. (2017) for some particularly insightful discussions around this question.

1. Bourdieu's influence (explicitly, implicitly or by extension) runs through much of what has been theorised about amateur participation.

2. The widely accepted understanding is that amateur participation is motivated by the pursuit of professional standards (cultural capital) and the acquisition of social capital (usually reframed with the communitarian theorising of Putnam and Stebbins), with little exploration of altruistic motivations, intentional social impacts or aesthetic specificities.

3. Academic analysis of amateur participation is often undertaken to critique and reflect on the funded field, leaving very few studies that explore the intrinsic properties of amateur intermediation and participation in any depth.

4. Socially engaged art (purposefully undertaken for its broader social benefit) is assumed to be a practice belonging exclusively to the funded field (often assumed to be a realised, rather than a discursive, practice), and so the nature of the social engagement and social benefit of amateur activities, removed as they are from the problematisation of inequality and policy attachment, is almost completely absent from existing analysis.

When it comes to amateur socially engaged practice, the body of existing research is scant and the theoretical approaches limited, and there is very little nuance regarding the relationship between creativity, kinship, participation and altruistic motivations. There is even less analysis of the relationship between amateur intermediaries and the social 'by-products' of their work, or of how these are experienced aesthetically through self-organising amateur intermediation. This lack of knowledge is, I believe, in part due to the dominance of Bourdieu's theoretical scheme, which appears to bleed into much of the discourse about amateur production, with the effect of drawing analysis towards questions of cultural value and status and thus, inevitably, to the relationship between the funded field and amateur groups in terms of social structuration and power. While this approach provides useful insights, it fails to grasp the complexity and diversity of amateur intermediation or how this is motivated, structured, organised and experienced. In the chapters that follow, I explore amateur groups that do not conform to these common conceptualisations of amateur participation – unfunded activities that explicitly adopt a socially engaged, instrumental mode, guided by altruism, rather than self-interest, and the aesthetic experience of kinship, while rejecting discursive practices originating from the problematisation of funding inequality and policy attachment.

2.2 Amateur socially engaged practice

2.2.1 Introduction

In the chapters that follow I analyse interview data collected over seven interviews with two case studies: Aston Performing Arts Academy[108] (APAA) and Festival Arts (Festival). Working outside funding frameworks, these amateur groups do not engage in the discursive practice of the funded field, and describe an approach that is absent from academic and policy literature – *amateur socially engaged practice*. The orthodoxy that amateur production is motivated by self-interest (apprehended through common theoretical propositions of 'serious leisure') fails to grasp the motivations that structure the work of these groups – motivations of altruism and the aesthetic experience of kinship. However, these interviewees are not performing 'delegated tasks' within or on behalf of formal institutions (as with Stebbins' volunteerism). They are instead small family concerns, involving small numbers of voluntary helpers, fiercely autonomous and self-determinate.

In this chapter I contextualise the work of APAA and Festival in preparation for the further analysis, outlining their approach and how this differs from the common rendering of amateurism described in the previous chapter. The discussion begins with a brief overview of each group's work (2.2.2, 2.2.3), how this is purposefully organised towards, above all, social benefit (2.2.4) and how voluntary work is, itself, a strategic approach to realising these social objectives (2.2.5) – a vital point of difference between these groups and the discursive practices of the funded field described in Part One. The discussion then draws out the effort and commitment that goes into these activities (2.2.6) and the broader impacts they have on the lives of participants and professionalised cultural fields (2.2.7). The discussion then turns to how these intermediaries do not seek to replicate but rather resist the work of the funded sector, actively rejecting funding, funding bureaucracy and the discursive practices that follow (2.2.8, 2.2.9).

These case studies illustrate trends common, to varying degrees, to the amateur intermediaries interviewed in this research. By focusing on APAA and Festival, it is possible to observe the complexities of and interconnections between artistic work, volunteering, family and friendship – motivations that structure very different forms of *amateur socially engaged practice*. Beyond the discursive practice of the funded field described in Part One, one finds forms of creativity that are complex, sophisticated and at times transgressive.

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[108] It is important to note that APAA is not an academy in any formalised, accredited sense.

2.2.2 APAA – a brief introduction

APAA is a music and theatre group that provides young people with the opportunity to develop skills in performance and creative production. The primary purpose of the group's work is to support the wellbeing, development and capabilities of young black participants from disadvantaged backgrounds, predominantly in Aston Newtown, Birmingham[109]. APAA was initiated in 2001 by Anjie Daniels, originally as an ACE-funded youth orchestra called Aston Youth Orchestra (AYO). Anjie administered AYO as a funded initiative until 2003 (through its first and only round of funding), choosing to continue on a voluntary basis from then on. The organisational structure and aesthetic nature of AYO changed dramatically when twin brothers Tru and Pelego (Pel) Powell joined in 2009, taking responsibility for the running and artistic direction of the group. It became APAA by name and its creative style became what they describe as 'Urban Glee' – an unusual combination of pop music, musical theatre and urban/hip-hop styles. As well as the focus on the social/personal development of young people, performances address social issues relevant to Aston, such as knife crime, drug gangs and social disenfranchisement.

The move from classical to the less fundable, but more commercial, genres of pop and musical theatre (Urban Glee) is significant because it reveals the organic, flexible and responsive nature of amateur socially engaged work. Because AYO was unfunded, and thus free from any prescribed, bureaucratically constituted definition, the group was able to adapt around the deeply personalised form of creative practice that, as will be discussed in 2.3, had evolved through Tru and Pel's consanguineal relationship. Because the brothers' work has evolved through kinship, they have arrived at a model of amateur socially engaged work that they find difficult to square with externally, institutionally defined framings of black-led creative activity:

> We kind of see ourselves as an Urban Glee… what's funny is we're kind of in that limbo place where we don't necessarily fit within, and I'm just gonna be real and say, the black culture of reggae, which is why we didn't really fit in with Simmer Down[110], the Hip-Hop or the Grime. We weren't street enough, we weren't hip enough, but then equally we're not classical enough, if you like… so we kind of had to find our own path and I think it's a lot bigger than what people know (Powell, T. interview Cox 23.07.2019).

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[109] Aston Newtown is one of the most socially and economically deprived areas of the city (Brandham, 2015).
[110] Simmer Down is an arts festival held annually in Handsworth Park, Birmingham. The festival is funded by ACE, Birmingham City Council and private sponsorship. Simmer Down was originally managed by The Drum Arts Centre (an NPO) until its closure in 2016. Since then, the festival has been delivered as an ACE-funded project co-ordinated by former managers of The Drum. APAA have performed at Simmer Down on a voluntary basis.

Here, Tru signals some issues relating to the outbound effects of the discursive practices of the funded field (described in Part One) that will be addressed shortly (2.2.8, 2.2.9). The brothers both describe APAA as consisting of two strands of activity: 'development' and 'commercial'. Development describes the majority of their activity, involving weekly workshops and rehearsals. This work focuses on the personal development of young participants above aesthetic concerns, although these aims are closely interconnected. 'Commercial' refers to the occasions on which APAA are paid to perform. Income from these performances is distributed equally between all performers, including the young participants. APAA's maximum commercial fee is (at the time of writing) £900, which means that Tru and Pel rarely take home more than £36 each per performance, which they always invest back into the running of the group: 'Tru and I, we earn absolutely nothing – again, it's about the passion that we have for the young people and the arts' (Powell, P. interview, Cox 15.10.2019).

2.2.3 Festival – a brief introduction

Festival was established in 1968 by Jack and Joye Beckett. Daughters Jenny Baines and Julie Beckett have continued to run Festival since their father's death in 1986. Festival uses drama techniques to support 'young people to develop their interpersonal skills, their social skills, their confidence [and] their creativity' (Beckett interview, Cox 15.10.2019). The aim is to 'provide a safe space where they can learn to communicate with each other' (Beckett interview, Cox 15.10.2019). While acknowledging that they are 'not qualified in any way to counsel people, or to help [young people] through difficulties' (Beckett interview, Cox 15.10.2019), Jenny and Julie see this, unequivocally, as the primary purpose of Festival's work – 'this is what Festival does' (ibid).

Jenny and Julie describe Festival as having, like APAA, two elements: 'Weekly drama' and 'Festival Summer Camp'. 'Weekly drama' sessions are led by Jenny and Julie (every Wednesday night), facilitating drama improvisation exercises directed towards the development of communication and interpersonal skills of young people, rather than any particular *performance* outcome. Festival Summer Camp is an annual, training and performance residency held in St Davids, Pembrokeshire. Volunteers work with approximately 40 young participants over a four-week period to develop a Shakespeare (or other traditional theatre) performance and a children's show for locals and tourists at Bishops Palace – a ruined monastery in St Davids. The summer camp is a non-profit commercial undertaking arranged to cover costs. Participants pay £150 to attend, although if parents cannot afford this the fee is often waived. Income is used to cover venue hire, campsite fees, transport and props, while all facilitation and organisational work is undertaken voluntarily. The summer camp is of particular importance to Julie and Jenny – as will be expanded upon in 2.3 and 2.5.

2.2.4 'It's all about the young people'

Unlike what has been theorised in research literature, these amateur groups are undoubtedly organised altruistically, for the benefit of others and with specified social aims. They are, ostensibly, youth theatres that seek to engage young people in arts participation – a structure of practice commonly associated with funded organisations through either education frameworks (e.g. local education authorities), arts funding (e.g. NPO projects), or profit-making commercial enterprises, sold to parents who pay considerable subscription fees (e.g. Stagecoach). But Festival's weekly sessions are free and, as will be seen, on the occasions that APAA and/or Festival ask for money from participants, it is kept to a minimum to cover costs, while intermediaries and facilitators work voluntarily. This voluntary focus on the development of young people stands in contrast to the amateur groups surveyed by *Our Creative Talent* (OCT)[111], which highlighted a concern regarding the *lack of engagement* with young people:

> One issue which came through very strongly was the challenge of attracting younger members, particularly young adults, to get involved in the group. In some cases, this was based on a concern that attracting this age group was important for ensuring that the group could continue. For others, the focus was more on the artform and ensuring that skills and interest in a particular craft is not lost to future generations (Dodd et al., 2008, p. 54).

OCT describes a desire among amateur groups to engage young people, but with this *not* being their primary focus. The report goes on to note that child protection administration acts as a barrier for amateur groups who might wish to engage younger members:

> Although there is an appreciation of the need for child protection, there was concern that much of the legislation puts a significant burden onto groups and limits their potential to develop activity for children and young people (Dodd et al., 2008, p. 56).

In contrast, because Festival and APAA focus specifically on the personal development of young people, they undertake significant administrative work in the implementation and maintenance of child protection policies and procedures. The important point is that the concern regarding a lack of engagement with young people described by OCT is a concern not for the *personal and social development of young people* but rather for the sustainability of the group and/or artform, whereas

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[111] As well as most other research, as has been highlighted in 2.1.

Festival and APAA reverse this, explicitly directing their work towards the personal and social development of young people and, in so doing, accept a significant administrative burden. Unlike the account of amateur participation described in research literature, these groups are motivated by social benefit rather than self-interest, providing support and development opportunities to young participants through artistic production. This is evidenced not only in the structure of the activities themselves, but also in the way in which intermediaries describe the purpose of their artistic work. As Julie (Festival) makes clear: 'we're not training anybody for the theatre or anything like that' (Beckett interview, Cox 17.06.2019). Instead, Festival is

[a] safe space where [young people] can learn how to communicate with each other, if I put it in very bold terms, it doesn't feel like that's happening at all… but drama gives us activities to teach them to communicate… Almost all of them, gradually become part of the group and become valued by the group and there isn't a pecking order, as there might be in a team – who's good at this, who's the best, none of that happens because they're working together and – it's almost like playing – it is an extension of play, that's the sort of drama we do, that's what dad evolved (Beckett interview, Cox 15.07.2019).

Tru and Pel describe the purpose of APAA in much the same way, focusing on the emotional and interpersonal development it provides to young participants:

I want to be able to say at least one person, through the impact of the organisation, has changed their lives and are doing amazing things, and that's because of our holistic approach, and over the years we're so thankful that we are able to do that, we have impacted the lives of so many and I have, we all have seen first-hand, literally someone who was a gang member and now is on *Coronation Street*. For us it's amazing, the impact, we've watched people grow and get married within our organisation, we've watched people fall in love within our organisation (Powell, P. interview, Cox 21.09.2019).

The focus here, as with Festival, is on the bonds between participants and the personal development these solicit. In the balance between social and artistic objectives, the work of these groups is firmly weighted towards the social. In the balance between altruism and self-interest, it is firmly weighted towards altruism. For these intermediaries, the social benefits of their work are not 'by-products' (Putnam, 2000, pp. 411–412, cited in Crossick and Kaszynska, 2016, p. 59 - see also Stebbins 1983; 2006) but intentions realised through purposeful, sophisticated methods – as will be seen in 2.5. In

this sense they can (and will) be described here as *amateur socially engaged intermediaries (2.2.10)* – a mode of practice absent from research literature.

2.2.5 Voluntary work

For these amateur socially engaged intermediaries, being unpaid is a strategic choice taken on the basis of social benefit. For them, payment would negatively affect the social benefit of their work:

> We would never want it to become an organisation where we were paid because it would completely alter all the relationships within the group. It doesn't work as a paid thing (Beckett interview, Cox 15.07.2019).

For Tru and Pel, in much the same way, the voluntary nature of their work is integral to realising the intended social impacts:

> It's never been about money! And what we're scared of is, if it becomes about money, and money becomes a driving force, then are we going to lose the impact? And that's my concern. I want the impact to be about the love of art and the love of young people. Those are the driving forces – not money (Powell, P. interview, Cox 21.09.2019).

These responses do not fit with the version of amateurism described by Stebbins and assumed in studies of amateur participation[112]. It is not about the money but, equally, it is not about self-interest. Voluntary labour is invested not in *personal development* but in the *development of others*, and the fact that the work is voluntary is seen as a strategic decision made to solicit the intended social impacts. This important aspect of these intermediaries' work will be explored further in 2.5. The vital point for now is that they begin from motivations that are, to the largest degree, altruistic, to the extent that they work unpaid to deliver demanding socially engaged creativity without the rewards assumed in extant theorising:

> It's about people, it's about young people, it's the lives you're affecting and changing, the impact that you're having. So that is beautiful. But, at the same time… because of the lives that you are affecting, the emotional baggage that you're taking home sometimes, the lack of appreciation from the young people… that's hard (Powell, P. interview, Cox 23.07.2019).

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[112] Nor, as will be seen, does it fit with the 'hobbyist' or the delegated work of the 'volunteer'.

These intermediaries actively *choose* not to be paid. They are fully aware of funding possibilities[113] but, for them, being paid is problematic. The primary, most consistent and important reason given by interviewees is that *being paid would compromise the social objectives of their work.* These objectives are the primary motivation, soliciting rewards that are unlike those described in research literature, and which take precedence over economic concerns and the legitimation funding might bring. This is a significant departure from discursive practices of the funded field and the models of amateur activity described in research and policy literature.

2.2.6 Hard work

Although these are small voluntary groups, the level of commitment and social impact is considerable. Phrases that appear with regularity include 'ridiculously hard work', 'mission', 'consuming', 'passion', 'way of life' and 'lifestyle'. Intermediaries give huge amounts of personal time and sacrifice to their groups:

> It's very taxing, we're there every week, we miss time with our own families to support other families and it's a tall order (Powell, T. interview, Cox 24.03.2019).

The Beckett family have given up holidays to deliver the summer camp, which has, in the same way that Tru describes, placed strain on their own personal relationships:

> We did hit a point where Colin [Jenny's husband] just suddenly said, '*Look!* I can't cope with this. We were put here to do this, this is what we're for, because we've done it all this time, we know what we're doing, this is us, this is what we do, but it's *not* a holiday!'… It's not a holiday and it's not work, this is different, and we kind of accepted that… And we've just sort of gone on doing it without the discussion. It still sits there underneath (Baines interview, Cox 15.10.2019).

This might fit with Stebbins' commonly deployed account of serious leisure, but there is nuance revealed that calls for closer scrutiny. Walcon and Nicholson, for example, mobilise Stebbins to describe how amateur participation entails 'hard work, sacrifice, conflict, devotion, and involves gaining hard-won skills and expertise' (2017, p. 7).[114] However, the subtle but very important

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[113] It should be noted that they have, on rare occasions, collaborated with funded organisation. APAA received ACE funding for 'Creative Creatives' in 2018. The motivation given for this project was a desire to include APAA participants in broader activities in the city. However, this experience with funding was, as will be described later, a negative one.

[114] This is drawn from Stebbins (2011), 'The semiotic self and serious leisure', *The American Sociologist*, 42(2–3), pp. 238–248 (p. 242).

difference between Walcon and Nicholson's account (prevalent in research literature) and the work of these groups is that their hard work, sacrifice, conflict and devotion is directed not towards gaining skills for *themselves* but to facilitating the skills, development and wellbeing of *others*, a motivation to amateur participation that both Bourdieu's economic determinism and Stebbins' serious leisure fail to capture. These interviewees (working as facilitators and co-ordinators, leading weekly workshops, rehearsals and large-scale performance events) are not acquiring artistic skills that constitute the performances but are sharing and using their skills to create experiences that benefit young people. They make considerable sacrifices in this effort, delivering sophisticated work that involves not only time and organisation but also (and contrary to what has been described in studies of amateur/grassroots intermediation) the use of creativity for the social benefit of others.

2.2.7 Scale, and contribution to professional fields

The broader impact of this amateur socially engaged creative work should also be acknowledged. The number of participants engaging at any given time is impressive:

> There's not really a huge plan to scale anything up, we are what we are: a grassroots youth organisation. We want to affect the lives of young people within Birmingham and that's kind of who we are… we're quite happy with working with a hundred kids at a grassroots level (Powell, T. interview, Cox 24.03.2019).

A hundred young people is a significant number for a voluntary activity managed by a team of three, outside the support of a larger organisational framework. Another striking aspect, in terms of scale, is the longevity of the work. APAA (excluding the eight years before Pel and Tru joined) has been running for 12 years and Festival for more than 50. The number of young people who have benefited over this time is difficult to ascertain because neither group keeps records, but one can surmise that it is considerable. Considerable too is the scale of the contribution to professional fields. As described in 2.1.7, research has noted how amateur arts groups (in general) provide employment and an informal 'training ground' for professionals (Matarasso, 1997; Holden, 2015; Crossick and Kaszynska, 2016). While not the focus of their work, Festival and APAA have supported many young people into professional cultural employment. Julie and Jenny estimate that approximately '10 to 15% of Festival's participants have actively carried on art work' (Beckett, Baines interview, Cox 17.09.2019) in professional contexts. They routinely refer to examples as they chat through interviews:

155

Julie: Yeah, Lucy Minion and Caroline Green both took on the mantle of running youth theatre groups, but took it to the level of doing it professionally, so they get paid for doing it… Lizzie still puts on, she's a film editor by trade but she still put on, she just put on a fantastic show in Bristol… She came to us with, sort of no real theatre experience when she was 14…

Jenny: … would Lucy have done a first-class degree in art if she hadn't spent all those years designing? – It was in fact the T-shirts [made for Festival as part of working within the group] that got her a place at university. She said 'I don't have a portfolio, I've applied through clearing, what shall I do?' And we went through all the T-shirts and she took a pile of T-shirts to her interview and that did it! [115] (Beckett, Baines interview, Cox 17.09.2019).

This extract reveals an important aspect of the work of these groups, which will be discussed further in 2.3 and 2.5: while they do not keep records, intermediaries remain in informal contact with participants for many years. There is an informality and a loosening of boundaries between facilitator and participant, and a sociability that is sustained beyond the activities of the group. Like Festival, APAA make a notable contribution to professional fields in Birmingham and beyond. Pel knows of many participants who have gone on to careers in the CCIs:

Countless, I would say, that have gone on and are doing great things. I would say at least between 50 and 60 young people who we've worked with are either in London doing amazing things – Cory Weaks who was with us for five years, who grew up with us from when he was 15, he's now 21, 22, and he had his first screening… Al-Keem is now in London doing amazing things, getting paid for what he does. Oh my gosh, Chris Russell, who does lots of gigging and is the MD for Call Me Unique, and he's doing wonderful things… we don't just nurture and develop artistically, we do it professionally too (Powell, P. interview, Cox 21.09.2019).

It is notable that both Festival and APAA organise their work in a way that allows participants to assume increasing levels of responsibility over the course of years, taking on administrative and production roles that mirror professional jobs in the CCIs:

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[115] In addition to this, in 2019 the sisters used social media to ask whether former Festival members would provide voluntary workshops for their current cohort. The response to this single post revealed 10 former members who are now working professionally in the CCIs or arts education: 'We must have had 10 different people, who'd all been to Festival themselves in their youth, who came for nothing and ran us a session… we had puppetry, we had Shakespeare, we had a drama session without any words… we had dance, a physical theatre session… most of them are professionals; one of them is an actress, one of them is a puppeteer, one of them is a dancer' (Beckett interview, Cox 17.09.2019).

We have six development managers [unpaid young people]… they have about five or six in their team, and they manage attendance, punctuality, artistry and their overall development… and then they have additional roles; one of our development managers… looks after the pastoral side, another development manager looks after the event side, another development manager is recruitment and retention, another development manager… is social media, so they all have their own little pockets of areas… Most of our development managers have been with us for five years (Powell, P. interview, Cox 23.07.2019).

This is an informal process and it is notable how, as voluntary groups, APAA and Festival have the flexibility to adjust the organisational structure around participants as they develop, a point that will be discussed further in 2.5. As a voluntary organisation providing interpersonal and professional development to, specifically, young black participants from disadvantaged communities, APAA potentially makes a significant contribution to diversity within professional fields by providing a practical route to addressing the institutional inequalities described in 1.2.2. However, these contributions are invisible to policy and academic analysis, partly because APAA and Festival do not identify this as a primary purpose of their work, and mainly because they do not monitor or evaluate their work within any formal data-gathering systems[116]. As such, it is difficult to gauge the impacts of participation, or their contributions to professionalised fields. Their contribution is known only anecdotally between group members, and can be obtained only through interviews. The researcher is aided by the groups' striking sociability – many group members have kept in touch for years, and have returned to support the work as volunteers. From this it would appear that, while these intermediaries have little or no direct connection to formally constituted cultural institutions, the scale of their contribution to careers in professional fields is not insignificant.

2.2.8 Rejecting funding bureaucracy

The choice to work voluntarily is accompanied by a *rejection of* funding and funding bureaucracy (which is, of course, in and of itself a fundamental difference between amateur and funded socially engaged practice). One reason given for working voluntarily is to avoid the administrative burden that funding entails or, as Pel put it, 'all that red tape', concurring with OCT's survey, that noted how

funding application forms [are] often over-complicated and perhaps designed for arts organisations with professional staff, and that for groups that are purely voluntary, making applications is time consuming and frustrating…. [this] may be down to misconceptions and a

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[116] Neither were included in *Our Creative Talent* or any similar exercises.

lack of knowledge of available funding rather than based on the reality of funding programmes (Dodd et al., 2008, p. 55)[117].

There is an implicit assumption here that amateur intermediaries are neither competent nor committed enough to engage with funding. In terms of 'willingness to undertake time consuming and frustrating' admin, it should be restated that, owing to their focus on young people, these intermediaries undertake complex administrative work and take responsibility for maintaining child protection procedures. The second point – that it is perhaps 'misconceptions and a lack of knowledge' that underpins the choice to work voluntarily – does not hold for these groups either. They have first-hand experience of arts funding from their professional careers, as well as through the work of their groups. Interviewees also had experience of arts funding through (very rarely) working with funded organisations. APAA had secured ACE funding in 2003 and partnered on a funded project in 2017 (Creating Creatives – footnote 114). Festival have occasionally worked with funded organisations, and have dealt with similar bureaucracies in their professional work as teachers/a BBC radio producer. In short, it is clear that both groups are aware of arts funding, cognisant of its specialised discursive practice/language and able, if they wished, to participate in the funded field. *They choose not to:*

> Julie: It's a huge undertaking applying for money. We know because we've got young people who have been members of the group, now in their 20s and 30s, who are trying to run theatre groups, and who are doing fantastic work with children, and such a high percentage of their time and effort is taken up with applying for funding. Well, it's their job, so that's like the admin side of me in the BBC, that's fine, but this is not our job, and we don't have any space in our lives for working so hard to get a little bit of money to support this, and given that we're managing this quite well…

> Jenny: … especially if it puts restrictions on who we can have and the kind of thing we can do, you know, which quite often it does (Baines, Becket interview, Cox 17.06.2019).

Julie and Jenny (like Pel, Tru and others interviewed) are not naïve about funding. Their statements demonstrate knowledge of and familiarity with the work required (echoing Jessie's feeling that they must 'rip [their] butts open to get 5k out of the Arts Council' – 1.4.8). Instead, they reject funding, primarily due to perceived restrictions. This leads analysis to the most powerful and compelling reason

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[117] It is likely, I argue, that OCT is describing the outbound effects of the exclusionary linguistic market and discursive practices of the funded field, where some amateurs encounter specialised language designed by and 'for arts organisations with professional staff', which takes time to successfully decode, learn, naturalise and operationalise, as described in 1.2.8.

for their abstinence from funding, a reason that links to the analysis of Part One and contains nuance that is absent from existing research literature. Dodd et al. provided the following summary:

> There is a sense that the questions asked in applications forms and criteria for investment are often not relevant to voluntary arts groups. Many groups also highlighted that they were reluctant to access grant funding as they felt that there were often strings attached which would dictate the activity that they deliver and require additional management to ensure they were complying with monitoring and evaluation requirements (Dodd et al., 2008, p. 55).

For the amateur intermediaries interviewed in this research, the strings attached are not described as criteria 'not being relevant', but rather as criteria being *exclusionary*, *restrictive* and, at times, offensive. For example, the reason Anjie, Tru and Pel had *chosen* to run APAA unfunded since 2003 was that

> [t]hey [ACE] wanted Anjie to partner with other organisations and do stuff that actually she didn't want to do, so revert back to African drumming – it was very stereotypical, dhol drumming… just very much 'this is the box that you should be in' so Anjie was like 'I don't want to do that, I'd rather walk away from the funding and do it by myself' (Powell, T. interview, Cox 24.03.2019).

A number of important points are revealed by this statement (and Tru's preceding statement in 2.2.2). The first relates to the discussion in 1.4.10 regarding how the pressure to produce discourses that affirm the 'ecology rhetoric' is asserted through funding bureaucracy, regardless of whether or not this would be beneficial or applicable in practice. For Tru, Pel and Anjie, there was the feeling that funding bureaucracy *'wanted'* them to partner with organisations in ways they felt would be detrimental to their work. Secondly, the feeling of being entered into 'a political economy of racial representation' (Mercer, 1994, p. 240) (generated by problematisation of inequality and policy attachment within the homogenous funded field, as described in 1.4.7) is evident in Tru's account, experienced as restrictive and stereotyping. The choice to reject funding is therefore a deliberate, conscious response to the 'burden of representation' (Mercer, 1994) carried through the discursive practices of funding bureaucracy, revealing a resistance to the symbolic power (or violence [Blackshaw and Long, 2005]) inherent to the funded field[118]. For APAA, participation in such practices devalues

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[118] This recalls Fasil's 'dichotomy' (1.4.7), in which he is compelled to strategically mobilise representations of 'connectedness to community', *specifically Muslim communities,* in response to the prescribed discourses constructed by the problematisation

their work, and foists upon them the requirement to represent blackness and diversity *for the benefit of actors in the funded field*. This is not an isolated incident; it is commonplace when it comes to arts funding and collaborations with funded organisations: 'Yeah, be their tick box, their token if you like' (Powell, P. interview, Cox 23.07.2019).

Festival reject funding for different reasons (in a sense, the opposite reasons) which are still, nonetheless, rooted in the symbolic power issuing from the discursive practices of the funded field. Like many of the amateur socially engaged intermediaries interviewed, they feel that there exists in funding bureaucracy a prescribed set of representations that excludes, or imposes limitations upon them, and their participants, hindering their ability to realise the social objectives that drive their work:

> Julie: We have no illusions about the fact that white middle-class kids, who make up the bulk of our group, have real struggles and difficulties in their lives, and we've had more than one parent come to us in tears and say 'you have no idea what you've done for him'. And when you've got a parent standing there saying that, you think, 'great, we'll carry on, that's lovely'. But that person doesn't fit any of the boxes. That person is not a gang member, that person's just a local comprehensive school kid…

> Jenny: but he doesn't fit, or she doesn't fit… We're at least honest about what we're doing…

> Julie: But also, nobody knows about what we're doing[119]… We have been criticised for being white middle-class. I think sometimes people have felt we're a little bit too middle-class… (Baines and Beckett interview, Cox 17.06.2019)[120].

Amateur socially engaged intermediaries often cited 'box-ticking' (ibid) and 'not fitting' (ibid) as reasons to abstain from funding bureaucracy in this way. Although these terms are not clearly defined, they imply what Jessie referred to as 'the rhetoric' of the funded field (discursive practices structured

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of the gap and policy attachment. While Fasil attempts to navigate this uncomfortable terrain, Pel and Tru choose (to use Bourdieu's analogy) to not 'play the game' at all.

[119] It should be noted that Julie and Jenny often describe how they are 'quite happy being under the radar' (Baines and Beckett interview, Cox 17.06.2019) and how working voluntarily allows them to structure their work to avoid excluding potential participants or having to frame their work in any prescribed way.

[120] Because, as amateur groups, they do not gather data, how they know participants are predominately 'ordinary comprehensive school kid[s]' and/or middle-class is unclear. Their prime concern appears to be that they do not want criteria that determine or restrict participation.

by the problematisation of inequality and policy attachment – 1.4.5). For APAA, this was experienced as a pressure to conform to particular representations of blackness (i.e. styles of music, and being framed as representative of diversity within the funded field) and adopt a performative role *for* the funded world – 'be *their* tick box' (Powell, P. interview, Cox 23.07.2019). For Festival, it was expressed in terms of young participants being excluded because *they are not* representative of any particular target group or, in other words, there is no place for them within the discursive practice of the funded field. In these discussions, Festival and APAA reveal the effects of dispossession described in 1.2.8. For APAA, it is manifest in the feeling of becoming 'a token' – defined and constrained by discourses over which they have little control or autonomy. For Festival, paradoxically, it is manifest in the sense that their participants have little symbolic value within the linguistic market through which funding is arbitrated – despite their participants being closer to the demographic make-up of the funded field. For both, *crucially,* there is a resolute refusal to engage in discursive practices that would write subject identities upon their participants, identify target groups – which, they feel, would implicitly marginalise others – and limit how they described their work and who could be said (or assumed) to participate.

In this way (contrary to the 'misconceptions' and 'lack of knowledge' described by OCT), APAA and Festival demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of the discursive practices that commodify particular representations within the funded field (1.4.6), and the disconnect between these and the exclusionary social stratification of the funded sector. For Pel and Tru, this is engendered by their refusal to be 'their tick box… token', and for Festival by the feeling of, as Jenny puts it, 'at least [being] honest about what we're doing' (Baines and Beckett interview, Cox 17.06.2019).

The important point I want to underscore is that these groups *refuse* to participate in funding and the legitimation it brings. This is at odds with the conventional understanding that voluntary, amateur cultural work is tacitly motivated by the acquisition of cultural capital gained by imitating the legitimated arts. Following this logic, the consecration of funding, or association with funded institutions, would be desirable. Instead, these groups reject this for the reasons given above, and also because other, more intrinsic, motivations rooted in kinship assert themselves (this will be discussed in 2.3 and 2.5) – motivations that seek autonomy from the exogenous influence and pressures of the funded world. These themes will be discussed further in the chapters that follow. For now, it can be noted that for these groups the additional workload that funding entails is *a secondary* concern*. The primary concern is not so much that the 'strings attached' would 'dictate the activity', but that this would dictate *who could participate and how the work was understood*, and that it might become

instrumentalised to the *benefit of funding/funded institutions*. This latter point may appear on first reading as similar to the concerns expressed by independent intermediaries working in the funded field, as described in 1.4.6. However, there is a vital difference to be appreciated. For intermediaries in the funded sector, this concern was connected to maintaining position within the field, and this dominated much of the discussion. For amateur socially engaged intermediaries it appeared as a marginal concern, related to the effect it might have *on participants and on achieving their social objectives* – becoming 'tokens' and/or excluding young people (although, as noted in 1.4.6, there is nuance to be observed among agents in the funded field who, while driven by funding and position in that field, were also critical of tokenism and its potential negative effects).

The nuance that emerges through interviews with amateur socially engaged intermediaries shifts emphasis to a more political dimension, evoking Bourdieu's conceptualisation of symbolic violence exercised through discourse (1.1.10) (identified in arts funding by, among others, Blackshaw and Long [2005] and Stevenson [2013; 2016]). For these amateur socially engaged intermediaries, funding would oblige them to represent something that they, for various reasons, feel would be exclusionary, disingenuous and/or disempowering. The choice to reject funding is, therefore, guided by their commitment to young people and by their social objectives – to neither exclude, nor write upon participants subject identities originating in the discursive practice of the funded field.

2.2.9 Artistic autonomy

The desire for artistic autonomy, and freedom from narrow conceptualisations of artistic quality (1.2.4), came across strongly with APAA who, on occasion, have secured donations from local businesses to cover the running costs of showcase events and performances (their commercial arm). When asked why this was less problematic than arts funding, Tru responded:

> Sponsors don't have any form of input in the content of what we deliver, so they don't need to know kind of like, what art forms we're doing and what we're delivering… They just… trust our judgement and trust that what we bring to the table is going to be of good quality… I feel that if you are publicly funded, then you've got less licence to be more creative and more free. I think when you're not funded or you're privately sponsored, or whatever the case may be, you've got more licence to be free because there's less red tape, there's more freedom – from my experience anyway[121] (Powell, T. interview, Cox 24.03.2019).

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[121] The experience Tru refers to here are the occasions on which APAA received funding and/or collaborated with funded institutions. These experiences are described in predominantly negative terms.

What comes across in interviews with amateur socially engaged intermediaries is that rejecting funding brings autonomy in terms of both aesthetic style and social impact – which means being able to realise the intended social objectives without adopting exclusionary aesthetic and/or discursive practices. In the case of APAA there is a sense of validation from the work being of sufficient quality to be commercially booked. For Festival, a similar feeling was expressed by their view that audiences at Bishops Palace 'just see us as a professional theatre company' (Beckett interview, Cox 17.09.2019). However, this validation is clearly not what motivates them to their work, and does not accord with the institutional legitimation or the serious leisure described by Bourdieu, Stebbins or others. As will be seen, these intermediaries have little interest in securing legitimation or consecration within professionalised commercial or funded worlds. Further, while in the funded field it has been observed that intermediaries are 'continually negotiating degrees of artistic independence from policy objectives [social benefits]' (Warren and Jones, 2015, p. 1748)[122], amateur intermediaries appear to be talking about artistic autonomy in a rather different way. For them, artistic autonomy includes both aesthetic freedom and the freedom to pursue social objectives without the constraints and perceived negative impositions that result from participation in funding bureaucracy. The analysis that follows will investigate the themes introduced here in depth, identifying intrinsic motivations that structure these amateur socially engaged activities. For now, it can be concluded that for amateur socially engaged intermediaries there are reasons to reject funding and strong *motivations* to work voluntarily, and that these are rooted in altruism, social benefit and resistance to the discursive practices of the funded field, rather than self-interest or up-classing.

2.2.10 Conclusion

In this chapter I have sought to introduce the case studies and key themes that will be taken into the analysis that follows, revealing a form of amateur socially engaged practice that stands apart from the models described by existing research. These case studies differ in their orientation towards amateurism, funding, volunteering and instrumentalism, representing a model of practice that is artistic, altruistic, self-determinate and purposefully directed towards the social benefits provided to young people. It is notable that while (at face value) these groups are demographically, aesthetically and socio-economically very different from one another (Festival's membership is predominately white and middle-class, and their social objectives delivered through traditional theatre; APAA's membership is predominantly black and disadvantaged, with their social objectives delivered via

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[122] Raising questions about the relationship between funded intermediaries and the discursive objectives of their socially engaged work (1.4.5)

Urban Glee) they have much in common in terms of structure, motivation and attitude towards funding. These similarities were shared, to varying degrees, across all of the amateur socially engaged intermediaries/groups interviewed in this research. What underpins these similarities are particularly the *motivations* expressed through the *experience* of their work. This leads analysis to a closer examination of motivations and structures that elude dominant theoretical approaches commonly used for analysis of amateur participation. The chapters that follow explore these motivations (2.3, 2.5) and introduce an alternative theoretical approach that responds to the vital role of kinship in experience (2.3).

2.3 Family as motivation for amateur socially engaged practice

2.3.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the role family kinship plays for these amateur socially engaged intermediaries and their activities. This topic was introduced by interviewees, and was not a specific line of questioning for either funded or amateur research participants. In the funded field, family was rarely discussed, with the exception of Fasil, who identified his upbringing as one reason for his socially engaged approach, although it seemed to play less of a role in structuring his work than it does for APAA and Festival. What was striking in conversations with amateur intermediaries, was how they described family bonds as motivating, enabling and bringing meaning to their work[123]. The interconnection between family kinship, voluntary work and aesthetic experience is more complex and important than extant theories of amateur participation allow. While commonly deployed concepts of habitus and social capital are often seen as closely related to kinship, and often include kin relations, family bonds play a different, more intrinsic, role in the artistic work of these groups. 'What kinship *does'* (Schweitzer, 2000, in Fliche, 2006, p. 4 emphisis original) for these amateur socially engaged intermediaries cannot be understood through economism and self-interest without superimposing assumptions that obscure how these activities work. Consequently, this chapter argues for kinship, rather than capital, as a framework for analysis, and in so doing draws out the inadequacy of dominant theorising, with particular attention to Bourdieu. There are debates to be had about what kinship is, and what types of relationship can be understood as kinship. This discussion will be addressed in 2.4. For now, I take the most common understanding of kinship – family – as a means of introducing the topic, and to draw out motivations that are absent from existing research.

To set the scene, the chapter begins where interviewees begin – with family history, with a typical response from Festival highlighting the centrality of family bonds in the organisation of their amateur socially engaged work (2.3.2). The discussion then critiques Bourdieu's theorising of kinship and how this relates to his understanding of amateur participation (2.3.3), before digging deeper into how consanguineal and affinal relationships structure and sustain the work of APAA and Festival (2.3.4, 2.3.5) and then concluding by presenting the case for kinship, rather than capital, as a framework for analysis (2.3.6).

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[123] Interview questions (for both funded and amateur intermediaries) focused on the nature of socially engaged work, histories of socially engaged work, inequality in arts funding/participation, the notion of a cultural ecology and the perceived impacts/value of socially engaged work. Owing to the heuristic approach used, there was more interviewer interaction with interviewees in the funded field, so the responses here are perhaps co-created to a lesser degree.

2.3.2 Example 1: Festival Arts – a family affair

Festival begins with family. Separating the sisters' socially engaged artistic work from Beckett family life is a difficult exercise that abstracts the work from its meaning, motivation, system of enablement and structure. The importance of family is immediately and constantly evident in interviews with Julie and Jenny. Julie begins the story of Festival with, 'we are the daughters of Jack and Joye Beckett' (Beckett interview, Cox 17.06.2019)[124], and then proceeds through an account in which socially engaged creativity has been (and is) part and product of family life. As the sisters repeatedly told me, they were 'born into it' and their children 'have grown up in it' (Baines and Beckett interview, Cox 15.07.2019). Festival was initiated by Julie and Jenny's late parents Jack and Joye Beckett in 1968, who took inspiration from a project led by Birmingham Repertory Theatre in 1967 ('Theatre 67') that the sisters had participated in as children. According to Julie, her farther surmised that 'he could do more with these young people' (Baines and Beckett interview, Cox 15.07.2019):

> Julie: Dad became interested in how creative drama can develop an individual creatively and personally – and that's really where we still are.

> Jenny: Mum actually ran it really. Dad was the creative force and the director, but mum made everything else happen.

> Julie: Nothing would have happened without her…

> Jenny: [Dad] had all these wild ideas and mum made them happen…[125]

> Julie: Both of them, mum *and* dad were both the pastoral carers, without any doubt, but it was both of them, not just my dad, what else did she do… oh, she acted of course![126] (Baines and Beckett interview, Cox 15.07.2019).

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[124] This was the first thing Jenny said in our first interview, in response to the request: 'Tell me about Festival'.

[125] The sisters describe a huge range of tasks that their mother undertook: 'She made everything… herself rather than buy it. And she did it beautifully and completely on the cheap, she kept an eye on the budget… She also cooked for the first however many years… she did publicity… until the day she *died* – she never went out without leaflets and she never stopped giving them out when we were down there' (Baines and Beckett interview, Cox 15.07.2019).

[126] Note the centrality of 'pastoral care', highlighting the social focus of their work – the element of nurture is a very important aspect. This will be explored in more depth in 2.5.

Julie and Jenny speak of Festival in terms of inheritance. After their father's death in 1986 'mum felt quite strongly that she didn't want dad's vision to die' (Beckett interview, Cox 17.06.2019) and so the family decided to continue the work:

> We had all these lovely young people who wanted to do it, we were only in our 30s, but we decided that we were going to give it a go and see how it panned out. We brought in our uncle Bob, who was an accountant – because we'd had nothing to do really with the money – and he said 'you have to be certain that you set correct ticket prices to make sure you can cover your outgoings'… We didn't decide to do it for 30 years – we decided to do it a year at a time, which is kind of still where we are (Beckett interview, Cox 17.06.2019)[127].

Without any formal, institutional obligations, the sisters have decided to volunteer 'ridiculously hard work' (Beckett interview, Cox 17.06.2019) for more than 30 years, continuing Festival in the way in which their parents established it: Wednesday night drama in Birmingham and the annual Festival Summer Camp in Pembrokeshire. To help them, they have drawn on a broader system of family support, including partners, children, uncles, aunties and cousins. There is a strong sense of hereditary obligation, exemplified by the worry they expressed:

> We don't want to leave it as a family curse on our children, however, all our children have grown up in this – it is a family business as it were (Baines and Beckett interview, Cox 17.06.2019)[128].

The sisters describe a unique form of amateur socially engaged artistic work that has been sustained for more than 50 years, set in motion by their parents and moulded *from* and around family life, spanning three generations. What comes across strongly is that *this is a family ritual* that maintains bonds between family members – living and lost – and that these bonds structure the work, how it is perceived and how it is experienced. The summer camp, for example, evolved from family holidays and Jack and Joye's love of the Pembrokeshire landscape, which was passed on to Julie and Jenny. Julie explains how her father wanted to *share this experience* with the Wednesday night drama group, taking participants 'down to Wales in the summer and put[ting] it on for the public in a theatre that we will create for ourselves in a garden – let's do that in 1969' (Beckett interview, Cox 17.06.2019).

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[127] The last point, to 'decide to do it a year at a time', signals the flexibility and autonomy that is common to these groups.
[128] The term 'family business' is used metaphorically. As described in 2.2.4, 'it's not about money' – all their work is voluntary.

Jenny locates the inspiration, evolution and value of the summer camp squarely in family life and childhood play:

> We had a caravan down there… and at some point he [Jack] was sitting watching us at the back of the Bishops Palace, which is next to the cathedral in St Davids, but it's a ruin, and we were on the steps playing, and he could hear very clearly – what we were saying – and he thought 'this has got a great acoustic, this is a good place' and so… he took us down there [the drama group from Birmingham]… and in those days, incredibly, you could do that, so we wrote letters to people's parents saying 'can we take your children away for four weeks…?' (Baines interview, Cox 17.06.2019)[129].

The decision to continue to run the summer camp can only be understood as one rooted in kinship. The sisters are acutely aware of the impracticalities and cost of this work. It requires time, substantial administrative effort, travel and financial risk, and excludes them from funding, visibility and recognition in the funded world:

> Because we're not performing in Birmingham, even though we've got Brummie kids, we can't get money from here, but we can't get money in Wales either, because we're bringing Brummie kids down and we're not Welsh! – so that's what I mean when I say 'we don't fit anywhere' (Baines interview, Cox 17.06.2019)[130].

There is little practical value in the demanding exercise of Festival Summer Camp. It solicits no advantage financially, reputationally or in terms of positionality within any discernible field of cultural production. In other words, it does not accrue any useful species of capital (economic, social or cultural) assumed by a Bordieuan system of thought, or correspond to Stebbins' self-interested amateurism. It signals values that are absent from studies of amateur participation, discourses about public funding and funding bureaucracy, which are perhaps too particular and personal to be captured by Putnam's bridging and bonding social capital and also, in the absence of any discernible advantage, Bourdieu's social capital, which, as Blackshaw and Long suggest, would tend towards framing obligations to family as perhaps oligarchic and/or nepotistic (2005, p. 14), as discussed in 2.1.6.

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[129] The sisters go on to express how there would be no Festival Arts if they had been required to follow the formal processes of funding bureaucracy at this early stage.

[130] It should be stressed that, contrary to what this statement might suggest, they explicitly *do not desire* funding. Throughout interviews, they describe their preference for working voluntarily and unfunded. Additionally, this tells us something about the crude understanding of place and lived cultural geography exercised by bureaucratic funding structures.

The connection that Julie and Jenny describe – between family life and their socially engaged arts practice – is one of kinship. This undergirds how they structure and think about their work, calling for closer scrutiny of dominant systems of thought used to understand amateur participation, wherein scant attention has been given to the specificities of kinship, in part because it is often folded into notions of social capital and/or habitus.

2.3.3 Kinship and cultural production – a theoretical oversight

It is necessary to divert here, to think about kinship and artistic practice theoretically, and how this relates to these groups. Locating kinship within common theories of amateur participation, socially engaged artistic work, or specifically *amateur socially engaged artistic work*, is difficult. There is little research that addresses the topic directly. On the (very) few occasions it is mentioned, it is *implied* as a constituent of social capital in schemes derivative of Bourdieu and/or Putnam, and often subject to a negative analysis – the bonding that excludes (Putnam, 2000), the frontier of nepotism (McRobbie, 2011; 2013) and a mechanism of social stratification within institutional/professionalised settings (Bourdieu, 1990a; 1993; Blackshaw and Long, 2005; Grenfell and Hardy, 2007). While Bourdieu's theorising is extensive enough to include kinship, cultural production and amateur participation, potentially providing an avenue for theorising the links between them, in practice he leads analysis to a dead end.

Taking into account the origins and scope of his work, Bourdieu might have identified a role for kinship in amateur cultural production – his early studies of kinship systems and amateur photography lay the foundations for his work on art, taste, cultural production and distinction. His widely adopted ideas can be traced directly to ethnographies of kinship systems among the farming communities of Béarn (1960) and marriage arrangements among the Kabyle of Algeria (1965, in Bourdieu, 1995a). However, while his theorising provides useful insights, he fails to identify the links between kinship and amateur artistic work that can be seen as motivating, structuring and sustaining the work of these groups. Looking first at marriage, Bourdieu situated affinal partnership in the cultural realm. His starting point was to differentiate between kinship ideology – the rules representing the ideal, symbolic arrangements – and what he called 'practical kinship' (Bourdieu, 1995a, p. 168) – wherein actors *negotiate* the possibilities that exist between habitus and the social environment. He rejected the idea that 'rules' determine kinship and proposed, instead, the familiar system of *strategy and exchange* that operates between habitus and field (social structure):

All the strategies with which agents aim to 'fall in line' with the rule and so to get the rule on their side remind us that representations, and especially kinship taxonomies, have an efficacy which, although purely symbolic, is none the less quite real. The structures of kinship fulfil a political function (like religion or any other official representation) in so far as they are used as means of knowledge and construction of the social world (Bourdieu, 1995a, p. 170).

Within a given social system, Bourdieu theorised, the official 'rules' (Bourdieu, 1995a) of affinal kinship provide a cultural-symbolic blueprint of 'ideal marriage' (Bourdieu, 1995a, p. 186), deeply embedded in the mental structures of the group and operating as dispositions of habitus. As with aesthetic judgements (1.1), feelings of love, family and kinship are misrecognised strategies of self-interest:

One sees how artificial or quite simply beside the point it is to ask questions concerning the relationship between *structures and sentiments… Socially approved love, love predisposed to succeed, is nothing other than that love of one's own social destiny that brings socially predestined partners together along the apparently random paths of free choice…* agents' dispositions [are] objectively attuned to the objective structures, in a spontaneous compliance which removes all need to point out the proprieties… agents obey the impulses of feeling or the injunctions of duty more than the calculations of interest, even when, *in doing so, they conform to the economy of the system* of constraints and demands of which their ethical and affective dispositions are the product. The denied truth of the *economy of exchanges* among kinsmen is openly expressed only in the crises which have precisely the effect of bringing back the calculation continuously repressed or sublimated into the blind generosity of feeling (Bourdieu, 1995a, p. 160, emphasis added).

Bourdieu reduces affinal kinship to the economism of self-interest. At the same time (below), he hints towards a connection between aesthetic taste and kinship, but only insofar as both adhere to the same strategies that undergird distinction and social structuration (1.1):

[E]arliest learning experiences, reinforced by all subsequent social experience, tended to shape schemes of perception and appreciation, in a word, tastes, which were applied to potential partners as to other things: and even without any directly economic or social calculation, these tastes tended to rule out misalliances (Bourdieu, 1995a, p. 160).

For Bourdieu, in the final analysis, love and marriage is a cultural system of predetermined symbolic exchanges. Sentiments and obligations of affinal kinship are tacit social strategies, wherein agents, subconsciously guided by their dispositions (habitus), negotiate to accumulate. Taste in art, attraction and love basically follow the same course. Sentimental notions of love exist only as ideological devices that grease the wheels of this covert (misrecognised) logic. Bourdieu's treatment of family – both affinal and consanguineal relations – follows a similar course. The family unit is conceptualised as 'the domestic unit' (Bourdieu, 1995a, p. 16), operating on both symbolic and social planes:

> [F]amily as an objective social category (a structuring structure) is the basis of the family as a subjective category (a structured structure), a mental category which is the matrix of countless representations and actions (e.g. marriages) which help to reproduce the objective social category. The circle is that of reproduction of the social order (Bourdieu, 1996c, p. 22).

There are two features of Bourdieu's later theorising about family that are of interest to this analysis. Firstly, he envisaged family as a 'collective subject', bound by a 'transcendent will manifesting itself in collective decisions and in which its members feel required to act as parts of a united body' (Bourdieu, 1996c, p. 24). The collective subject is organised by dispositions internalised in habitus through the 'well founded fiction' that is the 'ideological construction' of family (Bourdieu, 1996c, pp. 20–21):

> [T]he domestic unit is conceived as an active agent, endowed with a will, capable of thought, feeling and action, and founded on a set of cognitive presuppositions and normative prescriptions about the proper way to conduct domestic relationships. *It is a world in which the ordinary laws of the economy are suspended, a place of trusting and giving – as opposed to the market and its exchanges of equivalent values…* the refusal to calculate; a place where interest, in the narrow sense of the pursuit of equivalence in exchanges, is suspended (Bourdieu, 1996c, p. 20, emphasis added).

There is a shift in thinking from Bourdieu's earlier theorising on marriage and his later theorising on family, where he appears to allow, momentarily, for the ordinary laws of economy to be superseded by other motivations. However, the potential for motivations beyond the self-interested accumulation of capital is quickly diverted, as the individual family member is folded into the 'collective subject' (Bourdieu, 1996c, p. 6), accumulating and distributing 'family capital… the stock of resources a family possesses that can be consumed or invested to enhance the family's well-being and functioning… [which] can exist in the form of economic, social, and cultural resources' (Bourdieu, 1986, cited in

Waithaka, 2014, p. 472). As with individual subjects, the collective subject locates itself within broader social organisation by the levels of capital it accumulates and reproduces through 'transmission of economic, cultural and symbolic privileges' (Bourdieu, 1996c, p. 23):

> The family plays a decisive role in the maintenance of the social order, through social as well as biological reproduction, i.e. reproduction of the structure of the social space and social relations. It is one of the key sites of the accumulation of capital in its different forms and its transmission between the generations. It safeguards its unity for and through this transmission. It is the main 'subject' of reproduction strategies. That is seen clearly in the transmission of the family name, the basic element in the hereditary symbolic capital (ibid).

Secondly, Bourdieu describes a particular type of *labour* that converts the 'well founded fiction' of family (the symbolic blueprint) into the objective organisation of family as a social structure:

> To understand how the family turns from a nominal fiction into a real group whose members are united by intense affective bonds, one has to take account all of the practical and symbolic work that transforms the obligation to love into a loving disposition and tends to endow each member of the family with a 'family feeling' that generates devotion, generosity and solidarity. This means both the countless ordinary and continuous exchanges of daily existence – exchange of gifts, service, assistance, visits, attention, kindnesses – and the extra-ordinary and solemn exchanges of family occasions, often sanctioned and memorialized by photographs consecrating the integration of the assembled family (Bourdieu, 1996c, p. 22).

Here, in the practical and symbolic work that produces 'family feeling… devotion, generosity and solidarity' (ibid), Bourdieu detects, again, a connection between family kinship, creative practice and aesthetic experience. The 'family function' (which, in his theorising of amateur participation, separates the 'popular aesthetic' from more intense artistic activities – 2.1.2) makes an appearance in the symbolic work of family photographs[131]. From here, as described in 2.1.2, Bourdieu imposes limitations on this relationship – the family function signifies a lack of aesthetic competence and value, precluding it from the class-based system of aesthetic taste as distinction and, ergo, cultural production (wherein aesthetic experience is conceptualised as objectified cultural capital in the agonisms of social position-taking [Born, 2010, p. 178]). When it comes to cultural production, the

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[131] In his theorising on both kinship and amateur participation, Bourdieu encounters immediately and constantly the symbiotic relationship between kinship and aesthetic experience, which he frames as the 'popular aesthetic', bound to 'family function' (as described in 2.1.2) which is, he claims, a 'nominal fiction'.

'practical and symbolic work that transforms the obligation to love into a loving disposition' (ibid) is relegated to, at best, a peripheral concern, as attention is diverted into matters of capital and up-classing[132]. When it comes to, specifically, amateur participation, Bourdieu explicitly detaches the family function from amateur creativity and situates both outside the field of cultural production altogether. As such, his system is unable to accommodate any role for kinship in artistic work.

In Bourdieu's theorising of cultural production (Bourdieu, 1993; 1996b), kinship, if it is mentioned at all, is implied as a vaguely differentiated constituent of social capital or habitus and receives little analysis. As a species of social capital, it is the degree of power and agency afforded by the family name and connections that, as described in 2.1.2, allows those in privileged groups to circumvent amateur participation and move directly to professional artistic work. As a constituent of habitus, family kinship transmits embodied, pre-reflexive dispositions that determine taste and the cultural capital this engenders. This embodied cultural capital converts to social/economic capital when it enters the social world to unconsciously predetermine social position, acting as a beacon around which similar types coalesce. I argue that this ignores (as pre-reflexive dispositions) and/or superimposes assumptions (about self-interested strategy) that obscure the role of kinship in the intense creative activity of 'keeping dad's vision alive' (Beckett interview, Cox 17.06.2019) – voluntarily running an arts summer camp in Pembrokeshire for decades. Despite his early engagement with kinship, Bourdieu's inattention to its specificities in cultural production leaves a blind spot that can be seen running through not only his own analysis but those that utilise his analytical system:

> Few studies adopting Bourdieu's work as their inspiration have sought to explore how actors make use of kinship outside of the family. Consequently, 30 years after the publication of Bourdieu's first writings on the subject, Peter P. Schweitzer's statement still seems relevant: 'one example of such neglect is the issue of *"what kinship does"* (or more precisely, "*what people do with or against kinship"*)' (Fliche, 2006, p. 3, emphasis original).

Bourdieu's inattention to kinship is mirrored in the limited body of research that seeks to understand amateur participation (described in 2.1). The commonly adopted revisions of Putnam and Stebbins, while assuming a more communitarian tone, ultimately rely on the same kind of economism as Bourdieu – bridging and bonding capital as assets to be *acquired* and *used* to solicit advantage in social space. The serious leisure of amateurism is ultimately about feelings of accomplishment attained from

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[132] Bourdieu's writing on 'family as realized category' came late in his career, after his early work on amateur photography. One wonders whether, if he had revisited his theorising on amateur participation, more thought would have been given to kinship in his analysis.

acquiring professional-level skills (cultural capital) in, again, the cause of self-interest. Stebbins' fleeting references to 'self-actualization, self-enrichment, re-creation or renewal of self… enhancement of self-image, self-expression, social interaction and belonginess (sic)' (Stebbins, 1982, p. 257) might ostensibly allow some space for kinship to play a role in creative work, but he does not pursue the link, nor do those adopting these concepts (Nicholson, 2017; Jackson, 1993; Matarasso, 1997; 2011; Crouch et al., 2009; Walcon and Nicholson, 2017) and, as described in 2.2, the differentiation between 'career volunteers' and 'amateurism' collapses when one considers how these amateur intermediaries organise their work. The limiting notion that amateur participation is a work of self-interest (whether Putnam, Bourdieu or Stebbins) renders the ways in which family kinship can motivate and structure amateur creativity beyond analysis. Bourdieu, in particular, appears to miss this point in his conceptualisation of the popular aesthetic and its family function.

For APAA and Festival (as with others interviewed in this research) amateur socially engaged artistic work is rooted in, and motivated by, 'the refusal to calculate' (Bourdieu, 1996c, p. 20) that characterises kinship – 'where interest, in the narrow sense of the pursuit of equivalence in exchanges, is suspended' (ibid). These groups refuse to adopt discursive practice that might afford them advantage, legitimation, and cultural and economic capital within the funded field (2.2.8). Keeping dad's vision alive involves decades of personal sacrifice which, while being personal and subjective, is both altruistic and reflexive, rather than unconscious and self-interested. In the course of this research, it was notable that interviewees had never calculated, and were unable to calculate, the economic value of their voluntary work – none had ever attempted such an exercise and they were reluctant to do so.

In this way, APAA and Festival reveal the limitations of Bourdieu's theorising in particular. In contrast to Part One, where it provided a useful framework for understanding discursive practice in the funded field (an institutionalising system that distributes economic and cultural value), Bourdieu's theoretical scheme is unable to register how kinship operates as a basis for socially engaged amateur production in the work of these groups (this point will be revisited shortly – 2.3.6). Having introduced an example of kinship structuring socially engaged cultural work (2.3.2), identified the absence of this in research and theory, and probed the limitations of commonly deployed schemes of analysis, the remainder of this chapter will now demonstrate the centrality of family kinship in the work of these groups, and argue for kinship, rather than capital, as a framework for understanding these forms of cultural production.

2.3.4 Example 2: APAA and the continuum of sibling play

One routinely encounters activities that are incomprehensible within common theorising of cultural production, but make some sense (to varying degrees) through the lens of kinship. As with Festival, the genus of and motivation for APAA is firmly rooted in the obligations of family. The story begins with a mother working against the grain of cultural and education institutions to provide for her daughter:

> It all started because Anjie's daughter… wanted to play violin at school, that's how it all came about. The teacher said 'you can't do violin… you need to do vocals or something', so she [Anjie] was really annoyed by that, so Anj was like, 'right, I'm going to create something for you to do it'[133] (Powell, T. interview, Cox 24.03.2019).

AYO, and its original aesthetic (classical music), was motivated by the obligations of consanguineal kinship – a mother providing for her daughter's interests and refusing racial stereotypes issuing from cultural institutions. One is led to ask: are we to understand this as capital, a disposition of habitus, a self-interested call to serious leisure, bridging/bonding social capital, or kinship, which, according to Bourdieu, is not what cultural production is about? These questions become increasingly urgent when one considers how, since joining the group more than a decade ago, when AYO became APAA and its aesthetic style became Urban Glee, Tru and Pel have shaped APAA in the image of their sibling play. This transformation can be understood only by considering how Tru and Pel's mode of socially engaged creative activity evolved through their consanguineal relationship:

> I was 10 or 11 years old. Tru and I, we created our own talent show… there was nothing out there basically, nothing at all. I really had a passion for arts and developing art and showcasing art, and Tru had a passion for events, putting events on, making it run and equally the art. So together we just combined our skills and we literally had – it was even in a garage, it was like a row of garages – we had access to one garage literally… and different youth from the area, different young people ranging from about 8 to 14, we just literally put posters up, got interest from different people, had auditions. It's so funny because I look back and I'm doing exactly the same thing I did then as I do now, and Tru does exactly the same thing then as he does now, with APAA on a bigger scale. So my role was literally quality assurance, so all of the acts, I'd basically help support, develop – as young as 9, as young as 10 – it's crazy. I'd also, me and

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[133] Again, we encounter racial stereotypes exercised through bureaucratic cultural frameworks, as described in 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4.

Tru, would always do something at the talent show as well, as we always perform, but yeah that was my role, and then I would find myself helping and supporting Tru on the event side of things, like the running order… it's so funny because we do exactly the same thing now (Powell, P. interview, Cox 23.07.2019).

The brothers have developed a model of socially engaged cultural work through participation in each other's lives, and through what they experienced and had access to as children. They expanded their talent show through school, directing it towards social/educational benefit:

[By the age of 16] we were very established in the inner-city for working [voluntarily] with kids in schools… we did lots of work with young people, and that was doing choir work and dancing… so from the age of 16 we were doing that, it was something that was always in our diaries. We used to lead on talent shows for the schools, delivering those for the schools, so it's something we've always been involved in (Powell, T. interview, Cox 24.03.2019).

All of this was (and still is) voluntary work. The important point is that, for Tru and Pel, APAA is an activity that has evolved on a continuum from childhood play into adult life, growing organically through their consanguineal relationship into the socially engaged artistic practice that it now is[134]. As with Festival, APAA's work begins, not with the demands and expectations of cultural policy, funding or commercial imperatives (the directives of institutions, the prescribed discursive representations of the cultural field, or the acquisition of social capital attributed to amateur participation), but with the obligations, commitments and meanings that manifest in family – *kinship* – expressed through the *experience* of socially engaged creativity. Like many interviewed in this research, Pel and Tru describe being born into it, and it being a way of life.

2.3.5 Love, marriage and amateur socially engaged arts

As well as consanguineal relationships – parent, child and sibling – the amateur intermediaries interviewed draw (consistently across a broad range of socio-political contexts) on support from affinal partnerships – husbands/wives/long-term partners. These are shared, mutually affirming activities. The structuring role and value of affinal kinship in the work of these groups has already been alluded to in the preceding discussion – Festival grew from the affinal bonds between parents Jack and Joye. Now, Julie's husband Graeme is every bit as involved in the management of the group, as

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[134] The way in which Tru and Pel describe APAA, as on a continuum from their childhood, is very different from the discursive practice encountered in the funded sector, described in 1.4.

accountant, cook and facilitator. Jenny's husband Colin is musical director, facilitates sessions and co-organises. Colin, like Jenny and Julie, is present in every aspect of the work. During interviews he joins the conversation and describes Beckett family history (which is also Festival history) with as much a sense of belonging and connectedness as Jenny does. The sisters refer regularly to his role and commitment, highlighting how he has 'lost money by stopping being a teacher to do it' (Baines interview, Cox 17.06.2019). The questions posed by Fliche (2006), quoting Schweitzer, and which are unanswered by Bourdieu – 'what does kinship do?' and 'what do people do for kinship'? – are answered by the commitment and sacrifice that Colin displays in order to support Festival's socially engaged work[135].

It is, in analysis, extremely difficult (and perhaps beside the point) to know to what extent Graeme and Colin volunteer their time for their partners or for the work of Festival itself or, vice versa, to what extent Julie and Jenny continue the work of Festival because of what it provides to their affinal partnerships – cultivating participation in one another's lives through activities that bind them together. In a very real sense, the researcher enters a garden of love, where kinship, art, family ritual and affinal union entangle in ways that are in every instance unique and complex. The extent to which affinal kinship is a *catalyst for*, or an *outcome of*, creative practice is hard to gauge, appearing in these cases to have a symbiotic relationship with the socially engaged creative work. What comes across strongly is that affinal bonds are forged in, by and through these voluntary creative activities – *and this is important*. The work is a shared and meaningful experience of kinship.

It is fitting, and not insignificant, that the event that brought Tru, Pel, their partners and Anjie's youth orchestra (AYO) together was Tru's wedding:

> I got involved in 2009, me and my brother, that was to do with my wedding. To cut a long story short, I paid for a choir to perform and they cancelled last minute and I needed a choir… I was working at The Drum[136] at the time and I've seen Anj come in a few times, with a few kids and a few musicians and I was like 'this might work, give me a few weeks to work with them'… I approached and just said 'I've got this wedding, choir's just dropped out, can I work

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[135] The sisters describe how Colin 'could have been a successful composer or educator', but committed his efforts to Festival, which solicits *him* no benefits from a Bourdieusian perspective – further evidence that there is a different system of value at work.

[136] As described previously, The Drum Arts Centre (now closed) was a publicly funded venue in Aston Newtown. The venue was an NPO funded by the local authority and ACE. Tru worked on box office and as an usher. Although he worked there, in interviews he describes having no connection to the venue growing up and that, apart from his meeting Anjie there, there is no connection between the development of APAA and The Drum.

with these kids?', and Anj was like 'fine', so me and my brother worked with them... and the rest is history (Powell, T. interview, Cox 24.03.2019).

In chapter 2.5, the analysis will explore how, in the work of these intermediaries, the value of kinship extends beyond their own immediate consanguineal and affinal relationships. For now, it can be noted how discussions about affinal relationships tend to drift into discussions about how the groups produce tight bonds, often leading to long-term partnerships among participants. Jenny and Julie describe with affection how their children have established long-lasting affinal relationships through participation in the group:

> Jenny: Look at Harry [Jenny's son], my daughter-in-law came to us because her mum worked with Julie and they said, 'oh, why don't you come and do some drama with us?', she came at 14 and now she's my daughter-in-law!... I think I have a different relationship with my daughter-in-law, as a daughter-in-law, because I've known her since she was 14, and she's known me since she was 14! (Baines interview, Cox 15.07.2019).

> Julie: ... and it's happening again with my children, my daughter-in-law, my son and she got together at 14 and they were both at Festival, they're 23 now (Baines and Beckett interview, Cox 15.07.2019).

Julie and Jenny refer to many enduring affinal relationships that have emerged through Festival over the years, highlighting examples of participants who have met as teenagers, entered into either official (marriage) or lifelong affinal partnerships, and later volunteered to support Festival in adult life. Similarly, Tru and Pel take pride in the relationships that have developed between participants as a result of the close bonds forged through APAA:

> There's been quite a few long-term relationships, one marriage, two engagements. It's no coincidence the directors are all married, which perhaps sets a role model. We spend 8 to 10 hours a week together, it becomes a second family, everyone is living in each other's pockets – of course relationships are birthed! (Powell, T. interview, Cox 12.05.2020).

What is signalled here, for further analysis in 2.5, is that the feelings and value of kinship extend beyond the immediate, into the wider community of the groups. The feeling that 'it becomes a second family' (ibid) was a very common sentiment across the amateur groups interviewed.

2.3.6 Kinship not capital

The extent to which family (consanguineal and affinal) and creative work become entangled is compelling in the work of these groups. The taxing and, in terms of capital and exchange, useless enterprise of Festival Summer Camp only makes sense through the lens of kinship. 'Keeping dad's vision alive' is a vital part of how the sisters experience the work (this will be seen further in 2.4 and 2.5). While the 'inherited' nature of Festival (Baines interview, Cox 15.07.2019) and the sense of hereditary obligation might ostensibly correspond with Bourdieu's accommodating 'habitus' (a disposition towards this type of work received through upbringing), the reader should be convinced that what the sisters do for kinship in 'keeping dad's vision alive' is rather more involved, conscious, purposeful and reflexive than merely playing out an unconscious disposition (if not, the discussion in chapter 2.5 should settle the matter).

In the work of these groups we encounter the dead end of Bourdieu's handling of kinship, and his inattention to how this might propagate creative production and aesthetic experience beyond the family function of the 'popular aesthetic' (Bourdieu, 1990a). As argued by Born (2010), King (2016) and others, Bourdieu's relegation of powerful, subjective motivations (including kinship and aesthetics) to habitus leads to an 'unpersuasive account of subjectivity which fails to probe its complexities… Indeed, in his scheme there appears to be no space for subjectivity, which is portrayed as unitary and as filled up by the dispositions of the habitus' (Born, 2010, p. 181). Anthony King argues that while Bourdieu's habitus may have sought to resolve the dualism between structure and agency, objective and subjective, his loose and at times contradictory use of the concept has made it an 'unwitting reversion to objectivism' (King, 2016, p. 422) – a valid observation that this analysis agrees with. Referring directly to Bourdieu's studies of kinship, King argues that

> by casting a shroud of deadening objectivism over living interactions between virtuosic individuals… habitus reduces social reproduction to the mechanical imposition of prior social structure onto the practices of individuals, returning to the very systemic image of social life which Bourdieu initially rejected in his critique of structuralist accounts of gift exchange (King, 2016, p. 429).

In Part One, I used Bourdieu's analytic framework to argue that, in the funded field, socially engaged art is, primarily, a discursive practice. Is there a contradiction in arguing against Bourdieu here? I think not. His scheme is effective in locations where economic capital and hierarchy structure strategies, in locations that are discernible as a field (Lahire, 2015, p. 74) [2.1.2]. The funded arts is, by definition,

structured by the competition for economic capital, producing discourses that are, as described in Part One, clearly euphemised struggles orientated towards the particular end of economy, position and power. It should be clear from the extracts given so far that these amateur intermediaries produce discourses that are very different, subjective and self-determinate. They did not, unless asked, contextualise their work in terms of economic value in relation to others. When asked this type of question, they struggled, and demonstrated little interest or knowledge regarding the specifics of actors in the funded (or any other) field, other than describing a sense that they do not fit, and that funding exudes symbolic violence in the ways described in 2.1.7 and 2.2.8. When it came to the work of others (professional or amateur) interviewees appeared, on the whole, indifferent. Further, they did not present their work in terms of connectedness to community in the competitive ways described in 1.4.6. They did not talk much about engaging communities at all. Instead, notions of community were suggested in more immediate, intimate, subjective terms. As will be seen in 2.5, they talked in detail about individual participants: their character, their family, the friends they made in the group, what they went on to do and where they are now. They also (as described in 2.3.2, 2.3.4 and 2.3.5) talked about their own families – parents, siblings, partners and family history – topics absent from interviews with participants in the funded field. With professionals in receipt of public money, such subjective discourses are strategically suppressed (see 1.4.9 and 1.4.10).

The responses from amateur socially engaged intermediaries were difficult to understand using analytical schemes built upon field, competition, economism and self-interest. As will be seen, these intermediaries' discourses and practices are not transmuted forms of economic capital orientated towards self-interested position-taking or up-classing. In short, they are 'not about the money' (Powell, P. interview, Cox 21.09.2019) or capital in any euphemised sense. Keeping dad's vision alive (Beckett interview, Cox 17.06.2019) and 'doing exactly the same thing… then as… now' (Powell, P. interview, Cox 23.07.2019) are, instead, sophisticated forms of cultural work that unite kinship and aesthetic experience, maintaining bonds with lost relatives, theatre-making and the Pembrokeshire landscape, and altruistically supporting young people. Festival and APAA are all about kinship: the obligation of parent to child, child to parent/sibling/partner and the continuum of sibling play experienced through socially engaged creativity – kinship expressed through the aesthetics of Urban Glee or a Shakespeare play *as altruistic voluntary work*. For Tru and Pel, APAA is intrinsically and emotionally linked to a family wedding – affinal union. This brings meaning to the experience of their cultural work that is difficult to conceptualise in terms of capital, exchange and/or serious leisure. However, it is the genus of complex socially engaged creativity that, according to Bourdieu, by performing the symbolic work of the 'family feeling that generates devotion, generosity and solidarity'

Bourdieu, 1996c, p. 22) should be limited to the 'solemn exchanges of family occasions… sanctioned and memorialized by photographs consecrating the integration of the assembled family' (ibid), excluding more complex forms of aesthetic practice/cultural production altogether.

The role of kinship in the work of these groups is not reducible to capital, exchange and self-interest. Further, the specific way in which it connects with and structures the aesthetics of amateur cultural work is difficult to reconcile with the motivation of up-classing, self-interested amateurism. It is a complex, purposeful and reflexive form of experience that Bourdieu's objectifying system of habitus, capital and exchange fails to grasp. What interviewees present under analysis is cultural work that is simultaneously a work on, with and for kinship in all its registers.

2.3.7 Conclusion

In this chapter I have introduced the most consistent, central and striking theme to emerge from interviews with amateur socially engaged intermediaries – kinship. In thinking about how kinship acts as a catalyst and motivation for their altruistic and autonomous socially engaged creative work (work that has been sustained for decades), we encounter the inadequacy of dominant theories of capital and self-interest that one finds in extant analysis of amateur production. The foundational role of kinship that these intermediaries describe is intrinsically bound to the aesthetic experience of their altruistic creative work, in ways that cannot be apprehended by reductive notions of habitus, exchange or field, or the acquisition of favourable terms through bridging or bonding social capital, or self-interested serious leisure. The centrality of kinship in the work of these groups calls for a different approach to understanding this form of work, which escapes the economism of capital and the ambiguities of habitus, to create a space for kinship as a motivation that solicits astonishing amounts of voluntary effort, creates new modes of aesthetic practice and realises significant, unseen, social benefits.

2.4 An alternative approach: the aesthetic phase of mutuality of being

2.4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters (2.2 and 2.3), the socially engaged nature of these amateur groups has revealed the limitations of dominant theories of amateur participation, particularly Bourdieu's extensive work on cultural production and participation. By assuming that amateur production is a work of self-interest directed towards social status, extant schemes of analysis obscure the vital role of kinship and aesthetic experience. In this chapter, I propose an alternative approach that allows space for the motivations amateur intermediaries describe as playing a role in their creative work, revealing an intrinsic relationship between kinship, creativity and aesthetic experience. Exploring what these intermediaries do with, and for, kinship – specifically, *the aesthetic experience of kinship* – provides a more refined approach to analysis. It avoids the tendency to understand amateur production in terms of social hierarchies, and of status in relation to professionalised forms, instead illuminating specificities and complexities absent from existing research, i.e. what motivates and structures intermediation, how altruism contributes to aesthetic experience, and the broader social potential of amateur practices.

The chapter begins with a clarification and expansion of what kinship is, adopting the concept of 'mutuality of being' (Sahlins, 2011a) to take kinship forward as a basis for analysis (2.4.2). From here, the discussion introduces John Dewey's largely overlooked (in arts and cultural studies) conceptualisation of experience (2.4.3), before exploring his theorising of 'Art *as* Experience' (1958, published originally in 1934), relating this to the work of Festival and APAA to illuminate how mutuality of being is intrinsically bound with artistic expression in the *aesthetic phase of experience* (2.4.5). This provides the alternative conceptual framework that is employed in revisiting the case studies in the remaining chapter and appendix.

2.4.2 Mutuality of being

The proposition I am making is that these amateur socially engaged activities are structured and organised by the intrinsic relationship between kinship and aesthetic experience. Having introduced the structuring role of kinship in its most commonly understood form – obligations to family (brothers/sisters/parents/children/affinal partners) – a more refined and inclusive conceptualisation of kinship can be drawn from contemporary kinship studies, in preparation for the less immediate kinship relationships that will be addressed in 2.5. The generally accepted, uncontentious view in contemporary kinship studies, shared by Bourdieu (1995a; 1996c), Schneider (1984; 1996), Sahlins

(2011a; 2011b; Carsten, 2013) and others (see Allan, 1996; Sousa, 2003; Fliche, 2006; Kronenfeld, 2012), is that kinship operates on both genealogical and symbolic planes but is, above all, a *cultural* matter. During the 20th century, artificial insemination, adoption, marriage and parenthood among same-sex couples[137] has accelerated an upheaval in ideas about how kinship is organised, understood, realised and communicated in modern societies, contesting head-on the genealogical principle that was traditionally seen to be the core of kinship (Godelier, 2011, p. 10). Maurice Godelier posits that these developments are 'undeniable proof that parenthood is basically not biological but social, thus confirming a thesis dear to many kinship specialists' (Godelier, 2011, p. 11).

The thesis to which Godelier refers is that kinship, as a system of social organisations, is a cultural practice that, as theorised by Bourdieu, exists in the symbolic domain – constructed and performative. Genealogical factors are important, but are not what kinship is all about (Kronenfeld, 2012). A leading exponent of the cultural-semiotic basis of kinship is David Schneider, who noted:

> [A]ll of the symbols of… kinship seem to 'say' one thing: they provide for relationships of diffuse, enduring solidarity. 'Diffuse' because they are functionally diffuse rather than specific… there is no… limitation on the aim or goal of any kinship relationship. Instead the goal is 'solidarity,' that is, the 'good' or 'well being' or 'benefit' of ego with alter. Whatever it is that is 'good for' the family, the spouse, the child, the relative, is the 'right' thing to do. And 'enduring' in the generalized sense symbolized by 'blood'; there is no built-in termination point or termination date (Schneider, 1977, p. 67).

Schneider argued that, as a symbolic system, 'diffuse, enduring solidarity' (ibid) is not unique to kinship, pointing to parallels in the structuring properties of nationalism and religion. This marks a bifurcation in contemporary kinship studies. One perspective, following Schneider, argues that because the signs of kinship are not unique to kinship – 'kinship… is a non-subject' – it can be explained by objective social-symbolic systems and has no notable specificity (Schneider, 1972, p. 59, cited in Sahlins, 2011a, p. 8). This is not the view shared by this thesis, which identifies multiple registers of 'diffuse, enduring solidarity' (or, to use Bourdieu's terminology, locations where 'the ordinary laws of the economy are suspended' (Bourdieu, 1996c, p. 20) in the work of these groups. Interviewees describe a first family (consanguineal, affinal) and 'a second family' (the group) (Powell, T. interview, Cox 12.05.2020), together inculcating a 'family feeling that generates devotion, generosity and solidarity' (Bourdieu, 1996c, p. 22) between lost relatives, family members, affinal partners, friends

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[137] Once repressed but now largely accepted in many western liberal-democratic societies

and participants. These associations have particular, specifiable qualities that cannot be swept away because they work together (in vital ways) to motivate and structure the creative work of these groups.

Rather than ignore the specificities of kinship and defer to objective social organisation (leading in the direction of Bourdieu's theorising, problematised previously in 2.1.2, 2.3.3 and 2.3.6), Marshall Sahlins' conceptualisation of kinship takes analysis in a different direction. The argument that kinship is 'a non-subject' is strongly refuted by many, including Sahlins, who views the proposition as a theoretical non-sequitur – a postmodern dead end that drives kinship to the ontological impasse where so many deconstructive arguments come to rest (Sahlins, 2011a, p. 5). Sahlins argues that Schneider, and those who follow him, fail to account for the specificities of particular kinship relationships that are vital to understanding social organisation in its complexity (Sahlins, 2011a, p. 12). In short, different registers of kinship, whether cultural, genealogical or symbolic, may possess similar structuring properties, but this does not mean that they are the same, that these qualities work in the same way, or that kinship as a social phenomenon should therefore be abandoned as an approach to analysis.

Drawing on the examples given, differences can be seen in the way in which participants relate their work to lost relatives (2.3.2), the ongoing experience of sibling play (2.3.4), affinal bonds (2.3.5) and, as will also be seen, to propagating tight social bonds between/among participants (2.4). These are all different motivations of kinship that are experienced differently but work together to structure these participatory creative activities, which are created *by* and *for kinship*. As such, they do not correspond to the self-interested accumulation and exchange that underpins common approaches to analysis. Sahlins takes Schneider's broadening of kinship as the basis for a more refined theorising of kinship through his concept of 'mutuality of being' which, he argues, has 'the virtue of describing the various means by which kinship may be constituted, whether natally or postnatally, from pure biology to pure performance and any combination thereof' (Sahlins, 2011a, p. 14). Without abandoning the specificities of particular kin relations, Sahlins argues that 'much is gained by privileging *intersubjective being* over the singular person as a composite site of multiple others' and that a kinship system is 'a manifold of participations, founded on mutualities of being' (Sahlins, 2011a, p. 10, emphasis added). Sahlins' mutuality of being describes kinship as participation in one another's existence through relationships that bind the development and direction of lives together. This framing allows for various instances of shared nurture, biography, residence, and cultural and social connectedness to be studied *as kinship*, without abandoning the specificities of the obligations and rites contained within those

relationships (Sahlins, 2011a) or reverting to the mechanistic economism of self-interest within objective social structure:

> The constructed modes [performative/informal] of kinship are like those predicated on birth precisely as they involve the transmission of life capacities among persons. If love and nurture, giving food or partaking in it together, working together, living from the same land, mutual aid, sharing the fortunes of migration residents, as well as adoption and marriage, are so many grounds of kinship, they all know with procreation the meaning of participating in one another's life. I take the risk: all means of constituting kinship are in essence the same (Sahlins, 2011a, p. 14).

There is more that unites Sahlins and Schneider than divides them here. Both identify forms of social organisation that operate somewhat differently to systems of strategy, capital and exchange. Schneider's description of the meanings carried through the symbols of kinship in religion and nationalism[138] – 'diffuse, enduring solidarity' – align comfortably with Sahlins' mutuality of being. And in arguing that, as a sign system, kinship symbols are not unique to traditional conceptualisations of kinship, he outlines how these symbols *produce,* and can be seen *as distinctive features of*, a particular system of social organisation. For example, his description of how the signs of 'diffuse, enduring solidarity' differentiate between home and work provides an alternative starting point for thinking about amateur socially engaged cultural intermediation:

> What one does at home, it is said, one does for love, not for money, while what one does at work one does strictly for money, not for love. Money is material, it is power, it is impersonal and universalistic, unqualified by considerations of sentiment and morality. Relations of work and money are temporary, transient, contingent. Love on the other hand is highly personal and particularistic, and beset with considerations of sentiment and morality. Where love is spiritual, money is material. Where love is enduring and without qualification, money is transient and contingent. And finally, it is personal considerations which are paramount in love – who the person is, not how well he performs, while with work and money it does not matter who he is, but only how well he performs his task. Money is in this sense impersonal (Schneider, 1977, p. 66)[139].

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[138] I do not want to suggest that religion and nationalism are outside systems of capital, strategy, exchange and power. The point here is that, within these systems, Schneider and Sahlins observe other structures of value and meaning – symbolic and practical – that organise and bind groups together.

[139] It should also be acknowledged that the distinction between work and home and public and private has been critiqued by feminism and queer theory for many years, proving that such distinctions are far from outside systems of power and social

Returning to the socially engaged creative work of APAA and Festival, the ideas developed in kinship studies shift the focus from capital and strategy to love, sacrifice, altruism and the blurred lines between home and work (a theme that will be relevant in 2.5.5). It should be clear by now that what these intermediaries describe as the motivation for and purpose of their work aligns more comfortably with 'mutuality of being' and/or 'diffuse, enduring solidarity' than with self-interested leisure, or Bourdieusian 'games of struggles' for capital within fields and/or up-classing. Indeed, what characterises these groups is their *rejection* of these hierarchies, their refusal to participate in the games of status and position (engendered in the bureaucracy and discursive practice of the funded field [Part One]), and their altruistic focus on young people:

> Almost all of them gradually become part of the group and become valued by the group, and there isn't a pecking order, as there might be in a team – who's good at this, who's the best, none of that happens because they're working together and – it's almost like playing – it is an extension of play, that's the sort of drama we do (Beckett interview, Cox 15.10.2019).

> [I]t's about young people, it's the lives you're affecting and changing, the impact that you're having. So that is beautiful. But, at the same time… because of the lives that you are affecting, the emotional baggage that you're taking home sometimes, the lack of appreciation from the young people… that's hard (Powell, P. interview, Cox 23.07.2019).

Revisiting these statements through the lens of kinship, we are no longer compelled to reduce what they convey to naïve sentiments that 'misrecognise' the true nature of cultural work – distinction and self-interest – but, instead, we view them as the intrinsic motivation of mutuality of being as the basis for, and structure of, unique forms of socially engaged creativity. The efficacy of mutuality of being as a tool for understanding these motivations to amateur socially engaged creativity will become more evident in the chapter that follows, where analysis will explore how these intermediaries, in very deliberate, cognisant and sophisticated ways, create environments in which close kinship bonds between participants can be forged (2.5). As a precursor to this discussion, it can be noted that when asked 'why do all this for young people?', the answer from Julie, Jenny, Pel and Tru was simply 'love' – a motivation that arose on numerous occasions, and has been observed by others:

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stratification. The point here is that, in this, Schneider identifies meanings and values, present in various aspects of social organisations, that are beyond systems of capital, strategy and exchange. This may appear to suggest a dualism, i.e. one cannot love one's work. Schneider presents this example to illustrate a point, but recognises the complexity in his analysis.

Jenny: [I]nformally you've got your comments like 'I've sussed you, you just love them all'… on the whole we do, we just like them, we've not come across many kids who have been really unpleasant and difficult…

Julie: … and if they have, you love them through that… (Baines and Beckett interview, Cox 17.06.2019).

Julie: [W]hen Tim came and saw half the kids in Queensbridge *(a school in Moseley, Birmingham)* on the stage, and said I've clocked you now, I like what you're doing…

Jenny: I know what you are doing, I think the school had better buy another minibus! So that we can support you in the summer…

Julie: I know what you're doing because a) I like your friendship system, he said and b) you just love them don't you… (Baines and Beckett interview, Cox 17.09.2019).

Sahlins' mutuality of being allows analysis to take seriously the role of what Jenny and Julie describe as a 'friendship system' as a basis for creativity, without reducing it to capital and/or self-interest.

In *Kinship and Friendship in Modern Britain* (1996) Graham Allan suggested that broadening the scope of kinship to include friendship provides a more germane approach to understanding how social actions (like the work of these groups) are mobilised. Summarising the surprisingly limited body of research to address friendship, Allan noted that it is through friendships, albeit transient, that people 'develop attachments and form commitments, come to appreciate their place within the social order, and co-operate with each other in generating change' (Allan, 1996, p. 1). Sjaak van der Geest draws upon a significant body of research to argue that friendships are, in essence, the purest form of kinship and should be taken as the starting point for understanding traditional kinship systems. His study of sibling relationships highlights how unfriendly, disconnected, competitive and unpleasant these can be, arguing that 'relatedness based solely on voluntarily created ties of affection [friendship] is closer to an ideal of kinship than that based on biological reproduction' (Carsten, 2000, p. 73, cited in Van der Geest, 2013, p. 69). Van der Geest supports this view with a catalogue of studies that argue his point:

Consanguineal siblings are… born into an inherently ambivalent relationship, a matter that may account for the restraint that surrounds their interaction. Created sibling relationships are not only as good as natural ones, they are potentially better. They are an improvement on nature in the sense that they allow for the purest expression of 'brotherly love'… The paradox is that people choose kinship terms to express love and affection, apparently assuming that the truest love is found in [traditional notions of] kinship, such as between siblings. But, at the same time, they recognize that a voluntarily chosen relationship is more precious and carries deeper emotional satisfaction than one that has been thrown on them. It would have been more 'correct,' one could argue, to use terms of love and friendship to express dear kinship relations (Van der Geest, 2013, p. 69).

The point Van der Geest makes is that 'a rigid analytical distinction between friendship and kinship is not helpful to understanding how kinship works. Amity—or friendship—enters the domain of kin relations. "True kinship" is not determined by birth but by morality: voluntary altruism and generosity' (Van der Geest, 2013, p. 68). Van der Geest's approach (shared by Sahlins' mutuality of being) performs two important tasks. Firstly, it broadens the scope of kinship studies to include friendship and, secondly, it reverses the emphasis from the rules and rites of hereditary obligation to voluntary altruism and generosity as the vital properties of kinship. These developments arising in contemporary kinship studies allow this analysis to extend the discussion relating to family in the previous chapter to matters of friendship in the next, without reducing 'voluntary altruism and generosity' (ibid) to capital, and giving due consideration to the motivations and feelings these intermediaries attach to their work.

What these intermediaries describe (in the previous chapters and again in 2.5), is mutuality of being experienced through creative praxis and, I argue (further in 2.5), that this is the primary motivation that brings meaning, form and structure to their work. Sahlins' concept, that begins from 'participation in one another's existence' (Sahlins, 2011a, p. 9) through relationships that bind the development and direction of lives together, provides an alternative approach to understanding these intrinsic motivations – motivations rendered invisible by analytical schemes that superimpose mechanistic systems of self-interest, while dismissing subjective sentiments of love, friendship and altruism as either misrecognition (Bourdieu) or by-products (Putnam). Taking mutuality of being as a basis for artistic work, the question that follows is: how does this motivation interact/co-operate with the creative, aesthetic aspects of artistic work? Or to put it another way, what is it about artistic work that

lends itself to the experience of mutuality being described by these interviewees? This leads to the second theoretical pillar of the approach I am advocating.

2.4.3 Experience

The argument I am making is that mutuality of being is *expressed* through the *experience* of amateur socially engaged artistic work, and that this *experience is aesthetic* – enhanced through artistic practice. This is revealed vividly through the theoretical work of John Dewey's *Art as Experience* (1958). It is remarkable how little has been said, in general, about the nature of *experience* in the body of research that addresses amateur and/or professional cultural production. Bourdieu's analysis of amateur photography, focusing as it does on an 'economy of exchanges' (Bourdieu, 1995, p. 160), is wholly unconcerned with *how* participants experience participation in camera clubs, or how 'social', 'cultural' and 'symbolic' capital play out *as experiences*. In contemporary studies of amateur participation (2.1), the nature of experience lurks in the background, behind the acquisition of skills through serious leisure (Stebbins) or bridging/bonding social capital (Putnam), but it is rarely brought into analysis. While most would agree that artists, cultural intermediaries and participants are in the business of *creating experiences and experiencing*, these experiences appear in theoretical discussions as forums or by-products – the hollowed out temporal dynamics of social fields as forums for exchange. They themselves have no efficacy or role. This common oversight was strongly rebuked by Dewey, for whom

> [e]xperience includes what men do and suffer, what they strive for, love, believe, and endure, and how men act and are acted upon, the ways in which they do and suffer, desire and enjoy, see, believe, imagine – in short, processes in experiencing… It is 'double-barrelled' in that it recognizes in its primary integrity no division between act and material, subject and object, but contains them both in an unanalysed totality. 'Thing' and 'thought'… are single-barrelled; they refer to products discriminated by reflection out of primary experience (Dewey, 1929, cited in Muhit, 2013, p. 16).

Dewey developed an analytic approach that challenged the conventions of philosophical thought that tend to separate experience from nature, and thus organise matters into those of experience (*subjective)* and those of nature (*objective)*. For Dewey, it is in experience – the interaction between organism and environment – that 'the world enters into man's life in a more intimate and internal way: "The world we have experienced becomes an integral part of the self that acts and is acted upon in further experience" (Dewey, 1958, p. 104, cited in Muhit, 2013, p. 17). Pre-empting

deconstructionists such as Derrida, Rorty and Butler, Dewey's approach unpicked epistemological dualisms between mind, body and environment, bringing these together in his unifying theory of experience, which highlighted the interaction between organism and environment to reveal 'the ecological connectedness of conduct and communication' (Hildebrand, 2008, p. 150). While it is not possible to fully explicate the scope of Dewey's pragmatism here, we can grasp that which is relevant to this analysis without reducing its broader potential.

2.4.4 Art as experience

Dewey argued that the dualisms carried through extant theories of art and aesthetics have devalued art's place in philosophical thought, separated arts participation from the lives of most people and limited our understanding of aesthetic experience in everyday life[140]. Chief among these problematic dualisms are the preconceived, rigid and narrow definitions of what art is and, therefore, what it is not. These definitions, Dewey argued, begin from the ends of art – objects, performances, poems and so on – rather than the impulses, motivations and processes that bring these 'expressive objects' into being. This has had the effect of separating artistic from aesthetic, instituting further dualisms between artist and appreciator, perception and expression (creativity), expression and the expressive object (art itself). Approaches that begin from these compartmentalising ends, Dewey argued, result in a 'conception of art that "spiritualizes" it out of connection with objects of concrete experience' (Dewey, 1958, p. 11):

> When artistic objects are separated from both conditions of origin and operation in experience, a wall is built around them that renders almost opaque their general significance… Art is remitted to a separate realm, where it is cut off from that association with the materials and aims of every other form of human effort, undergoing, and achievement (Dewey, 1958, p. 3).

Dewey proposed a radical reappraisal of what art is and does that collapsed these dualisms and reconstructed the aesthetic from the basic elements of experience – 'the physical, sensory, psychic functions many creatures, including humans, share' (Hildebrand, 2008, p. 148). He began by recognising the simple, but often overlooked, fact that aesthetic experience arrives through the same biological and sensory apparatus as all experiences of the ongoing interaction between organisms and

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[140] Dewey argued that art is 'the greatest intellectual achievement in human history' (Dewey, 1958, p. 31), contesting its common philosophical rendering as 'un-intellectual' – merely catharsis – expressing ideas and emotion through the codification of symbols, often opposed to, or less than, intellectual rationality.

environment. From this perspective, Dewey argued that aesthetic experience is not unique to those things we commonly identify as 'aesthetic objects' (such as art, natural landscape, dance and music):

> In order to *understand* the aesthetic in its ultimate and approved forms, one must begin with it in the raw; in the events and scenes that hold the attentive eye and ear of man, arousing his interest and affording him enjoyment as he looks and listens: the sights that hold the crowd – the fire-engine rushing by; the machines excavating enormous holes in the earth; the human-fly climbing the steeple-side; the men perched high in air on girders, throwing and catching red-hot bolts. The sources of art in human experience will be learned by him who sees how the tense grace of the ball-player infects the onlooking crowd… the zest of the spectator in poking the wood burning on the hearth and in watching the darting flames and crumbling coals. These people, if questioned as to the reason for their actions, would doubtless return reasonable answers. The man who poked the sticks of burning wood would say he did it to make the fire burn better; but he is none the less fascinated by the colorful drama of change enacted before his eyes and imaginatively partakes in it. He does not remain a cold spectator (Dewey, 1958, p. 5, emphasis original)[141].

For Dewey, to understand aesthetics and creativity and, further, how these motivate artistic practice, participation and cultural production/consumption, 'aesthetic theory must restore continuity between the refined and intensified forms of experience that are works of art and the everyday events, doings, and sufferings that are universally recognized to constitute experience' (Dewey, 1958, p. 3). From this practical starting point, Dewey described the aesthetic properties of art *as processes in the nature of experience*. The *work* of art is neither in the object nor in the perceiver, but in their partnership and collaboration in experience. The bedrock of Dewey's aesthetic theory is in his differentiation between experience and '*an* experience' (Dewey, 1958, p. 35, emphasis original)[142]. Dewey proposed that while the ongoing conditions of living are continuously, unremarkably and often unconsciously experienced, *an* experience has form:

> [W]e have an experience when the material experienced runs its course to fulfilment. Then, and then only is it integrated within and demarcated in the general stream of experience from other experiences. A piece of work is finished in a way that is satisfactory; a problem receives its solution; a game is played through; a situation, whether that of eating a meal, playing a

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[141] We have to excuse the dated language in Dewey's writing

[142] He also used the terms 'consummatory', 'integral' and 'vital' experience. For convenience, I will use 'integral'.

game of chess, carrying on a conversation, writing a book or taking part in a political campaign is so rounded out, that its close is a consummation and not a cessation. Such an experience is a whole and carries with it its own individualizing quality and self-sufficiency. It is *an* experience (Dewey, 1958, p. 35, emphasis original).

For Dewey, these forms of experience have the potential for aesthetic quality, and exist on a continuum from everyday life to refined art objects. This brings forward the logical possibility that *kinship* can have aesthetic properties when 'rounded out' and 'demarcated' from 'the general stream of experience' (ibid). This idea finds support in the statements from intermediaries provided thus far, such as Pel's account of the social impact of APAA's work – the 'beautiful' thing (Powell, P. interview Cox, 23.07.2019) – and the consistent difficulty interviewees have in separating artistic work from family life and the feelings solicited from the growth and development of, and the bonds between, young participants – these are all things *experienced*.

Festival and APAA's work can certainly be described as integral experience. In fact, it is a conscious structure of multiple interconnecting integral experiences. Each workshop is organised, structured, rounded out, individualised and 'demarcated from the general stream of experience' (Dewey, 1958, p. 35) by its temporal, creative and social parameters to solicit (in a sophisticated way) meanings and rewards that can be understood only via what these intermediaries bring through *perception*, leading to another important and useful component of Dewey's aesthetic theory:

> An experience has pattern and structure, because it is not just doing and undergoing in alternation but consists of them in relationship. To put one's hand in the fire that consumes it is not necessarily to have an experience. The action and its consequence must be joined in perception. This relationship is what gives meaning; to grasp it is the object of intelligence (Dewey, 1958, p. 44).

The proposition Dewey advances is that aesthetic experience is a process involving *both* perception and expression in union. This provides the avenue for rescuing important subjective motivations and meanings from Bourdieu's deadening, unanalysed dispositions of habitus (Born, 2010, p. 181) and bringing them to life in the production of aesthetic experience (cultural production), rather than dismissing them as misrecognition and deferring to objective structures. Dewey departs from traditional approaches by dissolving the dualisms between perception and expression, artist and perceiver. This approach calls for analysis to 'avoid reducing art to making or appreciating but [to] see

how both phases are central to the experience of both artist and appreciator (Hildebrand, 2008, p. 160). Within this framing, perception carries past experience into the present, thus participating in the construction of new, unique experiences for both creator and perceiver. When an artist makes, he/she 'perceives' what he/she is doing and undergoing, striving to embody 'the attitude of the perceiver while he[/she] works' (Dewey, 1958, p. 55). In this sense, both sides of the process are participatory and collaborative in experience. In both locations, making and perceiving, perception and expression symbiotically realise what Dewey termed 'the aesthetic phase of experience'. We need not look far into the testimonies already provided to see how perception carries meaning and feelings from past experience into the present work of these groups (i.e. 2.2.2, 2.2.3, 2.3.2, 2.3.4) or, as will be described in 2.5, how they seek to capture 'the attitude of the perceiver' in both their instrumental efforts with young participants and the creative productions themselves (Shakespeare play or Urban Glee).

What consolidates aesthetic experience, Dewey theorised, is the organising work of emotion, which, again, he conceptualised with an originality that allows us to think more deeply about the role of emotion in structuring creative/aesthetic work, and thus, the work of these cultural intermediaries. Dewey vigorously opposed the common conceptualisation of emotion as an irrational 'species of confused thought, which, once clarified can reach the status of cognition' (Hildebrand, 2008, p. 26), cognition being *the best* way to 'access reality and determine what is truly good' (ibid). For Dewey, emotion is *intellect*, central to integral experience and 'indispensable to such experiential processes as logic, ethics, science, art and religion' (Hildebrand, 2008, p. 26). His rendering of emotion emphasises the integrated whole of both feeling *and* expression in response to sensory and external conditions, diverging significantly from conventional accounts in which a subject 'has' this incredibly private, subjective mental event called an emotion (ibid):

> [E]motion emerges from the fluid boundary connecting organism and event, 'called out by objects physical and personal' as an intentional 'response to an objective situation'. Frequently that response is one that inhibits what one was previously undergoing (Dewey, 1929, cited in Hildebrand, 2008, p. 28).

Emotion then, arises in, organises, binds and redirects experience. Engagement with the material world filters through perception to excite emotion, creating a unity of environment, body and mind, and this produces the aesthetic phase of experience:

It is not possible to divide in a vital [integral] experience the practical, emotional and intellectual from one another and to set the properties of one over and against the characteristics of the others. The emotional phase binds parts together into a single whole; intellectual simply names the fact that the experience has meaning; practical indicates that the organism is interacting with events and objects that surround it. The most elaborate philosophic or scientific enquiry and the most ambitious industrial or political enterprise has, when its different ingredients constitute an integral experience, aesthetic quality (Dewey, 1958, p. 55).

From this perspective, there is no line to be drawn that separates object from subject and situates emotion solely in the latter. Emotion is 'not an intrusion into an otherwise harmonious and rational order' (Hildebrand, 2008, p. 28) but arises naturally *within* experience 'because experience is in a rhythmic alteration from stable to precarious and back' (ibid). We act, perceive, understand and interact *with* emotion in experience and so, in this way, emotion is both *feeling* and *expression,* constituted by the experience of the interaction between subject and object – organism and environment. Set against more familiar approaches based upon systems of capital and exchange, Dewey's approach and language may appear abstract. However, it becomes less so when applied to the testimonies of these intermediaries. The artistic, social and kinship elements of their work are not experienced separately, but together, organised by perception and united by emotion into particular *aesthetic* experiences. The emotions issuing from their *perception* of the bonds between, and the development of, young people, recall lost parents and/or childhood play in new experiences (organised into a commensurate structure, i.e. a workshop/rehearsal/show) unifying in the aesthetic phase of experience.

I argue that it is this that motivates these intermediaries' work*,* as it likely does many similar configurations of cultural activity. As Jenny tells me, 'it's not entirely altruistic – it is incredibly rewarding' (Beckett interview, Cox 15.07.2019). The reward, however, is not capital that solicits advantage in social hierarchy, but the 'beautiful thing' (Powell, P. interview, Cox 23.07.2019), which is the aesthetic experience of mutuality of being solicited through artistic work – *what they do with and for kinship* (Fliche, 2006). This would seem to be what structures their activities above all other concerns – every decision organised to *express* the aesthetic of mutuality of being through the *experience of creativity.* This accounts far more effectively, for example, for the impracticalities of Festival Summer Camp in St Davids, the choice to work voluntarily, and the sacrifice of sharing, rather than gaining, skills. This leads to the final (but by no means exhaustive) feature of Dewey's theorising,

which binds the aesthetic experience of 'mutuality of being' to creative work (Urban Glee/Theatre) specifically. Dewey unites the 'act of expression' (creativity and perception) and the 'expressive object' (the artwork itself). To explain this sufficiently, we need to backtrack slightly to clarify what 'expression' meant for Dewey as a composite site of perception and expression.

Dewey carefully located the act of expression in everyday experience without recourse to the common assumption that it is some special property of art. He began from the simple proposition that all experiences (whether self-directed or imposed) begin with an impulse. An impulse does not constitute an experience until it has been 'discharged' and 'undergoes' a process of 'becoming' *an* experience (Dewey, 1958, pp. 58–81). In the process of 'becoming', an impulse interacts with the external world, meeting 'things on its outbound course that deflect and oppose it' (Dewey, 1958, p.59). It is through this opposition that it becomes a *conscious 'undergoing'*. There is a 'transformation of energy into thoughtful action, through assimilation of meanings from the background of past experiences. The junction of the new and old is not a mere composition of forces, but is a re-creation in which the present impulsion gets form and solidarity while the old, the "stored" material is literally revived, given new life and soul through having to meet a new situation' (Dewey, 1958, p. 60).

The act of expression, in its most elemental state, is a *process* of transformation between perception, doing and undergoing. Tracing the 'expressive act' from these roots leads Dewey to conclude that experiences express – *in the sense of 'squeezing out' or 'wringing from' events* – meanings, emotions, creative responses and, thus, the aesthetic phase of experience. This significant shift relocates artistic expression from the depths of the artist's psyche to the interaction between organism (artist) and environment (external events and materials). The unifying aspect of emotion takes up its role here. According to Dewey, when an impulse meets resistance it is charged with emotion. However, an emotionally charged impulse is not an 'act of expression', in the Deweyan sense, until it is clarified and ordered by perception. When a person launches into a 'blind rage', they are merely discharging emotion. The raging person 'is not thinking of expressing his character; he is only giving way to a fit of passion' (Dewey, 1958, p. 60). To discharge is to release and abandon. To become expressive, emotion must be converted into 'interest and reflective action through assimilating meanings from the past and reorganis[ing] them in the present. In this re-creative act, the impulse gains form... What would otherwise be either a smooth passageway or an obstruction becomes a medium for creativity' (Leddy, 2020).

In other words, emotion must be harnessed by perception, which brings past into present experience, calling upon intelligence to contextualise and organise it into an act of expression – a process in experience stimulated by, and contingent upon, the interaction between 'the live creature' (Dewey, 1958, pp. 3–19) and external events/materials. Again, on first reading this may seem abstract. Consider the act of expression undertaken by a composer. The harmony and melody (the music) is the medium, and the *material* that constitutes the *work* is brought by perception, which brings the past into collaboration with the present in an act of musical expression. 'The task of the artist', according to Dewey, 'is to make the medium expressive so that the appreciator who encounters it will interact with it in such a way as to have an organised as well as emotional response – the emotion must be articulated as well as evoked by the medium' (Alexander, 1987, P. 221, cited in Hildebrand, 2008, p. 166). We can relate this easily to the work these amateur socially engaged intermediaries undertake with their groups – what they do *with* and *for* mutuality of being. To understand the motivations that drive and structure these groups, we must think of participants, *themselves,* as the medium (in the sense of material of creative endeavour, i.e. the clay of the sculptor) and intermediaries as the artists[143]. Consider Pel's statement:

> [I]t's about young people, it's the lives you're affecting and changing, the impact that you're having. So that is beautiful. But, at the same time… because of the lives that you are affecting, the emotional baggage that you're taking home sometimes, the lack of appreciation from the young people… that's hard (Powell, P. interview, Cox 23.07.2019).

Here, the outgoing impulse is to nurture, improve and change through creativity. It meets obstacles – 'emotional baggage' and 'lack of appreciation'[144]. The impulse is charged with emotion that, through perception, recalls past, similar instances, or perhaps produces reflection on whether they can or 'can't do it the same way' as their parents might have (Baines interview, Cox 15.07.2019)[145]. These reflections transform emotional 'energy into thoughtful action, through assimilation of meanings from the background of past experiences… [in] a re-creation in which the present impulsion gets form and solidarity while the old, the "stored" material is literally revived, given new life and soul through having to meet a new situation' (Dewey, 1958, p. 5 [I am using this quote again to underscore its relevence]). Processes like this, following Dewey, are undoubtedly creative and aesthetic, and are certainly not unique to the arts. What Dewey's analytical scheme calls to attention is both the continuity between everyday and artistic experiences (opening up the locations of aesthetic experience to include

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143 There are ethical implications to this that will be addressed in the following chapter – 2.5.
144 As well as all the various challenges that come with organising performances with young people
145 Julie and Jenny often describe how their work invites this question, bringing their parents to life in the work of the present.

mutuality of being), and the interoperations of perception and expression *in* experience, a process that is particularly developed and reflexive in the structured 'rounded-out' experience of socially engaged artistic work. This leads analysis to the role of the artistic product itself.

For these intermediaries, the aesthetic experience of mutuality of being is solicited through the nurturing and development of participants, a proposition I will develop in 2.5. But what, therefore, of Urban Glee or the Shakespeare play? Do these things matter? Or are they incidental? From Dewey's perspective, we can address these questions by thinking of cultural products (artworks, music, plays) as 'expressive objects'. For Dewey, the work of an artist is to organise, refine and imbue the 'expressiveness' of their expressive objects (artwork, productions, groups), which are experiences. Dewey challenges the dualism between the act of expression (creativity) and the expressive object itself. He argues that the 'isolation of the act of expressing from the expressiveness possessed by the object leads to the notion that expression is merely a process of discharging personal emotion' (as described above) (Dewey, 1958, p. 83). Dewey uses the analogy of a wine press:

> The juice expressed by the wine press is what it is because of a prior act, and is something new and distinctive. It does not merely represent other things. Yet it has something in common with other objects and it is made to appeal to other persons than the one who produced it. A poem and picture [or Urban Glee, Shakespeare or a performance in the Pembrokeshire landscape] present material passed through the alembic of personal experience. They have no precedents in existence or in universal being. But nonetheless, their material came from the public world and so has qualities in common with the material of other experiences, while the product awakens in other persons new perceptions of the meanings of the common world (Dewey, 1958, p. 83).

For Dewey, the *work* of an art object (the expressive object) is fundamentally a process in experience. An art*work* wrings out the feelings, emotions, memories and ideas brought by the artist in the experience of making, and by the perceiver in the experience of perceiving. The expressive object is not merely a mechanistic organisation of semiotic codes and symbols in material, or only what the perceiver brings by way of their perception, but an active *process in experience that unites the two*. The acts of expression and perception are parts of the same creative process, united in the experience of the expressive object:

The expressiveness of an object of art is due to the fact that it presents a thorough and complete interpenetration of the materials of undergoing and of action, the latter including a reorganisation of matter brought with us from past experience. For, in the interpretation, the latter is material not added by way of external association nor yet by way of superimposition upon sense qualities. The expressiveness of the object is the report and celebration of the complete fusion of what we undergo and what our activity of attentive perception brings into what we receive by means of the senses (Dewey, 1958, p. 103).

Again, this process may seem abstract at first, because we have moved some distance from the common and familiar territory of signs and codes that perform a structuring social function towards a scheme of analysis that unites the material object and the perception/expression of artist and spectator in experience. However, it is easy to locate Dewey's expressive object in the work of these amateur socially engaged intermediaries. For them, the value – the 'beautiful' thing (Powell, P. interview, Cox 23.07.2019) – of their work is not in the script or the quality of characterisation in a Shakespeare play, or in the excellence of performance (something they care about and strive towards). It is in the development of their participants through these experiences as expressive objects. The production itself (the expressive object) is vital – it provides (as well as all the other things that can be understood through semiotics) a situation able to 'express' (like the wine press) social bonds and personal development through intense creative work:

[C]rucially it's the relationships between them – the friendships and relationships that develop between them. Creative drama is a perfect vehicle for that. You've got what is essentially a youth club on the Wednesday night, so you've got a heaven-sent, if you like, opportunity to bring those kids together through the medium of drama, so that they are not constrained to talk to each other. They talk to each other because that's what the drama makes them do and it's amazing the strength of relationship and friendship that has formed right across the 50 years (Beckett interview, Cox 17.06.2019).

Thinking more broadly, it should be obvious, for example, that when a parent witnesses their child perform a violin piece for the first time (as Anjie did) what might move them is not the music, nor the excellence of performance (they may be acutely aware that it is far from the apex of musical achievement), but rather what they bring to the experience by way of perception clarified by emotion – seeing one's child working with others, the challenges they have overcome, the triumph of defeating stage fright, and the development of new skills (regardless of their use value in social organisation).

On such occasions, as emotion clarifies the aesthetic phase of the experience, it is not uncommon for a parent to wish a lost relative were able to share the experience, or to wonder what they might have made of it. We return here to Sahlins' mutuality of being. Just as Dewey broadens the potential location of aesthetic experience, so, too, he broadens the potential for many experiences to be considered 'expressive objects' – artistically and reflexively organised to express the aesthetic phase experience. Thus, following Dewey, it can be seen that these intermediaries structure their creative work to express the aesthetic phase of mutuality of being in experience, a case that will be developed and strengthened in 2.5. For Julie and Jenny, the manner in which mutuality of being between participants recalls consanguineal kinship (keeping dad's vision alive) has aesthetic resonance, and this is the raison d'être of the work. Perception attends to the challenges of socially engaged creativity, reconstructing meanings from the past (kinship relations, histories) in the present, bringing forth emotion – feeling *and* expression – that unifies in the aesthetic phase of mutuality of being in experience. The same process can be observed in equal measure in the socially engaged work of APAA's Urban Glee.

2.4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, by shifting theoretically from systems of capital and exchange (useful in Part One) to the aesthetic phase of mutuality of being in experience, analysis has come a long way. Thinking about how these intermediaries express the aesthetic phase of mutuality of being through the experience of their work opens up an entirely different, more refined and useful way of analysing amateur socially engaged art in its complexity. It allows us to take seriously the motivations intermediaries describe, without dismissing them as misrecognised decoys that mask covert, unconscious self-interest, predetermined by objective social organisation. Instead, what Julie, Jenny, Pel and Tru (and others interviewed) describe as motivation for their work can be understood as the aesthetic phase of mutuality of being expressed through creative work. The show, rehearsal and/or song are not exclusively outbound codified expressions of cultural capital, skills gained for self-interested ends, or zombie dispositions playing out unreflexively in habitus, but expressive objects that produce the aesthetic phase of mutuality of being in experience.

Bourdieu's scheme is useful, in that it invites us to consider matters of distinction and situate socially engaged cultural production within the context of social class structuration[146]. However, in so doing, it imposes the assumption that it is the acquisition of transmuted forms of capital and the principles

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[146] This helped us to identify and explain the particular characteristics of socially engaged art as discursive practice within the funded field, where economic capital and bureaucracy stake out a forum of competition and social hierarchy.

of economism that (consciously or unconsciously) motivate and structure amateur socially engaged cultural intermediation – a theoretical scheme that cannot account for the subjective meanings, values and experiences one encounters in such activities. The common remedies of bonding/bridging capital (Putnam, 2000) and serious leisure (Stebbins, 2006) are perhaps helpful, but because they conceptualise kinship and creativity as assets outside the aesthetics of experience (2.1, 2.3), they offer only an opaque, incomplete account of the intrinsic motivations revealed by the aesthetic phase of mutuality of being. They provide little understanding of how this type of work is structured beyond the vague exchange rates of social and cultural capital, albeit rooted in slightly less cynical forms than those that occupied Bourdieu. The things that these analytical approaches leave in the margin, gravitating as they do towards questions of self-interest within objective social structure – (self-actualisation, self-image [Stebbins], bridging and bonding [Putnam] power, status and distinction [Bourdieu]) – are revealed to be the beating heart, purpose, function and outcome of this form of cultural work: kinship, aesthetics, experience.

In the work of these groups, the family function that Bourdieu explicitly jettisons from the field of cultural production is the genus and motivator carried through the experience of socially engaged work – *the family function is the artistic work.* In the following chapter, this alternative approach will be used to explore the specific ways in which these intermediaries express mutuality of being through their work with young people, to further reveal *'what kinship does'* and *'what people do with…kinship* (Fliche, 2006, p. 3, emphasis original) – issues of monumental significance to the amateur socially engaged artistry of these groups.

2.5 Friendship as mutuality of being: an aesthetic experience

2.5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I introduced an alternative approach to understanding amateur socially engaged artistic work, which responds to the deficiencies of capital and exchange revealed by the role of kinship in these case studies (2.2.5, 2.2.8, 2.3.3, 2.3.5, 2.3.6). In this chapter, I extend analysis to examine what these intermediaries describe as the primary social objective of their work – the friendship bonds between participants. Here, the theoretical framework described in the previous chapter (2.4) is used to reveal how these intermediaries reflexively organise their activities to express mutuality of being among participants and that this, for them, produces the aesthetic phase of their work. By using this alternative approach, we can reveal more clearly how the aesthetic phase of mutuality of being motivates and structures these socially engaged artistic activities.

The chapter begins by exploring (in greater depth) the voluntary nature of the work described in 2.2.5, specifically how voluntary work is a structural choice directed towards mutuality of being (2.5.2). The discussion then moves on to describe how *mutuality of being among young participants* is the primary objective of these activities (2.5.3), before looking at how intensity (2.5.4), informality (2.5.5) and flexibility (2.5.6) are purposefully structured into organisational arrangements to create experiences that express mutuality of being. This leads to a consideration of transgressive aspects of these practices and the ethical questions that follow (2.5.7). The discussion then considers the aesthetic nature of this work, and the way in which, for these intermediaries, mutuality of being is an aesthetic experience as theorised by Dewey (2.5.8). The chapter ends by reinforcing the case for a Deweyan approach, by referring to traditional schemes to compare how important features of this work, made visible by Dewey, are invisible to common theoretical approaches (2.5.9).

2.5.2 Working voluntarily as a structure for mutuality of being

A useful entry to this discussion is to revisit the *motivation* to work voluntarily described in 2.2.5. The motivation to work voluntarily is not to acquire skills or capital but is a strategic approach to mutuality of being. Many amateur intermediaries felt that being paid would institute hierarchies that compromised this objective:

> Jenny: If they [the participants] know we're being paid it's not the same, is it? If the kids know you're being paid that turns you into a teacher almost.

Julie: If they know you're doing it for the love of them, that's different from doing it because you're being paid[147] (Baines and Beckett interview, Cox 15.07.2019).

This motivation to voluntary work gives priority to *the experience of mutuality of being* above economic potential, art-world legitimation and concerns about social status. This is so important to Julie and Jenny that they have worked voluntarily for more than 35 years. They are clear that they would reject payment were it available (2.2.5). In the same way, Tru and Pel see the voluntary nature of their work as integral to the experience of mutuality of being that they seek to express through Urban Glee:

I think the fact that they know, and everyone knows, that everybody's on the same playing field, it makes a difference. If they suddenly thought 'oh, you got a quarter of people getting paid' then it would change the perception of how much they're willing to commit [and] how much they're willing to get involved (Powell, P. interview, Cox 21.09.2019).

It was this that led APAA to the unusual policy of sharing income equally between participants – an effort to neutralise the perceived negative effect of economic capital introducing hierarchies within the group. Pel believes that, even when shared in this way, money negatively impacts the work:

In my opinion, in young people's minds, it's two ways: 'are you doing it for what you can gain, or are you doing it because you're being real?'… For years we weren't charging for our services, and we weren't paying the students, and the students were doing things because they loved it – they love the art. Now, even with our new students, one of the first questions is, 'are we getting paid?' and we've lost the notion of doing things for the love of doing it (Powell, P. interview, Cox 23.07.2019)[148].

For these intermediaries, working voluntarily flattens hierarchies and shifts the experience from feelings of work to feelings of love (2.4.2); the voluntary nature of their work is a structural decision

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[147] This recalls Schneider's distinction between work and 'what one does at home… for love, not for money' (Schneider, 1977, p. 66).
[148] Pel describes the decision to pay participants as being made for three reasons: to retain interest/enthusiasm, to level the hierarchies that payment brings, and to give participants the feeling that they are valued as professionals. However, this has had implications: participants now have different expectations of and motivations for commercial performances. It has also meant that APAA have less money to subsidise their development work and more child protection bureaucracy to navigate. There appears to be a different understanding about payment between generations in APAA. As facilitators, Pel, Tru and others do not take the small sums (investing their share back into the cost of running the group) and perceive the payments to young people as being fair, while young people perceive payment as recognition of their skills.

directed towards mutuality of being, which is itself the motivation to work voluntarily. It should be noted, however, that while these intermediaries seek to escape conventional institutional hierarchies (i.e. teacher/student) there is, albeit in a more opaque way, a distinction between the interviewees as facilitators and their participants. When talking about their groups in general, they tend to use the subject pronoun 'we', while when talking about the social benefit of their work, this shifts to 'they' or 'them'. As the interviewees see it, these activities are organised *for* participants, and this matters a great deal. So, while they seek a 'different type of relationship' (Beckett interview, Cox 15.07.2019), they are still facilitators, not participants, as would be assumed by Stebbins' amateurism (2.1.6).

Another motivation to work voluntarily is that it enables participation, highlighting again the social orientation of this work. The obligation felt towards young people insists that economic barriers be removed or minimised[149]. Costs are kept down by Julie, Jenny, Colin, Graeme, Tru, Pel and others working entirely voluntarily. This decision is rooted in values informed by their experience of family life. When asked about the choice to work voluntarily, Julie defers directly to familial kinship: 'because it was done for me' (Beckett interview, Cox 15.10.2019). Tru responds in a strikingly similar way:

> I keep reverting back to me as one of seven, a single mom, who couldn't afford arts engagement and the only thing that was around was Hippodrome and Rep, and that was like £15 an hour and she couldn't afford it. And I just keep thinking who we are, and who we want to attract, and who we want to provide our opportunities to – it needs to be affordable. We can quite easily put up our prices (Powell, T. interview, Cox 24.03.2019).

Here, again, we see experiences of kinship shaping how these activities are structured, recalling meanings *in perception* that, following Dewey, participate in the aesthetic phase of these experiences. In other words, the voluntary nature of the voluntary work is vital, not only because it makes the work practically possible[150] but also because it calls upon perception and emotion to solicit the aesthetic phase of new experiences. It should be noted that, for these intermediaries, voluntary work does not appear to be contingent upon recognition. They do not promote the fact that they work voluntarily to participants or in public-facing material. The extent to which audiences, parents or participants are aware of the voluntary nature of their work is difficult to ascertain. Certainly from interviews with participants (and the statements above), knowledge that their work is voluntary is seen to be assumed

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[149] As described in 2.2.4, Festival Arts' drama sessions are free, and those who cannot afford to contribute to the costs of the summer camp are allowed to attend for free. APAA charges just £4 per session, raising additional funds to cover costs by charging for commercial performances.

[150] As Colin tells me, 'the whole thing would be unviable if we were paid' (Baines, C. interview, Cox 10.07.2019)

while, at the same time, it appears that this is not directly stated – there is little evidence of *seeking* recognition. If and how participants (or others) become aware of the voluntary nature of this work is unclear – one can only guess that informality, context and word-of-mouth communicate this. Crucially, recognition of voluntary work is described as important only in terms of levelling hierarchies, and not as a reward of symbolic capital that can be used or invested to secure favourable terms socially, as might be assumed by Bourdieu or Putnam.

2.5.3 The primary motivation – mutuality of being among participants

It is not the bonds between intermediaries, or between intermediaries and participants, but rather those *between participants* that matter most. This is made clear by interviewees, particularly in how they describe success, which also reveals their sophisticated, reflexive approach to socially engaged work. Jenny and Julie take great pride in the expansive networks of close friends that have developed through Festival over the years:

> Jenny: Look at the coven… my husband used to call it the coven. There's about half a dozen of them, the old girls…

> Julie: Young women from our early years…

> Jenny: Well, they all came as teenagers, my daughter was hanging onto them… she's just slightly younger, isn't she – She's 40 now you see, so they're all in their 40s and they still meet up occasionally. They still decide 'hey let's all get together'…

> Julie: Regularly. So, friendship groups form, that we have proven will last for a very long time…[151]

> Jenny: And quite separate from Festival – they just all meet up, but that's where they met. They're, as it were, 'Festival friends'…

> Julie: It's a combination of the place, and what we're doing, and the sort of mutual working towards something that's great…

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[151] It has been noted in studies of funded socially engaged arts that there is a lack of longitudinal research to support the claims of the social benefit and development of social capital (Belfiore, 2006). Here, we see evidence that the sociable, informal nature of these groups enables a partial, anecdotal longitudinal awareness that is uncommon in the funded field.

Jenny: and the intensity, and having to live together as well (Baines and Beckett interview, Cox 17.06.2019).

At no point did these interviewees describe success in terms of ticket sales, recognition, positionality, reviews, income, awards, or other accolades often associated with successful artistic production. Nor was priority given to anything resembling the discursive practices one sees in the funded field: addressing inequality, numbers of participants, targeted groups engaged, funding secured, diversity, behaviours improved, connectedness to community, value for money, or social/economic objectives associated with policy attachment. Instead, success is measured by the *quality*, *strength* and *longevity* of friendships between participants. Interviewees make clear, again and again, directly and indirectly, that their work is purposefully structured to facilitate these close bonds. This takes priority over matters of artistic competence, aesthetic quality, money, and the personal acquisition of social, bonding, bridging[152], economic or cultural (skills) capital.

2.5.4 Intensity expressing mutuality of being

Aspects of structure that make no sense when seen through the lens of common analytical approaches (2.1, 2.2) make much more sense when one recognises that this work is organised to *express the aesthetic phase of mutuality of being*. The extent to which creativity that has evolved *from* the experience of kinship is reflexively engineered *to express kinship* from the experience is striking[153]. This is precisely the role of Festival Summer Camp – 'having to live together' being an important aspect of creative work (or, to use Dewey's terminology, of the expressive object) that propagates mutuality of being through intense creative practice:

Julie: It's grown organically... the whole thing, it doesn't work as well, it's much harder to do up here [in Birmingham], whereas we are all living together down there [Pembrokeshire], it's much easier to get the intensity of work going that we need (Baines interview, Cox 17.06.2019).

Jenny: The fact that we're living with them for three and a half weeks. If you're doing a production in Birmingham, that's great, that's fine... and you get your kids, you know, at Stage

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[152] Bridging social capital is applicable but limiting. Julie and Jenny clearly value being connected to, and interacting with, young people. However, separating this as 'bridging capital' – an asset desirable for its purchase outside the nature of experience – fails to grasp how these relationships are valuable because of what they do *in* experience by soliciting the aesthetic phase of mutuality of being.

[153] In Bourdieu's terminology, we might call this a 'structuring-structure'.

Door[154] whatever, they get the kids in for lots and lots and lots of rehearsals… and they do a great production, and everybody's families come to see it, and that's great, *but it's not the same as living with us for three and a half weeks,* and all working together, and if we were paid doing that… I don't think we could work together as a community the way we do (Baines and Beckett interview, Cox 15.06.2019).

Intensity is coordinated and structured into the creative work to express mutuality of being. Jess Hakin (a Festival participant who joined as a teenager and has gone on to establish her own theatre company and to voluntarily support Festival as a young adult) describes, from a participant's perspective, the specific and unique experience of participation, and the closeness of bonds within the group that arise from this intensity:

It is quite intense… It's not like anything else. It's hard to explain… like, they are very sentimental about certain traditions… there is this amazing thing where we go to Strumble, which is this lighthouse – again, we go to Strumble! What does that mean? I have no idea what that is! I had a friend who said [when Jess joined the group] 'oh yeah, we have this thing where we go to this lighthouse and just sing into the darkness' and I was like 'wow, ok!' So, I had someone who explained that. So you go and it's really cool, it's like you can see all the sea, and it's pitch black, but you can see the lighthouse, and we just sing songs, and that's just, it just doesn't, it was so strange the first time I went but it was, but it's a really nice thing, but for the people who have grown up with it, that's their childhood, they remember going to Strumble… It's a chance for this big family to get together over the summer and they [many participants] like the rituals (Hakin interview, Cox 19.09.2019).

The language of kinship is striking here. Jess describes Festival as an intense experience, like no other, framing its specificities in terms of family and participation in family ritual. Throughout the interviews, Jess describes the friendships between participants as being intensified through living and working together in the same way as Jenny and Julie do. Jess finds describing the experience of Festival difficult. She says it is 'hard to describe', 'not like school or uni', not like 'am-dram' but like 'nothing else', like a 'big family' (Hakin interview, Cox 19.09.2019). What one takes from her account is that Festival is an intense form of creative work that blurs the lines between family, friendship, creativity

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[154] This is a reference to Birmingham Rep's youth theatre company. This is one of very few occasions on which they brought up other organisations.

and sociability to express close friendship bonds between participants – it is 'a composite site of multiple others… a manifold of participations, founded on mutualities of being' (Sahlins, 2011a, p.14).

In this way, both participants and intermediaries see these activities as different – as *alternatives* to their institutional equivalents – with mutuality of being, intensity and informality presented as the points of difference that demarcate these integral experiences from others. Their accounts, however, are not discursive practices underwritten by the competition one encounters in the professional field – where to '"make one's name"… [means] achieving recognition of one's difference from other producers, especially the most consecrated of them' (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 106) as a matter of status and economic necessity (1.4.4). When they highlight these differences, amateur socially engaged intermediaries are speaking about *aesthetic experience* and *mutuality of being* outside any discernible field, an important point that will be revisited shortly (2.5.9).

For Festival in particular, there is an intellectual element that recognises the specific role of mutuality of being as a technique, structure and objective of their work. They describe Festival as an intellectual experiment handed down through the family:

> Julie: Although child drama was big in the 70s and 80s, and it was a force in schools, what they [parents Jack and Joye] were doing with Festival was totally different from anything that happened in school, so they were not doing something that they did in their working life – *at all*. This was something completely different… it had fewer rules, but a lot of discipline in it because it's theatre, but it was a relaxed – *not a school trip*. The relationship between us and the participants is different from the relationship between a teacher and a class, without any doubt… it also meant that they were close to, and loved by, a lot of our friends, which I think was also a lovely thing for them, and the same thing applies to us, because we know a lot of our children's friends because they've been to Festival…

> I think there was a sense of exploring what theatre and drama can do for young people, of them exploring and discovering what a fantastic thing it is to take these kids away, many of whom have got teenage difficulties, to put them in a place that is *very beautiful*, that's *not* a city, where they can see the stars for the first time at night – some of them – go for walks, and to make them live as a community, everybody helping with everything, so you know, everybody is expected to wash up, everybody is expected to do box office. We don't audition so there is no pecking order, you grow through the company to the point where you get cast

in different ways because you come for several years. It was like they were researching and experimenting and discovering what you could do by giving creativity and freedom of expression and theatre work to young people and for a much longer time[155] (Beckett interview, Cox 17.06.2019).

This element of 'researching and experimenting' (ibid) (a theme that repeats in other interviews with Julie and Jenny) signals a sophisticated, reflexive approach to mutuality of being through artistic work. The extent to which these intermediaries are calculating and deliberate in this effort is compelling. They are all well aware, and comparatively knowledgeable, of professional, institutional forms of socially engaged arts and arts education. As described previously, like other amateur intermediaries interviewed, Julie, Jenny and Pel have all worked professionally in formal education settings (primary and secondary school teaching) and have occasionally (including Tru) interacted with the funded arts world. They consciously seek to *not* replicate these forms (2.2.8) but instead to work differently and with autonomy, undermining the generally accepted view that amateur cultural production is an effort to imitate the professional world (2.1.7).

The use of intensity as a strategy for mutuality of being, and the purpose to which it is directed, represents a conscious, sophisticated, organised, purposeful, reflexive and demanding form of artistic work that does not conform to the assumed models of amateur participation one encounters in literature. These are not activities organised around the self-interested accumulation of assets. Instead, they are designed to foster interpersonal intensity that forges close friendships between *others* and, in this way, mutuality of being consolidates the organisational structure. Statements from interviewees amount to one thing: the meanings imported from family life, love of art, love of one another, place (Aston Newtown or Pembrokeshire) and the voluntary nature of voluntary work co-operate to express the aesthetic phase of mutuality of being through unique, refined and intensified creative experiences.

2.5.5 Informality as structure for mutuality of being

The intensity of 'living together' (Baines interview, Cox 17.06.2019) or, as Tru describes it, becoming 'a second family [where] everyone is living in each other's pockets' (Powell, T. interview, Cox 12.05.2020), is coupled with a purposeful informality, consciously organised to produce mutuality of being. Both APAA and Festival strive towards a 'different type of relationship' (Beckett interview, Cox

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[155] The way in which Julie shifts perspective from 'they' (mother and father) to 'us' (sisters/partners) and 'everybody' (community), so as to locate herself within manifold kinship relations, reveals the interconnections between consanguineal, affinal and friendship relationships across generations.

15.07.2019). The difference, in their view, is that levelling hierarchies and relaxing rules contributes to experiences that *express* mutuality of being by going further and, on occasion, transgressing boundaries that would, for valid reasons, be strictly enforced in professional fields:

> Julie: [I]t's important to us that we are not school – so they swear and generally make silly… but they do Shakespeare you see (Baines interview, Cox 17.09.2019).

> Pel: The other day… Tru and I had an argument, over Inspiring Brum[156], and he always argues about audience… I always argue about the content… so we ended up arguing about what's more important. In fact, it was recorded – somebody recorded it – it just got really heated. That's how we are. We just work really well together… We can argue, just like we do as brothers, and we talk again within 10 minutes. If we weren't brothers and we argued – and don't get me wrong, sometimes we will argue, and it starts professional and ends up personal – but because we're brothers it's fine. But if we weren't brothers, I don't know how it would work. I don't how we'll be able to argue and get back – and it's fun! (Powell, P. interview, Cox 21.09.2019).

This is different to what one would expect in professionalised work environments. It is, arguably, unprofessional. But these statements highlight the importance placed on informality by intermediaries, breaking down social and institutional boundaries to solicit more intense and intimate experiences. Pel's statement is double-barrelled. Firstly, he highlights the role of consanguineal kinship – the specific way in which he and Tru work together *as brothers* being vital to their creative process. Secondly, he describes a very different type of experience to what would be expected within a professionalised institutional setting – participants witnessing a sibling quarrel – something that would be considered an unacceptable transgression from the standards of institutionally coordinated work. For these intermediaries, however, while moments like these are not necessarily celebrated, they seem to represent an affirmation of the 'different type of relationship' they work towards:

> Julie: They get us warts and all. Because we're just as stressed as anybody else, in fact possibly more, and just occasionally you lose it a bit you know. I have sometimes, when nobody is hearing me in the [Bishops] palace, been frustrated and got angry. So, they get us warts and all, and they have to accept that we're also human beings.

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[156] An APAA community performance in 2019

Jenny: So we're not behaving like teachers… when I walked out at school [157] [when parents arrived] to pick kids up, you're always smiling aren't you… they don't get that.

Julie: They don't see their teachers go to the staffroom and cry at school, but they will see us sort of go 'Oh!!!' [gesture of frustrated emotion]. When the pressure is on and you need to get something done, they will see us frustrated, they will see us occasionally angry…

Jenny: They will see us occasionally argue… (Baines and Beckett interview, Cox 15.07.2019).

These incidents – arguing and losing composure – are cast as attributes that make the experience of these intermediaries' work markedly different. For Pel, it is 'more real' (Powell, P. interview, Cox 23.07.2019) – informality lifts the curtain on the creative process that makes APAA work and is therefore perceived to be more effective for expressing (from experience) mutuality of being. Julie and Jenny describe this informality as part of the experience of closeness that is ultimately of benefit to participants, who learn to accept people as they are, 'warts and all' (Baines and Beckett interview, Cox 15.07.2019) – *'participation in one another's existence'* (Sahlins, 2011a, p.9, emphasis added).

Informality extends to the blurring of lines between the homelife of amateur intermediaries and their work with participants. For example, the day before our first interview, Jenny held a rehearsal with participants in her family home because, outside of the usual Wednesday night schedule, they did not have access to their usual venue. This is, in part, a matter of necessity – with limited access to resources the home becomes a rehearsal space, office and storage facility[158]. However, it is clearly valued as something more. Rehearsing from home is a family ritual going back to the sisters' experience in childhood:

Julie: We used to rehearse, like we rehearsed here yesterday… mum used to have Sunday afternoon rehearsals… and everybody who came got tea. I can remember the sandwiches and cake going around!

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[157] Julie and Jenny's experience as teachers enables them to compare theatre-making in both amateur and education settings. It is notable that they describe qualities they know would be considered unprofessional in the professional context in positive terms, in relation to their amateur work with Festival.

[158] Going into Jenny's home feels like entering Festival Arts HQ, with posters, boxes of T-shirts, props and all sorts of Festival ephemera piled up around the house. Personal trinkets, holiday snaps and Festival material are indistinguishable from one another, i.e. pictures of parents (Jack and Joye) on display are from particular Festival Summer Camp years. One feels a sense of being in *Festival's* house.

Jenny: And there was always someone staying there as well. There was always somebody sleeping over there.

Julie: She was amazing. She was uber hospitable to everybody.

Jenny: I don't think she ever said 'no' to anybody who knocked at the door.

Julie: They [participants] felt there was an open door in the house and, to somebody who didn't have that experience themselves with their parents, that was amazing (Baines and Beckett interview, Cox 15.07.2019).

While born of necessity, the act of inviting participants into the family home is valued as an experience of mutuality of being through informality and participation in each other's lives – food is shared, people stay over and there is an open door. Pel describes the same blurring of lines in his creative work with APAA:

I can't tell you, and lots of people would never see this, the amount of work that myself as artistic director does for young people. I mean, I have a young man staying with me now. He's about to go off to uni, but his parents got a new job in London, he's got a job here and needs somewhere to stay, and he's been staying with me for the last few weeks. He's staying with me until September. I've had people calling up at three o'clock in the morning in tears because of issues with their dad, five young people who have lost children, who called me up whatever time in the morning and it's hard – but I wouldn't change it because I know that what we do is not tangible. You can't write on a piece of paper, but it has impact, it changes lives, and that's why I continue to do what I do. Me, my wife and I, we have issues sometimes around how much I give and when I should pull back, and when I shouldn't, and I don't think you can measure that when it comes to support (Powell, P. interview, Cox 23.07.2019).

Here again, mutuality of being is seen to be working through the relaxation of boundaries between home, artistic work and supporting young people. As with Festival, there is a strong pastoral element that intermediaries feel obliged towards and regard as a key aspect of their work – 'the impact of change' (Powell, P. interview, Cox 21.09.2019) through mutuality of being. Indeed, as described in 2.2.7 and 2.3.2, the element of pastoral care is structured into the work and encouraged among participants – a 'culture of care in the group' (Baines and Beckett interview, Cox 15.07.2019).

Informality and the pastoral dimension emerged strongly across the wide range of disparate, unfunded socially engaged cultural activities consulted in this research. It is not uncommon for feelings of obligation regarding pastoral care to transgress boundaries that would be enforced in institutional settings. Arrangements like these, unimaginable in formal institutions, are perceived as virtues. If these cultural intermediaries are amateur theatre producers, they are equally amateur pastoral carers albeit not formally designated or qualified as such, leading to important questions around safeguarding that will be addressed shortly (2.5.7).

The key point for now is that informality is consciously organised (albeit at times by a sense of pastoral obligation) to contribute to a particular type of experience that, for these intermediaries and participants, constitutes 'a different type of relationship' (Baines and Beckett interview, Cox 15.07.2019) and experience that sets their activities apart from other forms of artistic work. The 'intensity' (ibid) of 'living and working together' (ibid), the pastoral element of supporting participants through personal difficulties and the informality of the 'open door' (ibid) are orchestrated towards the experience of mutuality of being through artistic production. The work is informal and voluntary, but what these testimonies belie is that this informal and voluntary approach is purposeful – a sophisticated structure operationalised towards the experience of mutuality of being.

2.5.6 Flexibility as structure for mutuality of being

Another indication that the experience of mutuality of being structures these activities can be seen in the longevity of participant involvement, facilitated by organisational flexibility. As described elsewhere, former participants often return as adults to voluntarily support the work. Going further, these groups have a flexible approach to membership that means participants do not *have* to leave. Festival and APAA, ostensibly youth theatre groups, have no formal terms of participation and no prescribed age at which participants are no longer eligible. Subsequently, they have a number of adults who have attended since childhood and have, over time, assumed different roles:

> Jenny: It's very recent to me, since we've had to be so, I mean, I say very recent, I don't know how long it is since we had to be so careful with the under 16s and the over 18s, but only recently have I actually bothered to know how old they are. You know, they're just who they are and that's more important than the fact that they're 15, 16, but now of course we do have to absolutely know, and be a bit more careful (Baines interview, Cox 15.07.2019).

Julie: Now we've been going so long, we've got people who came when they were 14 who are now in their 40s, but still coming, different roles, different support, and so there are a lot of adults there who people can talk to, and who can supervise… Because we've been going such a long time, we have whole families. We've got children of festival members… six members whose parents were in it[159] (Beckett interview, Cox 17.06.2019).

APAA have arrived at a similar flexible approach to participation (in their case more structured), organised around the priority of retaining relationships within the group:

Most of our development managers [voluntary roles assigned to older participants] have been with us for five years…. I mean there's always more room to develop, then it's up to us as directors to say 'right how else can this person grow within the Academy?' We've got one person in the Academy who had been with us a number of years, eight years, got married within the Academy, who's found someone else in the Academy got married, they are both fantastic, and rather than say 'okay we want you to part ways', we created a role for him. He is now head of development [a voluntary role] and so it's really about looking within our Academy and thinking 'how can we change the infrastructure to ensure that every single person at all levels is developing?'[160] (Powell, P. interview, Cox 23.07.2019).

Because they are structured by, above all, mutuality of being, these socially engaged creative activities reorganise *around* participants, leading to models of practice that take unfamiliar shapes. Unencumbered by the rules and obligations of bureaucratic institutions (underwritten by competition for economic capital, as described in Part One), mutuality of being can be seen to take the place of the bureaucracy that is in the funded field, providing the elemental organising principles that structure the work. Whereas in the funded field, bureaucracy regulates discursive practices that lead to particular representations and organisational structures (1.4), here, who can participate and the terms of their participation seems to be determined by, above all, maintaining interpersonal relationships for their own sake.

2.5.7 Ethical questions arising from structure

It should be acknowledged that these intense, informal and at times transgressive voluntary structures – organised to create intense experiences that express mutuality of being – carry the potential for

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[159] Again, this draws attention to the element of kinship beyond the intermediaries themselves, with generations of families attending as participants.

[160] Different registers of kinship (in this case affinal) within the group often crop up in interviews in this way.

exploitation or unintended consequences, inviting valid ethical questions. The groups interviewed in this research described having safeguarding policies, with facilitators checked by the DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) and procedures for dealing with safeguarding issues. Because these interviewees happen to have experience working in education, they have adopted the safeguarding measures of professional education institutions in their work:

> When I came on board with APAA I was an NQT [newly qualified teacher], so I kind of understood about how an academy should look, or how an education institution should look, and then throughout the years, I personally was the one responsible for our code of conduct policy, our safeguarding policies, child protection policies, so all of those things. I kind of was responsible for making sure they were put in place… kind of mirroring what we have at school if you like… It is hard because it's all voluntary, so I've got to be careful of how much I put on, or how much I can hold someone accountable to, or 'for' rather, because it's voluntary. That's the difficult part, and that's the balance[161] (Powell P. interview, Cox 21.09.2019).

One can see that the voluntary nature of this work means that holding volunteers accountable is not straightforward, which potentially compromises the strength of safeguarding policies in practice. Going further, one can ask: is the intensity and intimacy that these intermediaries engineer positive/safe? There is the potential for crossing lines that could have serious consequences, particularly when it comes to young people who may have emotional or mental health difficulties. Intense experiences may overwhelm, disorientate and/or confuse, possibly leading to unhealthy attachments and/or dependencies that exacerbate mental health conditions. And, of course, a structure in which informality and intensity are engineered to solicit close bonds could be exploited by those intent on emotional, sexual, physical or other forms of abuse. There have been enough examples in recent years to make this aspect of the work a cause for concern. Furthermore, we cannot exempt these groups from the critique made by studies of employment practices in the CCIs. Reliance on voluntary labour can be exploitative and most commonly serves the interest of cultural institutions or, in these cases, voluntary intermediaries operating outside formal frameworks. We can ask legitimate questions about the terms under which other volunteers are engaged, particularly those who were formerly involved as young participants. In research literature, it has been noted that

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[161] It is interesting to note again how, as described in 2.2.8, the findings of OCT are reversed (Dodd et al., 2008). OCT, like other studies, concludes that amateur groups seek to replicate professional practice but *reject* the burden of safeguarding policies. Festival and APAA replicate safeguarding policy but *reject* professionalised socially engaged practices.

as well as being oligarchic… many voluntary organisations are framed by internal conflicts as well as external conflicts with outsiders… In relation to both internal and external power relations, we would add to this argument the point that sport and leisure associations, and long established ones in particular, are often inward looking, conservative and over-concerned with themselves; and that getting them to combine with other voluntary associations is very difficult (Blackshaw and Long, 2005, p. 14).

While interviewees in this research made no suggestion that they were not happy to participate in their groups, it is easy to imagine how the sense of obligation propagated by the deliberate and organised focus on mutuality of being could become a pressure, or worse manipulation, that would make it difficult for them to break away or develop their own careers outside of the group, especially when they had attachments developed through participation as children. Although it was said in jest, the fact that one participant at a Festival session joked 'welcome to the cult!' (fieldnotes, 11.09.2019) suggests both an awareness of the intensity of the work and perhaps an acknowledgement of the potential for problems. I also noted that while safeguarding measures were supposedly in place, no register of attendance was taken at this same session. I encountered nothing to suggest exploitation or abuse, but the key point remains: just as the work is voluntary, so too is safeguarding and protecting the interests of other volunteers. Outside the formal bureaucracy of institutions, there is little oversight to compel these intermediaries to adopt safeguarding procedures and, if informality and intensity are operationalised towards mutuality of being, clearly this creates scenarios in which abuse and/or exploitation could occur. This aspect of their work is troubling to me, as someone who has worked in the professional education and arts sectors, particularly when one considers that former participants, now adults, are integrated into the group's activities in ways that are not always clear.

It should be stressed that all the groups participating in this research had safeguarding measures in place, and there was nothing to suggest that participants and volunteers were anything other than enthusiastic about their involvement. The broader ethical question – should anyone set out to design intense practices that influence social relationships in this way? – leads to a further question: how is this different to other voluntary activities such as scouts, guides, faith groups, sports clubs or youth clubs? These questions reach beyond the scope of this analysis, but they certainly draw attention to the less celebrated aspects of institutional bureaucracy, reminding us that safeguarding policies are only as good as the organisational structures that compel them.

2.5.8 Mutuality of being as aesthetic experience

I have focused so far on the ways in which mutuality of being can be seen to motivate and structure the work of these groups, leading to models of practice that do not conform to those instituted by professionalised bureaucratic frameworks, and which are at times transgressive of professional norms. Here analysis turns to how mutuality of being becomes aesthetic through the experience of socially engaged creative work. For these amateur socially engaged intermediaries, the business of making art (theatre and music) is not merely a vehicle for soliciting social bonds that could be exchanged for another activity to achieve the same ends. For Pel, Tru, Julie and Jenny, as described in 2.2 and 2.3, art is a lifelong interest that interoperates with kinship and altruism (as constituents of mutuality of being) to generate what could be described as an aesthetic multiplier. In the first instance, they recognise the personal and social value (social benefit) inherent to their respective artforms:

> They develop as people while they're dealing with the audience, as well as while they're actually acting (Baines interview, Cox 15.07.2019).

The artform and its social impact are united in perception. From here, it will not have gone unnoticed that these intermediaries connect (or are unable to separate) their love of art and their love of young people – the impulse to share and nurture or, to put it another way, to nurture through sharing. This is a constant feature running through the interviews, which gets to the core of what the intermediaries do and why they do it. Their love of art and creativity is deeply infused with first-family kinship (family ritual, childhood experience, affinal partnerships etc), which carries its own, pre-existing aesthetic individuality. This is perceptually and emotionally invigorated by altruistically supporting the development of young people through mutuality of being (second-family kinship) expressed through intense artistic production or, to use Dewey's vernacular, assimilating meanings from the past in the present, where the impulses to create and nurture gain form and solidity through the commensurate experiences of APAA/Festival, to solicit a unique aesthetic experience. For these intermediaries, the expressive objects (Shakespeare/Urban Glee) have both practical and aesthetic functions. From a practical perspective, they provide the experiential framework that solicits mutuality of being:

> Julie: The context was – how creative drama can develop an individual creatively and personally? and that where we still are… We do *do* productions, because that's part of it, dealing with the pressure of all of that – it brings them closer together…
>
> Jenny: that's what Festival is (Baines and Beckett interview, Cox 17.06.2019).

The performances bring pressure that expresses mutuality of being through the intensified experience of 'mutual working towards something that's great' (Beckett interview, Cox 17.06.2019). But additionally, from the aesthetic standpoint, every aspect of these experiences draws from perception all the associations of kinship – sibling play, family ritual, a mother unable to afford arts participation for her child, lost relatives, affinal bonds and so on. These past experiences are unified by emotion in the work of propagating mutuality of being among participants to realise the aesthetic phase of every performance or workshop in experience. In this way, social bonds between participants – mutuality of being – become aesthetic. The love of art (rooted in family kinship), the voluntary nature of voluntary work (an expression of mutuality of being), and the bonds between participants and within families are brought together and organised into the unifying aesthetic phase of this work.

Considering what has been discussed so far, we can see how varied, complex and interdependent the meanings brought through perception are – childhood experience, theatre, music, family ritual, volunteerism, affinal relationships, love of young people and so on – all perceived and made aesthetic through the alembic of a Shakespeare production or Urban Glee: creativity that intensifies and clarifies the aesthetic experience. For these interviewees, without these meanings being brought together by the expressive object, the *work* of Festival and APAA is lost – the object itself becomes opaque in its significance because, as Dewey's theorising predicts, the work of art 'clarifies and purifies confused meaning of prior experience' (Leddy, 2020). From this perspective, the purposeful and reflexive way in which Shakespeare/Urban Glee are organised and undergone renders both the production (creativity/public performance/show) and the process (the structure of arrangements including location, intensity, informality, volunteering, family ritual and young people – the work of cultural intermediation itself) a unified expressive object – *works of aesthetic experience*. Like Dewey, these intermediaries recognise how the process of creativity can be shaped, sculpted and rounded out in such a way as to express the aesthetic phase of experience. And so, it can justifiably be said that the way in which these intermediaries organise their work represents a mode of cultural intermediation that is itself *the* art, with its own form and unifying aesthetic integrity in experience.

Dewey's attention to the nature of art *as experience* is particularly useful when it comes to these groups. While arguing that aesthetic experience is not unique to art (vastly broadening the potential locations of aesthetic experience to include mutuality of being), he paid close attention to the specificities of art, which for him, by purposefully organising material into expressive objects (or perhaps it is better to think of art objects as expressive/expressing processes), enables a collaboration

between artist and perceiver ('acts of expression') in which common experience is drawn out by perception and directed to become shared aesthetic experiences. For Dewey, successful works of art are intrinsically communal and transformative:

> Works of art that are not remote from common life, that are widely enjoyed in a community, are signs of a unified collective life. But they are also marvellous aids in the creation of such a life. The remaking of the material of experience in the act of expression is not an isolated event confined to the artist and to a person here and there who happens to enjoy the work. In the degree in which art exercises its office, it is also a *remaking of the experience of the community* in the direction of greater order and unity (Dewey, 1958, p. 81, emphasis added).

'Remaking the experience of community' (ibid) is precisely what these intermediaries do when they express the aesthetic phase of mutuality of being from the experience of producing a performance (or rehearsal, workshop etc), unifying a complex chemistry of perception and emotion that enlivens the past in the present. And so, while the work of these groups is structured *by and for* mutuality of being, it is fundamentally artistic in the way Dewey considers most favourable. Kinship, in all its registers, is made aesthetic through the expressive object – *aesthetic and communal in participation.* From this perspective, these groups are far from amateur and inferior – they are doing what, for Dewey, truly great art does.

2.5.9 Dewey vs capital and exchange – putting the aesthetics of mutuality of being centre stage

Having applied this alternative approach to the work of these groups, it is useful, in concluding this chapter, to draw some comparisons with common analytical approaches that tend to ignore, separate out and/or render opaque the experiential and aesthetic qualities of socially engaged artistic work. For example, Walcon and Nicholson's effort to conceptualise the aesthetic element of sociability in amateur theatre – the 'sociable aesthetic' – by deploying social capital, appears to lack analytical depth:

> The intensity of working in the theatre can create a strong 'bonding capital', particularly where there are economic imperatives to generate a profitable programme of work and maintain a theatre building. But this is often matched by social capital that is welcoming and outward-looking, a 'bridging' social capital that aims to give something back to the theatre and to the local community (Walcon and Nicholson, 2017, p. 28).

On first reading this sounds applicable to the groups engaged in this research; it is. But what is absent throughout Nicholson's analysis, as with others that defer to the social *as* capital, is the vital role of what is brought by perception – the subjective – in experience (Born, 2010). There is no mention of this in Nicholson's account. Thus, it is unclear exactly what is being referred to as 'bonding' and 'bridging capital', how the 'capital' element operates to structure creative practice or how these things manifest in experience. Social capital is used to describe the sociable aesthetic, but appears as an object separate from the aesthetic experience of participation, suggestive of something that exists outside the experience of undergoing sociability, disconnected from the artistic work itself.

In the analysis above, 'what kinship does' and 'what people do for kinship' (Fliche, 2006, p. 3) does not conform to the Putnam/Bourdieu rendering of social capital as asset. Julie, Jenny, Pel and Tru (and others interviewed) are motivated primarily by the formation of bonds *between young participants* and the benefits these provide to them – not self-interested peer-to-peer transactions to be used in their personal social arrangements. Taking seriously their impulse to nurture (revealed vividly by the pastoral element) rather than to acquire assets for exchange, it is difficult to see how any social capital solicited in this work could be deployed to the benefit of intermediaries to any degree that would warrant their level of investment. If attaining new skills and/or cultural capital were the aim, as assumed by Stebbins' serious leisure and Bourdieu's cultural capital, participatory arts with young people would be the poorest of strategies employed by intermediaries who knew how hierarchies of cultural value in the professional sectors worked. They reject these, and actively avoid replicating them. Furthermore, their focus on young people would significantly hinder the acquisition of skills or cultural capital because, arguably, they are unlikely to achieve the professional standards that might be symbolically recognised, and therefore useful, for soliciting cultural capital in professional fields. While their focus aligns them closest to youth theatre/music, theatre in education and community arts – forms of practice that are rarely cited as the locations of high-value cultural capital – these intermediaries consciously shun opportunities that might consecrate any forms of capital imbued in their work by *choosing* to work with young people *outside institutional frameworks* – either commercial or funded fields where legitimation might be solicited.

It can also be noted that these intermediaries' approach to voluntary work is difficult to conceptualise as symbolic capital. As Bourdieu points out, symbolic acts only become capital when recognised, but these intermediaries do not behave in ways that can be interpreted as seeking recognition. As described above (2.5.3), they do not publicise themselves to the cultural sector, they do not enter into competition for cultural funding, they do not adopt or operationalise symbols or signs that would

register within the cultural field, and nor do they publicise, either within the group or externally, the fact that they work voluntarily. As Jenny told me, 'we rather like being under the radar' (Baines and Beckett interview, Cox 17.06.2019) and, similarly, Tru tells me:

> I shouldn't be recognised or rewarded for the work I'm doing because I felt like it's… my ministry, my duty, you know, it goes deeper than me just doing good work, it's a mission and the mission is not yet completed (Powell, T. interview, Cox 24.03.2019)[162].

For these interviewees, being 'under the radar' (Baines and Beckett interview, Cox 17.06.2019) means avoiding structures of bureaucracy, power and discourse that might alter relationships and divert energy from the objective of mutuality of being, but equally means avoiding recognition and legitimation in the locations that would serve self-interest. These intermediaries refuse such structures, resisting the discursive practices of the funded field and the economic imperatives of both the funded and commercial fields. As such, it is difficult to identify a field into which Festival or APAA can be situated. They exhibit no behaviour that can be interpreted as jostling for status, recognition or position in any framework of objective relations, institutions or practices – charitable, educational, religious, cultural – formal or informal, that could be understood as a field. Festival and APAA have occasionally collaborated with schools (borrowing a minibus, promoting activity in assemblies, using a room at the Royal Birmingham Conservatoire), but this engagement is limited to the extent to which they cannot be seen to have, or be seeking, a position in that field. They have (as described previously) interacted with funding and funded institutions, but they actively seek to avoid this, perceiving funding as having potentially negative effects on their work. They have also received informal support from faith-based organisations but, again, they do not seem to be actors in this world, although religious faith does play a role – a theme explored through this study that will published at a later date. Under analysis, there is simply nothing resembling a field in which these groups can be seen as 'players'. Their work is, as described by Lahire in 2.1.2, 'off-field' (Lahire, 2015, p. 74).

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[162] As highlighted previously, some interviewees signalled faith as a motivation for their work. However, none of the interviewees who presented faith as a motivation identified their work as being 'faith-based' or affiliated it to any faith group/organisation. Instead, they were emphatic that their work was *strictly secular*. Interviewees highlighted a tension between their socially engaged work and perceived negative stereotypes that religious faith imports. To varying degrees, faith was described as a distant, subjective, private motivator that does not colour the experience for participants but solicits an aesthetic resonance for intermediaries on a personal level. This complicates common theorising about the role of faith in artistic production, which tends to compartmentalise it to acts of worship and/or evangelism. Faith as motivator for *secular* amateur activity is a characteristic that has received little interest from policy and/or academic research. Mutuality of being as aesthetic experience provided an effective conceptual approach for illuminating this type of vital, subjective and perceptual motivation, which is rendered invisible by notions of serious leisure, habitus, field and/or capital. However, this work fell outside the scope of this thesis and so, as stated previously, it will be published as a separate monograph at a later date.

The problem that the majority of analyses share is that, as described in 1.1, they assume a particular form of self-interest in relation to the social life of intermediaries, and thus fail to account for the aesthetic nature of mutuality of being and altruism in experience, which exists in the interaction between perception and environment and is expressed by experience in experiencing. They skip over the vital work of the aesthetic phase of experience (dismissing the subjective) by conceptualising all things aesthetic as an asset in objective social structure. How these intermediaries express the aesthetic register of mutuality of being through the experiential qualities of their creative work is entirely invisible to such analysis. Looking at the work of these groups through the lens of mutuality of being as aesthetic experience, we can see how common approaches reduce the expressive object (the artwork) to a vehicle for symbolic, social or cultural capital, and limit the locations of aesthetic experience, leaving the structuring role of kinship and experience invisible. Bourdieu's thinking tools, in particular, become unthinking tools – a set of rules and presuppositions that obscure the organising principles of this work. The researcher is met (ironically) with the same divergence between *rule* and practice that Bourdieu identified as the error of structural anthropology in his analysis of kinship – the catalyst for his metaphysical scheme for cultural production.

The approach advocated here draws analysis towards those things that Bourdieu, Putnam, Stebbins and others have ignored – the structuring role of the aesthetic phase of experience. We can identify and give sufficient weight to the way in which subjective things, such as family kinship, 'love' (mutuality of being) and expressive objects (Shakespeare or Urban Glee), work together to express aesthetic experience, and to how this unification motivates and structures these forms of artistic work. In these examples, the aesthetic phase of mutuality of being belongs in neither the subjective nor the objective realm but in their unity in experience. The *work of art* – the expressive object – is not limited to the music, performance or Shakespeare script but includes both the voluntary work that goes into its production, the *fact* that this work *is* voluntary, and the benefits of mutuality of being experienced by young participants.

2.5.10 Conclusion

In this chapter, using Sahlins' mutuality of being and Dewey's art as experience, I have extended analysis of the role of kinship to identify how the bonds between participants are expressed through the expressive object (creativity itself) to produce the aesthetic phase of mutuality of being in experience. This theoretical approach – mutuality of being *as aesthetic*, expressed through the experience of creative work – identifies the elemental components that structure this amateur socially

engaged work, without diverting to assumptions of self-interest, strategy or capital. It has revealed how these activities are structured in ways that operationalise informality, intensity and volunteerism towards the aesthetic phase of mutuality of being: Festival's summer camp reinvigorating past experience in new aesthetic experiences; the ritual of singing into the sea recalling family history, expressed and made aesthetic through sharing; and the bonds between brothers Tru and Pel, and between APAA participants, as an aesthetic experience expressed through Urban Glee. These experiences are in and of themselves aesthetic in nature and are what drive and structure this work.

i. Summary

In this thesis, I have explored two manifestations of socially engaged arts practice: funded/discursive and voluntary/experiential. In trying to identify shared properties within the disparate range of activities conceptualised as socially engaged in the funded arts (community, participatory etc), analysis was drawn to the discursive practices that funding produces, along with the disconnect between these, and the pervasive inequalities that characterise arts funding, this framing the research questions addressed in Part One:

1. How are 'socially engaged' discourses constructed in the publicly funded arts?
2. How do these discourses affect amateur/voluntary arts activity?

Bourdieu's less commonly used understanding of discourse and language was useful for addressing these questions, revealing how competition exercised through funding bureaucracy consolidates a linguistic market in which euphemised forms of symbolic/economic capital are structured by, and manifest in the problematisation of inequality and policy attachment. Here, the thesis offers original insights on the frequently observed problems of social inequality in the funded arts sector, illuminating not only how the objective of 'access' can be (and often is) undermined by the operations of distinction (restricted, often tacit notions of artistic quality) through ambiguous policy discourses, but also, and more importantly, how discourses about socially engaged arts co-opt inequality as a basis for maintaining the status quo.

Analysis in Part One has demonstrated how in the funded field, socially engaged art is, itself, a restricted discourse that exercises symbolic power to marginalise and devalue amateur/everyday practices in the interests of funded institutions. In this way, despite the rhetoric of inclusion, the products of the funded field (beyond specifically socially engaged practices) remain exclusive; the preserve of the wealthiest whitest 8% (Neelands, Belfiore and Firth, 2015). Paying attention to this gap (between discourse and practice) has led analysis to conclude that, in the funded field, socially engaged arts *is primarily a discursive practice that serves extant institutions and reproduces the inequalities of arts funding.* Understanding this is of vital importance because, put simply, if the discursive practice of socially engaged arts continues to provide this utility, damaging hierarchies of cultural value will persist, and efforts towards cultural democracy (Gross and Wilson, 2018; Hadley and Belfiore, 2018) will fail.

By exploring how funding bureaucracy structures socially engaged arts as a discursive practice in the funded field – organised to solicit political and economic support through claims to social benefit (policy attachment) – the study was led to further questions about the social benefit of those activities that are marginalised, specifically, amateur/voluntary practices that operate outside the funded field, and whether these can be understood as socially engaged - organised specifically for social benefit outside of funding paradigms;

3. Can amateur arts be understood as 'socially engaged' and, if so, how do amateur socially engaged arts practices organise and sustain themselves?
4. What does amateur socially engaged work tell us about the relationship between cultural policy, funded institutions and amateur participation?

In exploring these questions, the thesis introduces a number of activities that, while not describing themselves as socially engaged (or using any of the other various related terms, e.g. community, participatory, outreach), appear to be *doing* what socially engaged discourses in the funded field *describe*, but voluntarily, autonomously and outside the problematisation of inequality and policy attachment that structures socially engaged art as discursive practice in the funded field. I have termed these practices *amateur socially engaged arts; a* form of cultural intermediation that has not appeared in studies of arts participation before. Operating outside discernible 'fields', in ways that cannot be understood as competing for capital, power and/or status (economism through euphemised forms of symbolic capital), these practices highlight the limitations of Bourdieu's analytic scheme, as well as those of Stebbins and Putnam, calling for an alternative approach to conceptualising and understanding amateur participation and its cultural value.

Here, the study offers its most significant, original and potentially expansive contribution, particularly to the so-called cultural value debates that problematise the nature of 'value' being produced by different kinds of arts practice (Holden, 2006; Dodd, Graves and Taws, 2008; O'Brien and Oakley, 2015; Belfiore, 2018). The analytical framework developed, based upon contemporary kinship studies (specifically Sahlins' 'mutuality of being' (2011) and Dewey's 'Art as Experience' (1958) has illuminated vital forms aesthetic experience that structure and sustain creative work; experiences that are pluralistic, contingent, social, subjectively felt and rendered invisible or irrelevant by Putnam's, Stebbins' or Bourdieu's commonly deployed systems based upon field, capital, exchange and self-interest. Using this alternative theoretical framework has revealed how mutuality of being and volunteerism are *experienced aesthetically* through creative practice, and how, in turn, the aesthetic

phase mutuality of being and volunteerism motivate and structure complex forms creativity that are altruistic, consuming, communal, at times transgressive and that solicit significant social benefits.

Understanding the complexity of aesthetic experience as a paradigm of cultural value is important for both scholarship and policy going forward. Not only does it help better apprehend the nature of the 'value' expressed through artistic work and participation in general (how it is constructed subjectively, not as capital but aesthetic experience, and from a potentially vast range of activities beyond those traditionally categorised artistic), it also problematises extant policy approaches to soliciting the social benefits of arts participation (socially engaged arts), a point that will be developed shortly. The point here is that common analytical approaches promulgating that cultural value is best understood through the principles of economism – culture *as capital* and/or social *as capital* (whether via the critical analysis of Bourdieu, or practical utility of Stebbins and Putnam) - tacitly facilitates structures of inequality by failing to account for the integrity of the subjective and sociable in aesthetic experience. This makes concrete (in both policy and analysis) a reductive understanding of cultural participation that writes assumptions upon activities that operate outside funding frameworks and ultimately tells us little about what arts participation is doing in experience. The framework advocated in Part Two of this thesis provides a different perspective, that gives sufficient weight to the subjective and aesthetic motivations that common approaches tend to overlook, and in doing, delivers a more refined understanding the relationships between arts participation, cultural value and social impact.

By examining socially engaged art as both discursive practice in the funded field, and as the aesthetic of mutuality of being expressed through the experience of amateur participation, this thesis has identified important relationships/tensions that exist between amateur and funded arts, economism and volunteerism, and the inadequacies of commonly utilised schemes for understanding cultural value. The four questions that have guided this research have led to four substantive conclusions, summarised as follows:

1. In the funded field, socially engaged arts functions primarily as discursive practice structured by the problematisation of inequality and policy attachment, and this discursive practice contributes to inequality and the marginalisation of other forms of creative activity, including amateur/everyday arts practices.
2. Bourdieu's scheme of analysis is effective when it comes to identifying structures of inequality in fields organised by institutions and by competition for economic or other transmuted forms of capital.

3. Amateur participation can be understood as socially engaged and, further, without the exigencies of competition for economic capital and the discourses this produces, activities are structured by the more intrinsic direct benefits of mutuality of being and volunteerism as aesthetic experience.

4. Bourdieu's analysis is less effective when it comes to these subjective motivations and to activities that operate outside the gates of 'fields of practice'. In these locations, Bourdieu's system, and the commonly used alternatives offered by Putnam and Stebbins, tend to reduce complex subjective/aesthetic experiences to capital and individualistic self-interest. Instead, the alternative approach of mutuality of being as aesthetic experience effectively draws out precisely the things Bourdieu's, Putnam's and Stebbins') system obscure, to reveal structures of creative practice and cultural value that have been elusive to extant research.

These conclusions signal larger questions for policy and analysis, that go beyond the specificities of socially engaged arts. Setting funded and amateur practices alongside one another has made it clear that cultural policy and scholarship have issues to address when it comes to the distance between discourse and practice in the funded sector, and how cultural value is measured and understood. The outbound effect of socially engaged arts as discursive practice in the funded field (and scholarship) is to marginalise and obscure the potential of activities that do not conform to limited (and limiting) notions of cultural value, and what socially engaged arts (or indeed arts more generally) is/should be, the forms it can take, how it can be done, the types of expertise required, and the value of mutuality of being as aesthetic experience. This thesis complicates matters by highlighting how efforts to address such inequalities, or derive positive social impacts from arts participation are diverted when funding itself (being paid) effects the nature of experience in ways that, in some instances, impedes the aesthetic phases of mutuality of being (and/or volunteerism) to the detriment of the potential social benefits that are, ostensibly, the desired outcome of funding, something that policy makers should be mindful of.

While there is no straightforward solution to these problems, policy undoubtably needs imbue a more refined understanding of the mechanisms of exclusion and dispossession that operate through current funding bureaucracy, and consider how these processes can be interrupted to become more flexible and inclusive, perhaps through more egalitarian support frameworks such as councils for voluntary organisations (i.e. via the National Council for Voluntary Organisations [NCVO] or Local Authorities) or schools and education more generally. The findings of this study suggest that support should include accessible, non-financial practical offerings (e.g. utilities, space, admin assistance etc) alongside, or as an alternative to economic investment, and that these should be made available through more diverse

and direct institutional arrangements (Wilson et al., 2017) - diversifying support for the aesthetic experiences of many social groups, rather than funding diversity for the cultural interests of a few.

To be clear, the issue that funding can negatively impact the aesthetics of mutuality of being/volunteerism does not mean that activities of this nature should be precluded from support or public funding. Rather, other forms of support should be made available, and a more nuanced approach is required, one that can register the needs of intermediaries and create spaces for a diverse range socially aesthetic experience. In addition, providing support through a wider range of institutional frameworks might impede the operations of distinction operating through current arrangements by removing judgments of value from homogenised restricted institutions (institutional habitus) into fields and institutions that are, to use the term coined by Bourdieu, 'socially naturalised' (Bourdieu, 1993)[163].

 Crucially, more broadly, and as has been suggested by others (see Neelands et al., 2015; Wilson et al., 2017; Belfiore, 2018), policy should broaden its understanding of artistic quality and seek to emancipate funding from the narrow, socially hierarchised assumptions of cultural value that have limited the social benefits of arts funding to a privileged minority. This would involve actively embracing other forms of cultural participation, such as amateur arts, grassroots music scenes, majorettes, vintage car rallies and so on through more diverse structures of support. Alongside this, more attention should be paid to the nature of aesthetic experience, and the relationship between perception and experience as a basis for arts participation and policy decision-making. This means exploring approaches that include the subjective elements of aesthetic experience that individuals and/or groups bring to a potential activity and considering how an activity can be made responsive to these. While 'co-creation' has become a fashionable term in cultural work in recent years, the process of 'connecting with communities' should be about enablement, actively seeking to avoid introducing hierarchies of value and distinction (in both aesthetic and discursive terms) that marginalise and dispossess in the delivery of socially engaged artistic work. For many arts professionals this would mean adopting the perspective of facilitator rather than director, enabler rather than curator, and participant rather than artist, allowing decision-making to be led by those by whom the experience is intended to be experienced. Beginning with experience and, as Dewey puts it, 'the impulses' of creativity, rather than the ends of art, would likely identify activities and approaches that are more

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[163] Recognising Bourdieu's point that any form of hierarchised occupation will reflect the broader field of classes, whereby senior positions are likely to occupied by privileged groups, but groups who may be less invested in the forms of capital and intermediation that dominate art worlds.

effective when it comes to broadening access and participation, and realising the social benefits of shared, communal aesthetic experiences.

ii Reflections on methodology

The methodology that has guided this research has had implications that bear upon the findings. The heuristic semi-structured approach to interviews has produced data that, to varying degrees, has been co-created. However, many of the interview responses (in both funded and amateur contexts) describe experiences, perceptions and motivations that are not shared by the researcher, while others are more familiar. As such, while I have bracketed my experience and knowledge appropriately (chapter *Methodology and Research Design*), there has been variance in the degree to which responses have been co-created. The result is that themes that would not have been identified through an auto-ethnographic approach have entered the analysis, to the benefit of the research (e.g. Fasil's experience as a Muslim artist of Bangladeshi descent – 1.4), but have not been triangulated with the experience of the researcher to the same degree. In such situations, other research literature has been used (e.g. Mercer, 1994), but this variance should nevertheless be recognised.

Further, following the heuristic-ethnographic method, the theoretical approach has been guided by findings as they emerged from the field. This has led to a Bourdieusian analysis of discursive practices in the funded field (Part One), and the combination of mutuality of being and art as experience for amateur socially engaged intermediaries (Part Two). It should be noted that, owing to Bourdieu's interest in structures of social inequality, practices in the funded sector have been subject to a more critical analysis than those in the amateur context. While this has contributed to a more refined understanding of the role of discursive practice in producing inequality in arts funding, it does not account for the full range of motivations and cultural activities that funded intermediaries may engage with outside of their professional contexts. It also means that amateur socially engaged activities cannot be exempt from questions of social inequality that may operate through their work in different ways that have been omitted from this analysis.

Finally, because of the difficulties in identifying amateur socially engaged arts activities (described in *Methodology and Research Design vii*) and the limited resources available to this study, the number of amateur socially engaged intermediaries interviewed was smaller than those from the funded sector. Ideally, more amateur socially engaged intermediaries would have participated in the research. Despite these variations, parts one and two of this study are not unlike ethnographic

projects that draw upon smaller sample sizes or adopt a case-study approach, and thus this study produces comparable and credible data and findings.

iii Next steps

The conclusions of this study complicate policy approaches to the social benefits of arts participation and efforts to understand cultural value, opening up questions for future research. The gap between socially engaged arts as discursive and realised practice requires further clarification. While it is relatively uncontentious to conclude that the funded sector has failed in its efforts towards equality of funding distribution, there are (within the funded field) a wide range of divergent approaches, many of which will likely be effective when it comes to soliciting the social benefits realised through mutuality of being. As described in 1.3.4, monitoring and evaluation methods could be better attuned to differentiating between those activities that work and those that do not, and deeper understanding and development of evaluation techniques/processes would support this effort.

In addition, while APAA and Festival describe being paid as a barrier to the aesthetic phase of mutuality of being/volunteerism, Fasil and Jessie suggest something rather more nuanced and complex. There is no certainty that, as vehicles for social benefit, economic motivations and mutuality of being should be mutually exclusive. Understanding the relationship between these motivations, and the impacts of funding on the aesthetic phase of volunteerism more broadly, would help explore alternative resourcing structures and institutional arrangements that are more inclusive and effective when it comes to the social benefits of arts participation. The relationships between altruism, aesthetic experience and creativity should be a target of future research exploring cultural value and the social benefits of arts participation.

Finally, the conceptual approach developed in this thesis - mutuality of being as aesthetic experience - requires further exploration. During this study I expanded the analysis to include how some participants experience religious faith through their creative work. While, owing to the scope of the analysis, it has not been possible to include this material here, the analysis produced insights that locate and contextualise nebulous experiences such as 'spiritual feeling' in the aesthetics of everyday, secular arts practice, without reducing these to transmuted forms of economic exchange[164]. Further expansion of this analytical approach would likely reveal similar social-aesthetic experiences motivating/enabling a wide range of aesthetic-creative practices across funded, commercial and voluntary paradigms.

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[164] This material will be published as monograph at a later date.

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To provide a sense of the semi-structured heuristic interview approach, below is the schedule of questions used for 2 interviews with Festival Arts. The schedule for *Interview 1* was repeated (with occasional minor changes, e.g. name of organisation etc.,) across other cases with different interviewees. The questions taken in to *Interview 2* were extrapolated from analysis of responses provided in Interview 1, and, as such, were more targeted and specific.

Festival Arts Questions, Interview 1

1. Tell me who you are, what Festival is, and its history – set the scene?
2. What is the purpose of your work – why do you do it?
3. What motivates you/the work?
4. Have you ever received funding for your work?
5. Why/why not apply for funding?
6. Why work voluntarily?
7. How does it work financially?
8. What enables the work – are there other support frameworks that make it happen?
9. Tell me about company structure and governance?
10. What do you think are the wider impacts/benefits of your work?
11. How has the group/your work changed overtime?
12. What does Festival arts do professional for artists?
13. How does it contribute to 'ecology of culture'?
14. What does it do in terms of urban regeneration?
15. How do you feel about arts funding in general?
16. As an amateur group, have you ever detected an element of snobbery from funded sector, or other institutions?

Festival Arts Questions Interview 2

Clarifications
1. When was the guarantee against loss?
2. Could I get Constellation contact –Jess Hakin?
3. Mentioned work with the Crescent - details and other examples?
4. Who supports your work in St Davids?

Ecology
5. In what ways do you contribute to the cultural ecology? Expand
6. More detail regarding 'Cloud Coockoo Land',
7. What is your audience make-up at Bishops palace?
8. Have you ever participated in any wider evaluation/data gathering?
9. How many participants do you have at a given time?
10. How many professionals have worked with/for you?
11. How many people volunteer and why?
12. Do you think you have influenced professional institutions/careers? In what ways?

13. Art as 'boundary objects' - connecting faith resources to cultural ecology?
14. What do others see? How do you think others (i.e. participants) perceive your work?
15. How do you present your work to different parties?
16. What knowledge is shared and what knowledge is specific?

Politics

17. Does your work have a political aspect?
18. Do you feel arts funding politicised? … 'Not fitting? – fitting with what?

Being unfunded

19. 'Not entirely altruistic' - in what ways is it not? What do you get out of it?
20. 'The dynamics of the group' - what does this mean?
21. Does funding effect the artistic/aesthetic nature of the work in anyway?
22. Are you talking about loyalty?
23. Are you saying that the social capital aspect is enhanced by being unfunded?

Faith

24. You mentioned faith bringing a sense of 'vocation', but that this isn't a faith group – I get the second part, what about the first? Explain this for me? Is faith an underlying motivation for what you do?
25. You mentioned playing down faith. Why? What are the misconceptions? Is it uncool? You've already answered this but, does faith ever present in the sessions?

Others

26. How important is the history of the group in the motivation to keep doing it?
27. How important is the fact that it was your parents who set it up in motivation you to keep doing it?
28. Tell me about the negative aspects of it?
29. How has it negatively affected you?
30. Do you see any other negative effects?
31. What makes the bonding in the group so tight?
32. Why are participants so passionate about it?