

## Chapter 17

### Evaluate Cultural Events Legacy – from policy to engaged research

Rafaela Neiva Ganga

*Institute of Cultural Capital, Liverpool John Moores University, United Kingdom*

#### Introduction

Cultural events evaluation is a central topic for academic research, policy-making, and civil society as it emerges from the need to justify the public value of public spend on culture (Scott, 2010). Countless evaluation reports, research journal articles and other outputs have been produced, prompting narratives of success and or questioning the event impact and the public spend (Belfiore, 2009; Garcia, Cox, & Melville, 2010; O'Callaghan, 2012; Ooi, Håkanson, & LaCava, 2014; Steiner, Frey, & Hotz, 2015; Campbell, Cox, & O'Brien, 2017; Baker, Bull, & Taylor, 2018). The Economic and Social Research Council (2020, n.p.) defines impact as “the demonstrable contribution that excellent research makes to society and the economy” detailing that it can be instrumental towards influencing policy and practice, reframe debates and build capacity. According to this perspective, the most significant impact is the measurable change arising from the research and how the research users subsequently interpret that change. In contrast, the definition of 'success' tends to be a more fluid term, escaping academic constraints and placing political advocacy over science.

Most of the contemporary debates concerning cultural events evaluation is led by those who advocate for cultural policy and what must be noted is that much emphasis is placed on contributions from economics and sociology (Throsby, 2001; Holden, 2004; Hennion, 2004; O'Brien, 2010; Lamont, 2012; Crossick & Kaszynska, 2016). Given that interdisciplinary perspectives and ways of analysis differ, these scholars offer methodological instruments to measure the value of cultural policy and event legacy, which adds value and theoretical insights that help problematise the social context of cultural events. In the United Kingdom (UK) and Europe, research has been methodologically-oriented (based on how to evaluate, the ethical implications of using certain methodologies) and epistemologically-oriented (why evaluate at all, whose knowledge is being perpetuated, how the knowledge is been used) (see Holden, 2006; Walmsley, 2018). The methodological and epistemological decisions of cultural events evaluation provide evidence (or not) of its impact on a city's cultural field, local residents' cultural practices, urban public spaces development, and levels of funding and investment. Each of these points are crucial in an engaged civic debate on *what a society is* or *has been*, but above all *what a society might yet be* (Kalleberg, 2005). The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, Brexit, the financial crisis, and the resurgence of the far-right raises the need to rethink the plurality of cultural value, beyond marketised perspectives, stressing intrinsic values (Holden, 2004). This requires an engaged scientific public debate, facing an 'epistemological turn' and bottom-up approach to cultural events evaluation.

This chapter aims to offer an analysis of the cultural value debate and the social life of methods that have been used to capture the public value of hosting a cultural event. It does not present a discussion of empirical data, but it draws on prior and ongoing experience as a sociologist who has focused extensively on the evaluation of culture and cultural events, having focused on *Impact 18* (an evaluation of the 2008 Liverpool European Capital of Culture ten year on) and the *Liverpool Boroughs of Culture* (Institute of Cultural Capital, 2019). The chapter

discusses events evaluation as a social phenomenon embedded within particular contexts. It offers a contribution to the field by: 1. addressing the narratives of success of Liverpool as European Capital of Culture 2008 and how that narrative became a legacy on its own for events' evaluation and urban policy; and 2. reflects on the methodological design of the evaluation of Liverpool Boroughs of Culture and the legacy the research might have on the city region's cultural policy. The author argues that, by building on expanded dialogical relationships (science, policy, industry, and society), policy and public-relevant sociological research can critically co-design policy that accounts for a pluralistic perception of cultural value (Burawoy, 2005; Bergvall-Kåreborn & Ståhlbröst, 2010; Nichols, 2015). While conceptually contributing to contemporary cultural and policy debates, this chapter navigates the challenges of pragmatic research and aims to outline routes for future research.

## **A theoretical and methodological framework for researching cultural events legacy**

### ***Why evaluate cultural events legacy?***

Culture has been an essential element of public policy around the world, and this is especially true when we consider the legacy of hosting events. Being awarded a 'City of Culture' has become a brand recognised globally. This helps cities leverage their cultural attractions and promote them to international audiences, which helps with regenerating city images (Richards, 2020; Wise & Harris, 2017). For instance, in 2017, there were thirty similar titles around the world (Green, 2017). Some of these events have adopted a continent-wide approach such as the European Capital of Culture (known as the European City of Culture from 1985-2001), while others have focused on a more targeted scale, or a borough-wide reach such as the London Borough of Culture. While the scale of the event will relate to the amount of funding received, the impact, intended outcomes and legacy directions of each event are maximised so that change is embraced before, during and after the event.

Cities in Europe have recognised the importance of a title awarded externally as an opportunity to grow a new tourism base and service economy (Spirou, 2011), enhance destination competitiveness (Aquilino et al., 2019) and reinvent a city's economy (Cudny, Comunian, & Wolaniuk, 2020; Liu, 2019; Smith, 2012). The recognition of externally awarded titles has been magnified over the past few decades. The rhetoric that supports the European Capital of Culture assumes that this prestige attracts investments and will build a future tourism economy, which translate into a host of new opportunities (Getz & Page, 2016). This means that the most visible and long-lasting event that showcases European cultural policy, is seen, as an instrument of economic conversion. However, when this conversion occurs, it tends to be short-lived and centred on the year that the city hosts an event. In reverse, it leads to spatial and social fragmentation, disaggregating the real city from the city staged for the European Capital of Culture. Scholars who have evaluated event impacts address how this poses problems of segmentation and social exclusion (Richards et al., 2013; Wallstam et al., 2020; Wise, 2019).

### ***The cultural value debate***

The value of culture is a political matter, which cannot be dissociated from the optics one uses to consider them. In Europe, culture is a strategic asset for several reasons. First, culture is a resource for social cohesion across the continent. Second, European heritage and cultural expression are the foundation of the culture and creative industries, providing a significant employment volume (European Commission, 2017). The current political position and public

discourse emphasises the creative economy, prioritising culture's economic value to the detriment of its plurality (O'Brien, 2010). In comparison, the cultural policy has fallen short of providing alternative valuation systems that could be opposed to this approach (Matarasso, 1996; Walmsley, 2012). Currently, this is a fundamental challenge for Europe and other latitudes.

In the UK, the Cultural Policy field has been prolific in a debate on the instrumentalism of cultural events and the use of an 'evidence base' for making a case for art investment (Gilmore, 2014; Belfiore, 2012; Belfiore & Bennett, 2008). Heir of the New Labour (1997-2010) cultural policy evaluation frameworks intended to capture the impact of the cultural events – its 'legacy' or the added value that that culture bears (economic, social and individual). Furthermore, in the consultancy fertile terrain of the evidence-based policy-making, a trending tone of successes emerged, one that filtered down the plurality of narratives, epistemologies and methods in favour of a specific aesthetic of research presentation (glossy publications with incisive graphs sprinkled with punch lines aimed to make an impact media-worthy or as a catchy headline) that make visible the preferred policy narratives (Stevens, 2011). In this sense, policy-oriented research dedicated to measure and demonstrate the value of cultural events in regenerating cities has fuelled the academic debate over the selectiveness of research methods in impact evidence (Belfiore, 2012), and the epistemological implication of evaluating cultural value (Walmsley, 2012; Crossick & Kaszynska, 2016).

From a theoretical perspective, the value of culture has been addressed mainly by economists and sociologists (see Throsby, 2001; Lamont, 2012). The economic approaches seems to fail to provide a route to overcome the conventional mercantile approach (Throsby, 2001). Thus, to respond to this tendency, it is necessary to define the social value associated with culture from the participatory practice field (Walmsley, 2018; Wallstam, Ioannides, & Pettersson, 2020). The sociology of valuation, sociology of culture, along with other interdisciplinary and applied perspectives, have been demonstrating the value of capturing social actors' valuation practices. Such considerations are based upon what counts as a public good, or the significance of arts and culture for the ones that practice cultural interventions (Lamont, 2012; Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006; Hennion, 2004). This is not an easy task. Different actors in the cultural field (i.e. citizens, art and culture field professionals, public administrators, academics) construct and measure culture value differently. The challenge is to understand and standardise, and from there, manage and capture the plurality of cultural value.

### ***The methodological and epistemological debates***

Social science (or any science) methods are not neutral. Social science researchers have increasingly asked questions about the social status of social science, raising concerns on how methods shape our knowledge of the social world (Giddens, 1984; Bourdieu, 1996; Bauman, 2013). The search for objectivity is not done by excluding social relations, daily life or power relations, but by reducing ethnocentric analysis, which implies permanent self-surveillance, or better, a critical epistemological vigilance (Bachelard, 1990; Santos, 2002). While detailing this line of thought is complex and does not fit in the scope of this chapter, it is advantageous however to understand how methods have a 'social life' in impacts evaluation. This also relates to general pre-conceptions of the neutrality of social science used to validate a particular policy narrative concerning the value of cultural events. On this debate, it is helpful to consider which methods have been privileged by policy stakeholders for measuring impact and value of culture (Belfiore & Bennett, 2007).

Law, Ruppert, and Savage (2011) argue that methods have a *double social life*. First, they are closely related and theoretically permeated with the social world from which they emerge. Second, they also shape the social world, based on what questions are asked, what type of data are privileged (qualitative, quantitative), thus raising this *double social life* is central to analyse the impact evaluation of large-scale events. Gilmore (2014) argues that the resulting legacy narratives also have their own *double social life*. If the post-event policy narratives are drawn from selective data, the event's profile is also significant because the expectation of success pre-exists the research.

Another key contribution can be drawn from public sociology, which, in Burawoy's (2005) definition, aims to support the institutions of civil society (see also, Kalleberg, 2005). An events evaluation researcher is inherently engaged, as well as situated, between public sociology and policy sociology (Nichols, 2015). Moreover, an events evaluation researcher will leverage empirical methods and theoretical insights from the social sciences while engaging with 'extra-academic publics' on contemporary issues aiming to foster public good (Burawoy, 2005; Scott, 2010). Concerning (critical) sociological imaginations (Mills, 2000; Burawoy, 2005), there is a need to discuss the gap of *what is* (captured through empirical methods) and *what could be* (informed through theory, reflexive knowledge, and public dialogue). This reinforces the importance of public sociology to events impact and evaluation research. Potentially, advancing the cultural value debate beyond the definition of cultural value and how to capture and meaning of measuring (Belfiore & Bennett, 2008; Crossick & Kaszynska, 2016), can be found on the gap between *what an event is* and *what it could be* in a critical collective imagination.

Public sociology has been met with criticism questioning both its rational and its aims, while reclaiming the moral latitudes that make a healthy academic debate – this is based on hindsight that public good has to be perceived as plural (Charles, 2004; Nielsen, 2004). While events evaluation has undergone intense examination for placing policy advocacy above academic integrity (Belfiore, 2009). Critical and epistemological vigilance are up most crucial to revitalise the relationship between academia, policy and events evaluation. Because, what could be alternative? Both the divorce of the social sciences from its object and its neutrality are illusions long gone (Santos, 2002); still the debates on scholarship, public engagement, and advocacy are to be resolved, and the democratic mandate for culture to be fulfilled (Holden, 2004).

### **From the Capital to the Borough of Culture: The “Liverpool Model”**

For 35 years, the European Capital of Culture has been a laboratory for creative cities, network societies and knowledge-based economies (Castells, 1996; Schneider & Jacobson, 2019). Extensive work has been dedicated to analysing the multi impacts of the policy locally. However, it tends to fall into two conflicting narratives: either a negative response of critical scholars or the upmost positive conclusions of evaluations (Belfiore, 2016). These evaluations are perceived as agents harbouring 'positive illusions' (Bennett, 2011) and feeding skewed notions of 'evidence-based policy' that eventually act as agents of implicit cultural policy (Ahearne & Bennett, 2009). Exacerbated economic impacts (Bowitz & Ibenholt, 2009), economic incentives consequently lead to recurrent bids that focus solely on potential economic gains and financial legacies. This has also resulted in an explosion of similar type of events at several scales, which resulted in the organisation of the UK City of Culture, London Borough of Culture and the Liverpool Borough of Culture. As Boland, Murtagh and Shirlow

(2019, p. 249) argue, this “leads to a disconnect between the 'myth/rhetoric' of success and ‘ambivalent legacies’ and ‘authentic lived realities’ revealed in concentrations of unemployment, poverty and multiple deprivations”. The narratives of success leverage by the evaluation were created to justify the “discrepancy between early promises and actual effects” (Ooi, Håkanson, & LaCava, 2014, p. 423). The claims of long-term socio-economic transformation addressed by Garcia and Cox (2013) require further enquiry.

### ***The double social life of Impacts 08 and Impacts 18***

When Liverpool was European City of Culture in 2008, this was regarded as the ideal-type of culture-led regeneration event that overly emphasises the economic value of culture, “representing the apogee of a New Labour informed ‘cultural planning’ framework for urban development” (Connolly, 2013, p. 162). Liverpool 2008 was, in fact, not a cultural event but a culture-led urban regeneration strategy design to airbrush the city's image, attract infrastructural development capital and foster the visitor economy (Liu, 2019). The ‘Liverpool Model’ according to Garcia (2009) and Connolly (2013) became one of the most celebrated ways of transforming cities (see also, Sykes et al., 2013). To inspire future culture-led regeneration agendas, the UK Government decided to introduce its City of Culture Programme (DCMS, 2013), and later the London and Liverpool Boroughs of Culture (Liverpool City Region, 2015).

To evaluate Liverpool 2008, *Impacts 08* was initiated as a five-year holistic evaluation framework (2005-2010), commissioned by Liverpool City Council to capture the ‘multiple impacts’ of the European City of Culture in 2008 (Sykes et al., 2013). Designed in five clusters, including: a) cultural access and participation; b) economy and tourism; c) cultural vibrancy and sustainability; d) image and perceptions; and e) governance and delivery process’, this longitudinal and mixed-methods model became the second ‘Liverpool Model’ influencing future events evaluation methodologies in the UK and Europe (see Cox & O’Brien, 2012). Liverpool’s 2008 iconic economic impact of £753.8 million (the highest for any European Capital of Culture to date) is the cornerstone to Liverpool’s success narrative (Garcia, Cox, & Melville, 2010). This grand narrative of local cultural programming legacies, told by this approach, focuses on culture’s economic value and the importance of the event’s attractors (to aid the tourism economy). In this sense, “both methods, and their findings, in this work have a social life” (Campbell, Cox, & O’Brien, 2017, p. 50).

Delivering the European City of Culture was costly to the city and its citizens (Liverpool Echo, 2008). Demonstrating evidence of the impact of culture-led regeneration was essential in the context of Liverpool, as its claims of success were so widely trumpeted by policy and cultural stakeholders even before there was any evidence to sustain those assertions. As Cox and O’Brien (2012, p. 97) put it, “Liverpool’s success at culture-led regeneration owes much to circumstances in which European Capital of Culture was a catalyst, but not the deciding factor”. Yet, even after the publication of *Impacts 08* final report (Garcia, Cox, & Melville, 2010), there was little to no evidence of the economic, cultural and social long-term impact.

Revisiting the research ten years on, with *Impacts 18*, the aim was to address this evidence gap and overcome the social context that led to the intense criticism of the *Impacts 08 double social life* (Boland, Murtagh, & Shirlow, 2019), even from its research team. Members of *Impact 08* research team developed a breadth of critical work that has contributed to advance the cultural policy debate (Campbell, Cox, & O’Brien, 2017; Cox & O’Brien, 2012; O’Brien, 2013; Campbell, 2011; O’Brien, 2010), joining other critical voices (Belfiore, 2009; O’Callaghan,

2012). *Impacts 18 (Legacies of Liverpool as European Capital of Culture 10 Years On)* is a four-year programme (2016-2019) of academic research dedicated to capturing the long-term effects of hosting the European Capital of Culture title on the city of Liverpool, led by the Institute of Cultural Capital. However, just as history repeating itself, the same narratives of success were replicated around *Impact 18* even before the research was concluded. ‘Mr. Joseph Anderson (who served as the leader of Liverpool City Council from 2010 to 2012, when he was elected Mayor of Liverpool) said, the “Capital of Culture marked the start of something special, the last ten years have been an amazing success story” (BBC News, 2018, n.p.).

The final report was well anticipated, and a high-profile seminar was organised with the Liverpool City Council in October 2018 to disseminate the results of the impacts of the European Capital of Culture ten years on (Culture Liverpool, 2018). Yet, the *Impact 18* final report is still to be published due to its own social and ethic context. *Impact 18* had the potential to reconcile the policy research and evaluation of cultural events agendas. On the one hand, *Impact 18* was, as the original research programme, the first research programme of its kind in scale and scope to collect and analyse unparalleled qualitative and quantitative data of the long-term impact of a single cultural mega-event. Without a doubt, *Impact 18* was expected to contribute to the cultural value debate, and address understandings of the short and long term changes leveraged in a hosting city. On the other hand, the breadth of the critical mass of the research agenda on cultural events available grew significantly in the past decade, as already detailed. Moreover, the *Impact 18* evaluation could have actioned the critiques of evidence-gathering practice (Campbell, Cox, & O’Brien, 2017), moved beyond the toolkit approach (Belfiore & Bennett, 2010), and the logic chain approach for articulating ‘impact’ and ‘outcomes’ stems (Gilmore, 2014). However, Liverpool’s ‘success story’ re-told repeatedly by the media, policy-makers and private consultants left little to no space to debate the multiple, and often, contradictory narratives of the event’s legacies experienced over the past 10 years across the whole city of Liverpool. One of the legacies of Liverpool 2008 is how its success story became a recognised post-truth (Keane, 2018), limiting the public debate, critical research and potentially damaging the local urban and cultural policy.

### ***The Liverpool Boroughs of Culture as Legacy***

A broader causality of Liverpool’s 2008 success story rhetoric was the belief that the ‘Liverpool Model’ could and should be replicated in the Liverpool city region and across the UK, irrespective of those contexts’ specificities. Cox and O’Brien (2012), focusing on Liverpool’s influence on the UK City of Culture, have questioned the transferability of culture-led regeneration policies from one site to another, while Bianchini (2018) questioned the ‘impossibility of failure’ that is inscribed in this policy from the bidding stage.

In a more local context, the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, the first in the country with devolved power over culture, launched the Liverpool Boroughs of Culture in March 2018. The title, which formed part of a broader Culture and Creativity Strategy, is awarded annually on a rotational basis to one of the six local authorities that make up the city region, as part of the *1 per cent for Culture programme* with a dedicated budget of £200,000. The Liverpool City Region Devolution Agreement addresses the legacy of Liverpool 2008 as ‘transformational’, stating the intention to place culture “in the heart of its strategy to accelerate economic growth, improve skills and further develop its distinctive visitor offer” (Liverpool City Region, 2015, p. 14), which set the overall tone for which the value of culture is a fundamental priority in the region. The social context from which the Boroughs of Culture emerged was as such, heavily saturated with success narratives from Liverpool 2008.

When I was commissioned by the Liverpool Combined Authority to develop a research programme to evaluate the Boroughs of Culture, I was faced with a multiplicity of challenges to manage and reconcile a complex set of logics that add to the success story rhetoric. First, the Liverpool Combined Authority is an overarching governmental regional body, however, each individual Borough constitutes a political body on itself, with heterogenic cultural policies and strategies on how cultural events are instrumentalised to deliver wider agendas (e.g. urban regeneration, health and wellbeing, tourism economy). In essence, each Borough puts its own spin on the event, and the research programme would have to be flexible enough to capture the latitude of interpretations. Secondly, the research budget would be significantly less of the overall dedicated *Culture programme* budget, which meant that reduced resources could be made available for data collection and analysis. Finally, how could I advance the debate on cultural value and methodological innovation, while maintaining a practice of socially engaged science? How can I as a sociologist enter into a public dialogue that deals with questions of cultural policy evaluation, while maintaining research integrity? For full disclosure and practising what I preach concerning epistemological surveillance and criticism (Sousa Santos, 1996; Bachelard, 1990), I am too affected by different logics, one of those is my professional identity—since I am a sociologist that evaluates culture with a particular interest in social justice. I started the evaluation of the Liverpool Burroughs of Culture, with the intent and interest in embedding a critical research model to events evaluation relevant to local cultural policy. My goal is to infer a new vision of the plurality of the value of culture and new evaluation methodologies that support effective and inclusive cultural policies.

By engaging with and drawing inspiration from the theoretical and methodological heritage discussed previously, the research that emerged from the evaluation of the *Liverpool Boroughs of Culture* aims to reposition the debate of value of culture in the Liverpool city region. A policy analysis (Bacchi, 2009) was developed of the documents that frame the *Liverpool Boroughs of Culture*, namely the *Liverpool City Region Devolution Agreement*, and *The Culture and Creativity Strategy*, followed by each Borough's culture policy. From this exercise, it was possible to reframe the event with the cultural value of the policy and the conceptual logics of policy makers.

Throughout 2019, a dedicated steering group of representatives from the Liverpool City Region, each Borough, and colleagues from the Liverpool John Moores University was formed to develop an evaluation framework for the Liverpool City Region Boroughs of Culture programme. The final product of this co-design exercise, shown in Table 17.1, is a holistic evaluation framework that embraces concurring objectives (O'Callaghan, 2012), which includes market-led outcomes linked to the visitor economy, and socially orientated outcomes including health and wellbeing, while emphasising the economic nature of the event (Belfiore, 2009) and the contribution of an event to the visitor economy and growth of the Liverpool City Region's cultural and creative industries. Furthermore, the methodological strategy and instruments were co-design and delivered with each Borough of Culture programme and delivery teams to capture the plurality of specialisms.

[Table 17.1 about here]

Table 17.1. Policy and Research Framework for the evaluation of the Boroughs of Culture

It can be argued that this co-design evaluation framework allows enough scope to develop appropriate methodologies to perform comparative qualitative and quantitative analyses at the local and regional level. In addition, this framework allows the evaluation to map the various forms of cultural engagement, assess the role of cultural participation as a source of wellbeing, and identify the so looked-after economic returns of cultural events. The methodology includes, but it is not limited to, the meta-analysis of visitors' surveys (as commissioned by each Borough to private external partner); content analysis of the audiences' feedback and case studies (each Borough qualitative instruments to capture audiences' feedback on the day, and case studies from participants, partners and those who engaged in the programme); content analysis of focus groups conducted by me with each of the Borough of Culture programme and delivery teams; secondary data analysis of local and regional level statistical information (e.g. Index of Multiple Deprivation, from the Office for National Statistics, and boroughs residents' survey); and social media analytics (to show virtual engagement and reach of the dedicated programme accounts and posts).

The research framework and methodology for the evaluation of the Boroughs of Culture constitutes a negotiated pragmatic advance. Its most significant contribution is methodological research co-design with policy-makers (Bergvall-Kåreborn & Ståhlbröst, 2010) and the real-world valuation of mechanisms and dynamics that operate in the institutional field of local government-led cultural events. Addressing event evaluation and legacy at an organisational and local government level is another contribution of this work. Each Borough's cultural policy and cultural team organisational structure, as well as funding streams, were developed while co-designing the evaluation framework. This helped with shaping the research object, methodologies, along with internal organisation. Each Borough travels a different journey and experiences the Boroughs of Culture momentum and evaluation as a process-focussed practice of developing cultural policies, event's practices and producing cultural value.

This approach is determined by the limited opportunities for first-hand data collection, which has several implications. The majority of first-hand data is collected by 'extra-academic publics' (Burawoy, 2005), and it can be collected for non-academic purposes. This type of real-world data can be time and cost-effective because it was generated by the event and the producers and audiences that make an event possible. However, this does involve a heavy investment in data curation, validation, and standardisation to ensure that the data are fit for purpose. Another significant limitation is the absence of artists and citizens on the research framework and methodology co-design. When addressing methodological innovation, it can help to incorporate the principles of innovation co-design, including the Quadruple Helix Model of innovation, where four major social actors are brought together: science, policy, industry, and society (Schütz, Heidingsfelder, & Schraudner, 2019). The absence of artists (industry) and citizens (society) limits the discussion, scope of understanding of cultural value, and potentially narrows the methodological complexity. However, the Liverpool Combined Authority recently created a Policy Living Lab. A Living Lab "is a user-centric innovation milieu built on every-day practice and research, with an approach that facilitates user influence in open and distributed innovation processes engaging all relevant partners in real-life contexts, aiming to create sustainable values" (Bergvall-Kåreborn & Ståhlbröst, 2010, p. 191). This approach was designed to foster public involvement in the policy innovation processes, which we aim to explore—so to overcome this limitation. The principles here established are not new in public and policy sociology (Burawoy, 2005). As such, the same methodological and epistemological concerns particularly regarding the cross-contamination between both cultural policy research and its research object (cultural events), and critical and impactful research remains the primary focus (Burawoy, 2005; Martin, 2011).

Finally, while asking what processes can sustain these dynamics of events at a local scale, this research framework aims to develop tools and systematic guidelines for reorienting cultural policy in a pluralistic sense. The ambition is to foster equitable and sustainable legacies of culture in the broad sense through engaged, while objective, scientific evaluations, research co-creation and bottom-up solutions (Burawoy, 2005). The processes are participatory in nature, and thus require ongoing iterative development that is reshaped within each iteration of Liverpool Boroughs of Culture.

### **Lessons learned and to be learned**

The debate on the public value of public spending on culture is not new nor is it resolved. The proliferation of cultural events, from continent-wide to borough-wide, fuelled academic research, policy-making, and civil society interest on the intrinsic, instrumental and institutional value of culture. This chapter reframed events impact evaluation as a social phenomenon embedded within particular contexts offering a path to advance the debate beyond the previously prevailing issues on evidencing cultural value. The focus on the sociological practice of evaluation as publicly engaged science gives an opportunity to embrace an ‘epistemological turn’ that does not shy away from engagement, while remaining vigilant and critical through the research.

The discussion of the methodological options and challenges of evaluating *Liverpool Boroughs of Culture* offers possible strategies to navigate pragmatic cultural events evaluation. All the while, however, such evaluation research remains bounded by traditional sociological methods attempting to capture process and measure cultural value (Scott, 2010). Framing events evaluation as a public sociological practice offers new theoretical and empirical instruments to break from the circular debate on cultural events legacy. Advancing the debate can only be done by real-world practice of reflexive and collaborative evaluation that recognises cultural policy in interaction with other policy spheres and bounded to budget, organisational practices and political agendas.

Another contribute is to address cultural policy and events legacy at an organisational level. Attention has been placed on the legacy of events at the macro and micro levels, but there is a lack of research that addresses the processual, and even, outcomes of events to organisations, nonetheless that refer to their internal cultural policies. Organisational change can and should be considered as key considerations in impact and legacy evaluations. The institutional value of the evaluation of the *Liverpool Boroughs of Culture* is demonstrated on the growing process that came from programming, evaluating and delivering the event. Brokering dialogue between different levels of policy making (regional and local) can be interpreted as one of the roles of the evaluation.

Value co-creation, collaboration and knowledge exchange between academia, policy, industry and society are strategies known to the social sciences, with intentions of generating societal change. An important outcome here altogether is this leads to meaning making among different stakeholders. The intellectual heritage of social science can steer toward transparency on events’ evaluation and legacy by critically illuminating and interrogating contradictory discourses and instigating reflexive practices that eventually lead to lasting impacts and creative futures that are more inclusive.

## References

- Ahearne, J., & Bennett, O. (2009). Implicit Cultural Policies. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 15(2), 139-244.
- Aquilino, L., Armenski, T. and Wise, N. (2019). Assessing the competitiveness of Matera and the Basilicata Region (Italy) ahead of the 2019 European Capital of Culture. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 19(4), 503-517.
- Bacchi, C. (2009). *Analysing policy*. Sidney: Pearson Higher Education AU.
- Bachelard, G. (1990). *A Epistemologia*. Lisboa: Edições 70.
- Baker, G., Bull, A., & Taylor, M. (2018). Who watches the watchmen? Evaluating evaluations of El Sistema. *British Journal of Music Education*, 1-15.
- Bauman, Z. (2013). *Liquid modernity*. New Jersey: Wiley.
- BBC News. (2018, January 11). Liverpool to mark Capital of Culture 'milestone' with year of events. BBC News.
- Belfiore, E. (2009). On bullshit in cultural policy practice and research: notes from the British case. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, Vol.15 (No.3), 343-359.
- Belfiore, E. (2012). "Defensive instrumentalism" and the legacy of New Labour's cultural policies. *Cultural Trends*, 21:2, 103-111.
- Belfiore, E. (2016). Cultural policy research in the real world: curating "impact", facilitating "enlightenment". *Cultural Trends*, 25:3, 205-216.
- Belfiore, E., & Bennett, O. (2007). Rethinking the social impacts of the arts. *International journal of cultural policy*, 13(2), 135-151.
- Belfiore, E., & Bennett, O. (2008). *The social impact of the arts*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Belfiore, E., & Bennett, O. (2010). Beyond the "Toolkit Approach": arts impact evaluation research and the realities of cultural policy-making. *Journal for cultural research*, 14(2), 121-142.
- Bennett, O. (2004). Review essay: The torn halves of cultural policy research. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 10(2), 237-248.
- Bennett, O. (2011). Cultures of optimism. *Cultural Sociology*, 5(2), 301-320.
- Bergvall-Kåreborn, B., & Ståhlbröst, A. (2010). Living Lab: An Open and User-Centric Design Approach. In D. M. Haftor, *Information and Communication Technologies, Society and Human Beings: Theory and Framework* (pp. 190-207). London: IGI Global.

Bianchini, F., Alexander, C., Borch, A., Byrne, J., & Morpeth, N. D. (2018). *Cultural Transformations: The Impacts of Hull UK City of Culture 2017*. Hull: Culture, Place and Policy Institute - University of Hull.

Boland, P., Murtagh, B., & Shirlow, P. (2019). Fashioning a City of Culture: 'life and place changing' or '12 month party'? *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 25(2), 246-265.

Boltanski, L., & Thévenot, L. (2006). *On justification: Economies of worth*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1996). *Lição Sobre a Lição*. Porto: Estratégias Criativas.

Bowitz, E., & Ibenholt, K. (2009). Economic impacts of cultural heritage – Research and perspectives. *Journal of Cultural Heritage*, 10(1), 1-8.

Burawoy, M. (2005). For public sociology. *American Sociological Review*, 70(1), 4-28.

Campbell, P. (2011). Creative industries in a European Capital of Culture. I. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 17(5), 510-522.

Campbell, P., Cox, T., & O'Brien, D. (2017). The social life of measurement: how methods have shaped the idea of culture in urban regeneration. *Journal of Cultural Economy*, 10(1), 49-62.

Castells, M. (1996). *The Rise of the Network Society, The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture Vol. I*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Charles, R. (2004). The Arrogance of Public Sociology. *Social Forces*, 82(4), 1639-1643.

Connolly, M. G. (2013). The 'Liverpool model(s)': cultural planning, Liverpool and Capital of Culture 2008. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 19(2), 162-181.

Cox, T., & O'Brien, D. (2012). The "scouse wedding" and other myths: reflections on the evolution of a "Liverpool model" for culture-led urban regeneration. *Cultural Trends*, 21(2), 93-101.

Crossick, G., & Kaszynska, P. (2016). *Understanding the value of arts & culture. The AHRC cultural value project*. London: AHRC.

Cudny, W., Comunian, R., & Wolaniuk, A. (2020). Arts and creativity: A business and branding strategy for Lodz as a neoliberal city. *Cities*, 100, 102659.

Culture Liverpool. (2018, October 18). *Impacts 18: A Cultural Legacy*. Retrieved April 08, 2021, from Culture Liverpool: <https://www.cultureliverpool.co.uk/news/impacts-18-a-cultural-legacy/>

Economic and Social Research Council. (2020, September 30). *What is impact?* Retrieved from Economic and Social Research Council: <https://esrc.ukri.org/research/impact-toolkit/what-is-impact/>

European Commission. (2019). Creative Europe: European Capitals of Culture. Retrieved April 08, 2020, from [https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/actions/capitals-culture\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/actions/capitals-culture_en)

European Union. (2007, December 17). Tratado de Lisboa. Lisbon: European Union. Retrieved August 02, 2012, from <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/JOHtml.do?uri=OJ:C:2007:306:SOM:PT:HTML>

Garcia, B. (2009). Impacts 08 – The Liverpool Model. Understanding the impact of culture-led regeneration in Liverpool, 2008 European Capital of Culture. Liverpool: Institute of Cultural Capital. Retrieved September 29, 2020, from <http://iccliverpool.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Impacts082008BURAMAGazine-FINAL.pdf>

Garcia, B., & Cox, T. (2013). European Capitals of Culture: Success strategies and long-term effects. Luxembourg: Office of the European Union.

Garcia, B., Cox, T., & Melville, R. (2010). Creating an impact: Liverpool's experience as European Capital of Culture. Liverpool, Merseyside, Reino Unido: University of Liverpool.

Giddens, A. (1984). The constitution of society: Outline of the theory of structuration. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Gilmore, A. (2014). Evaluating legacies: Research, evidence and the regional impact of the Cultural Olympiad. Cultural Trends, Vol 23 Issue 1, 29-41.

Green, S. (2017). Capitals of Culture. An introductory survey of a worldwide activity. Retrieved September 24, 2020, from <http://prasino.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Capitals-of-Culture-An-introductory-survey-Steve-Green-October-2017.pdf>

Hennion, A. (2004). Pragmatics of taste. In The Blackwell companion to the sociology of culture (pp. 131-144).

Holden, J. (2004). Capturing cultural value: How culture has become a tool of government policy. London: Demos.

Institute of Cultural Capital. (2019, March 01). *Evaluation of the Liverpool City Region Boroughs of Culture programme*. Retrieved April 12, 2021, from Institute of Cultural Capital: <http://iccliverpool.ac.uk/?research=evaluation-of-the-liverpool-city-region-boroughs-of-culture-programme>

Kalleberg, R. (2005). What is 'public sociology'? Why and how should it be made stronger? The British Journal of Sociology, 56(3), 387-393.

Keane, J. (2018, March 23). Post-truth politics and why the antidote isn't simply 'fact-checking' and truth. The Conversation. doi:<https://theconversation.com/post-truth-politics-and-why-the-antidote-isnt-simply-fact-checking-and-truth-87364>

Lamont, M. (2012). Toward a comparative sociology of valuation and evaluation . Annual review of sociology, 38, 201-221.

- Law, J., Ruppert, E., & Savage, M. (2011). The double social life of methods. CRESC Working Paper Series, Working Paper No. 95, 1-18.
- Liu, Y. D. (2019). Event and sustainable culture-led regeneration: Lessons from the 2008 European Capital of Culture, Liverpool. *Sustainability*, 11(7), 1869.
- Liverpool City Region. (2015). Liverpool City Region Devolution Agreement. Liverpool: HM Treasury.
- Liverpool Echo. (2008, February 27). Council tax shock: Pay more & get less. Liverpool Echo.
- Martin, B. R. (2011). The research excellence framework and the ‘impact agenda’: Are we creating a Frankenstein monster? . *Research Evaluation*, 20(3), 247–254.
- Matarasso, F. (1996). *Defining values: evaluating arts programmes*. Stroud: Comedia.
- Mills, C. W. (2000). *The sociological imagination*. Oxford : Oxford University Press.
- Nichols, L. T. (2015). Sociology, Evaluation and Dialogue. *The American Sociologist*, 46(4), 435-436.
- Nielsen, F. (2004). The Vacant 'We': Remarks on Public Sociology. *Social Forces*, 82(4), 1619-1627.
- O’Brien, D. (2013). *Cultural Policy: Management, Value and Modernity in the Creative Industries*. New York: Routledge.
- O'Brien, D. (2010). *Measuring the value of culture*. London: Department for Culture, Media and Sport.
- O'Callaghan, C. (2012). Urban anxieties and creative tensions in the European Capital of Culture 2005: 'It couldn't just be about Cork, like'. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 18(2), 185-204. doi:10.1080/10286632.2011.567331
- Ooi, C. S., Håkanson, L., & LaCava, L. (2014). Poetics and politics of the European Capital of Culture Project. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 148, , 420-427.
- Richards, G. (2020). Deigning creative places: The role of creative tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 85, 102922.
- Richards, G., de Brito, M., & Wilks, L. (eds) (2013). *Exploring the Social Impacts of Events*. London: Routledge.
- Santos, B. S. (2002). *Toward a New Legal Common Sense: Law, Globalization and Emancipation*. London: Cambridge University Press.
- Schneider, W. and Jacobson, K. (2019), *Transforming Cities: Paradigms and Potentials of Urban Development within the “European Capital of Culture”*. Hildesheim: Olms Verlag.

- Schütz, F., Heidingsfelder, M. L., & Schraudner, M. (2019). Co-shaping the future in quadruple helix innovation systems: uncovering public preferences toward participatory research and innovation. *She Ji: The Journal of Design, Economics, and Innovation*, 5(2), 128-146.
- Scott, C. (2010). Searching for the 'public' in public value: arts and cultural heritage in Australia. *Cultural Trends*, 19 (4), 273–289.
- Smith, A. (2012). *Events and Urban Regeneration: The Strategic Use of Events to Revitalise Cities*. London: Routledge.
- Steiner, L., Frey, B., & Hotz, S. (2015). European capitals of culture and life satisfaction. *Urban studies*, 52(2), 374-394.
- Stevens, A. (2011). Telling policy stories: an ethnographic study of the use of evidence in policy-making in the UK. *Journal of Social Policy*, 40(2), 237-256.
- Sykes, O., Brown, J., Cocks, M., Shaw, D., & Couch, C. (2013). A City Profile of Liverpool. *Cities*, 35, 299-318.
- Throsby, D. (2001). *Economics and culture*. Cambridge : Cambridge university press.
- Wallstam, M., Ioannides, D., & Pettersson, R. (2020). Evaluating the social impacts of events: in search of unified indicators for effective policymaking. *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events* 12(2), 122-141.
- Walmsley, B. (2012). Towards a balanced scorecard: a critical analysis of the culture and sport evidence (CASE) programme. *Cultural Trends*, 21 (4), 325–334.
- Walmsley, B. (2018). Deep hanging out in the arts: An anthropological approach to capturing cultural value. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 24(2), 272-291.
- Wise, N. (2019). Towards a more enabling representation: Framing an emergent conceptual approach to measure social conditions following mega-event transformation in Manaus, Brazil. *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 38(3), 300-316.
- Wise, N., & Harris, J. (2017). *Sport, Events, Tourism and Regeneration*. London: Taylor & Francis.
- Ziakas, V. (2019). Issues, patterns and strategies in the development of event portfolios: configuring models, design and policy. *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events*, 11(9), 121-158.