



Grantmakers in the Arts  
Proceedings from the  
1999 Conference

## Strengthening the Arts Through Policy, Performance and Practice

November 14-17, 1999 San Francisco

### Audience Participation in the Arts

In recent years, many grantmakers, artists, artist managers, and cultural policy experts have tried to better understand the nature of public participation in the arts and how to enhance it. Funders at the national, regional and local level are commissioning research; funding diverse marketing, programming and capacity-building initiatives by cultural groups; evaluating the impact of audience development efforts; and stimulating discussion in the field about what does and doesn't work in building cultural participation. In this panel session, representatives of leading national, regional and local foundations examined the work they are sponsoring to build people's participation in the arts and culture, and the implications of this work for both their foundations and the field at large.

Moderator: John Killacky,  
*Yerba Buena Center for the Arts*

Panelists: Michael Moore,  
*Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund*  
Frances Phillips,  
*The Walter and Elise Haas Fund*  
Janet Sarbaugh,  
*The Heinz Endowments Respondent*  
Gerald D. Yoshitomi,  
*independent culture worker*

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In 1999 Grantmakers in the Arts celebrated its fifteenth anniversary and, as organizations periodically do, we took this opportunity to stand back, take stock of our work as grantmakers, and look to the future. As part of this process, we surveyed our membership and also asked a number of you to tell us what you were working on, how you were doing, and what was keeping you awake at night.

In fact, we found very few surprises. You talked about the need to sustain arts organizations and leaders, increase public participation, and support individual artists and their work. You also talked about your desire for more informed arts policy, better evaluation, and new linkages to the for-profit sector. These ideas formed the content of the 1999 conference.

But the spirit of the conference came from another place, another vision, that is equally a part of the essential GIA. John Gardner, the founder of Independent Sector, gave a speech in Oakland in 1998, in which he spoke of the immense promise and possibility of the work of philanthropy and the nonprofit sector. He said of our work:

*We are allowed to pursue truth, even if we are going in the wrong direction – allowed to experiment even if we're bound to fail, to map unknown territory even if we get lost. We are committed to alleviate misery and redress grievances, to give reign to the mind's curiosity and the soul's longing, to seek beauty where we can and defend truth where we must, to honor the worthy and smite the rascals with everyone free to define worthiness and rascality, to find cures and to console the incurable, to deal with the ancient impulse to hate and fear the tribe in the next valley, to prepare for tomorrow's crisis and preserve yesterday's wisdom, and to pursue the questions that others won't because they are too busy or too lazy or fearful or jaded. It is a sector for seed planting and path finding, for lost causes and causes that yet may win. This is the vision.*

Although he wasn't speaking of our work specifically, I have not encountered a more eloquent expression of what it means to be a grantmaker in the arts. The 1999 conference began with its content firmly in hand and with this vision offered as a guide. Hopefully along the way, we explored each other's best funding efforts, shared lessons from our failures, and drew courage from our commitment to artists, art forms, and community.

**Cora Mirikitani**

1999 GIA Conference Chair

**Díaz:** *My name is Eduardo Díaz. I am a board member of Grantmakers in the Arts and I am the director of cultural affairs for the City of San Antonio Local Arts Agency. We're really happy that you joined us for this session entitled Audience Participation in the Arts.*

*My simple task this morning is to introduce the moderator for the panel who, for many of you, needs no introduction at all. John Killacky is distinguished for his keen artistic vision and his administrative sensibilities for many, many years. He's the executive director of the Yerba Buena Center here in San Francisco, which is one of the sites for tonight's block party. If you haven't visited Yerba Buena, we hope that you'll have a chance to do so this evening.*

*He is in charge of everything from artistic vision all the way to community relations, and probably works the concession stand as well when necessary. He has been with the Walker Arts Center in Minneapolis, the Pew Charitable Trust, Patricia Brown Dance Company, and Laura Dean Dancers and Musicians. He was awarded the Irvine Prize for Artistic Vision as well as the William Dawson Award for Programming Excellence from the Association of Performing Arts Presenters. He's widely recognized as an educator, a writer, a filmmaker, and talks a lot in places like this. You will see why that is the case. John Killacky.*

**Killacky:** Thanks. I'll be selling logo items out in the hall afterwards.

I don't know how many got to see the paper this morning, in *The New York Times* or in *The Chronicle*, but the National Arts Journalism Program out at Columbia released its study. For those of us about to talk about audience participation, we see that they looked over fifteen newspapers outside of New York and Los Angeles in October. They note that Arts and Living combined is seven percent of the coverage, Business is nine percent, and Sports is eleven percent. But in the Arts in Living section, 50 percent is listings and another 24 percent is movies. As our panelists talk about audience participation, we have a very daunting aspect about cultural journalism that I don't think we're going to get to today but it's certainly a cloud in this hurricane.

The study didn't focus on news, but when they looked at television news during that same

period in October, less than one percent of the nightly news was on the arts. That one percent is probably about Mapplethorpe and other sensational topics. That's the task ahead of us.

Today, Holly Sidford put us all together, so thank you Holly. Holly asked us all to look at two different areas on this panel.

The first is to evaluate each of the foundations thinking about the issues of audience development, cultural participation. We're going to talk about some initial thinking of each of these stellar speakers and some of the flaws in some of the project funding that happened at first. Then we're going to discuss the more strategic, multifaceted kind of grants making that each of the foundations is doing.

I'm going to remind each of them that we're only talking among foundations so as soon as we talk about presenters and other things, I'm going to keep us back on track. We also want to talk about best practices in the field from their perspectives, things that are working. Because a lot of things are working.

In preparing for this, I went back to my Pew days in the early '80s and I called Marion up and I said, remember those studies we did in the early '80s before you got there? She said, not really. And I said, well, great! I spent two years working on those things, and convinced the board to put \$2.5 million into it, and what happened? Not much.

So I think it's really important for us to not just keep recreating the world. When I was at Pew, the foundation had given about \$300,000 to four dance companies to try to expand audiences. That same year they gave \$265,000 to five theater companies to expand audiences and pretty much it was more of the same. We'll give you more money to do more of exactly what you're doing. Of course, if you work harder and make more widgets, it's actually going to work, right?

When we saw that it didn't work very well, we decided to take a step back. I called up Pat Doyle, who was then working with the Cleveland Foundation, and was a great mentor of mine. She had been working in Cleveland with 18 arts organizations doing research, and she

was working with the Ziff Organization at the time to talk about audiences, what they shared, how they were different, were they discipline specific, and what they valued in the cultural experience.

There was a similar study done in New York with seven dance companies.

Both of those informed the Pew study, which I thought was going to be a great study – \$2.5 million, 28 organizations, all the different disciplines. Afterwards, I think Marion gave another \$1.5 million to have people try new things. It's hard to say if anything happened. Marion thinks not very much.

I'm going to turn it over here to my colleagues, with one last thought about marketing. No matter how we all think about marketing, none of us cross over. In our free time, we probably go to the movies, or we go to a chamber music concert. But we don't go to a modern dance company, a classical ballet company, a chamber music company, a jazz concert, etc. Yet somehow, all of us in the art world keep thinking that our audiences will actually act differently than we do. I work very hard at Yerba Buena Center of the Arts trying to convince all my audiences to come to all of the things, all of the time. But they don't.

With that, I'm going to get out of the way. We're going to start with Michael Moore, who is the new Director of Arts and Culture at the Lila Wallace Reader's Digest Fund.

**Moore:** Thanks everyone. When we were having the pre-briefing to talk about this panel, John was clear that the last thing he wanted to hear was everyone standing up to tell you just how great this work is and how easy it is. He wanted "hair shirt" stories.

So to start in that spirit, I was looking for some quotes that would set the appropriate tone for our panel. Two of them came to me, if I get this right. First is the famous quote from *Pogo*, "We've met the enemy, and it's us." Sometimes in the work that we're doing, it's precisely what we're asking for that tends to be the biggest challenge. The other is anonymous, "Hello, my name is Michael, and I'm a grantmaker."

A little bit about the Lila Wallace Reader's Digest Fund and its history in this work: We have invested over the past ten years about \$300 million. We began this work with a real focus on audience development. What I want to talk about is the evolution of our program designs and our thoughts about that over the last ten years.

In all of the areas in which we began, we started with what any good foundation should do, listening to the field. We heard in each of the fields that we were interested in a lot of focus on audiences being the premier challenge for arts communities.

We sat down in those fields and designed programs that we felt were responsive to the needs within those specific communities. We also invested fairly large amounts of money, even by national standards. Our theater program was about \$40 million; our program for museums was about \$35 million, and we invested in evaluation and research to track the results.

There were a couple of lessons that began to emerge really quickly for us. The first is that "audiences" is not a universally understood term. The goals for what you're going to change with an audience, whether it's to broaden, deepen, or diversify, are very, very different. One way of thinking about this is when we started the work, pretty much everything that people thought we were talking about was to diversify audiences in the bottom middle segment.

As we continued into the work, we realized that there are different types of participation. Organizations are working to build participation among their creators, their audiences, and their stewards. One of the initial assumptions we made, for instance, in our theater program, was that you could pick out a type of institution, say a large regional theater or a small community theater, and by virtue of what that theater was, determine what its goals should be for audiences and participation. That's just wrong.

Case in point, the regional theater program made the assumption that large regional theaters needed to diversify their audience, and

small, by going after minority audiences. Our small organizations of color needed to deepen their audiences by going into certain areas. What happened as organizations began to go about doing that, is that there was more difference between the goals and assets of a particular theater in a particular community than there was across theater segments. As organizations started to do that, what made sense on paper became very difficult once they started implementing it.

Another case in point involves two organizations we're working with, the Martin Luther King Center in Columbus, Ohio and AS-220, an alternative arts organization in Providence, Rhode Island. Under a previous mindset where we tried to discern what was good for participation by looking at the characteristics of the organization, we would structure a program that says, these organizations need to deepen their audience. What we did instead was talk to them much more specifically about the strategic needs of their institution.

AS-220 is an interesting case in point in that it's primarily an artist-run organization. Their primary audience is really in the creator's column, and they're working across all three of the goals to broaden, deepen, and diversify who the creative base of the institution is. Strategically what they lacked as an organization were stewards. Using a generic approach in which would say, you need to diversify your audience, would maybe lead them in a different direction. When they thought about what they needed to do strategically for the long-term health of their organization, they needed to start thinking about strategies that would build the steward and trustee class of the institution.

That took them in really different programming directions. They started setting up different kind of partnerships in the community, using different community agencies for performances, for broadening the reach of their program, and making a really concerted effort to deepen people's connection to the institution over the long term.

Martin Luther King Center in Columbus, Ohio is another kind of case in a slightly different direction. They're anchored in the African

American community in Columbus, but their audience is really from outside of that community. Their immediate neighbors, the neighbors in the community that they're closest to, are the most infrequent users of the institution. There again, an approach of developing a grant and a strategy that was generic in addressing their needs wouldn't lead them to identify the real challenge that they were trying to work on, and then invest in the programs to get there over time.

This was a very different approach from what we took with our museums program. In our museums program, we set out by asking the museum to tell us what their goals were for building audiences, and then to tell us what the strategies were that they were going to use to accomplish that.

There are some things that we're looking at to get better about figuring out how to align the work that we're doing in our grantmaking. We'll have a session tomorrow morning with some researchers at Rand, talking about some of the terms that I'm setting up here.

Basically, what we've begun to think about is that people enter the field of participating in the arts through a set of factors. One is their background; one is their perception about participation; one is the set of practical concerns that an organization faces; and the other is what actually the experience means for them.

Background includes characteristics like demographics, personality traits, cultural identity, their perception of whether participating in the arts is something of value, which is shaped by their personal beliefs. It's also shaped by their perception of social norms, who they referred to as a target group. That's why targeting audiences for us has been really important, because understanding how people participate in the arts is the first hurdle to overcome.

Once they solve those perceptual issues, then there are all of the practical issues: location, time, cost. Then there's the experience itself that completes an engagement to the work.

What is knowing some of that help you do as a grantmaker? One of the things that we struggle with in the grants that we make is trying to

really figure out the who, what and how of the investment we're making.

This is all a work in progress and it's just meant to convey some of our thinking. But if a goal that you're trying to reach is to diversify participation, chances are one of the challenges that you are going to confront are perceptual issues. You might look at targeting that's related geographically.

One of the strategies we have found that has tended to turn up in organizations that are really successful in diversifying audiences is building meaningful community engagements with the communities that they're working in. Measurement is really important, looking at the mix and diversity as a way of seeing how you progress over time.

Similarly, if one of the issues that you're trying to engage is to increase participation, the organizations that we've been looking at have done really good jobs in understanding demographics of their existing audience. They've gone about being very smart in marketing, pricing schedules, visitor services, all of the business work inside the organization, to overcome and lower practical barriers to get more people inside the door. That's a very easy measurement of just size.

If one of the things that you're looking for is to deepen participation, you might be looking at targeting people's behavior, their relationship to the existing programming. Program strategies are really program-dependent. Artists actually play a key role in relationships, building to organizations and deepening their engagement with art forms. There are various measures that you might want to look at in terms of looking at depth.

Making some of these distinctions has been important for us as we're crafting grants. Oftentimes, you'll have grantees make meaningful statements about what they're trying to do, and when you start unpacking it, it really falls apart. Some of the work that they're doing is really counter to the goals that they're setting out to reach.

A great example of that is early in our theater program, there was a regional theater that was

very committed to diversifying its audience. They took on the typical marketing strategies to do that: we're going to change the way this organization looks, we're going to make it more accessible to the audiences that we're working with.

What happened was that the perception of their existing audience was really shattered. Rather than making gains in diversifying their audience, they really undercut their existing audience, quite unintentionally. They also didn't overcome the perceptual barriers of bringing new audiences into the organization on a long and sustained basis.

These distinctions are helpful in trying to pull out what the grantee is doing, and trying to get closer to understanding how our money can be effective in reaching those goals.

**Question:** Could you define what you mean by broaden, deepen, and diversify just so we all understand how you're using those terms? I'm not sure if by diversify, it's always about cultural diversity. I'm not totally sure what deepening means.

**Moore:** I think for me, it's a very simplistic notion and it's in the context of a particular organization. Using AS-220 as an example, their audience is actually very racially diverse and economically diverse, their diversity issue is really getting a different class of steward and stakeholder for the institution. Those distinctions are made in the context of an organization's operations and what it is trying to accomplish over the long term.

One of the reasons those distinctions have been helpful for us is there's an assumption that when you're talking about diversity, you're only talking about racial diversity or class diversity.

Similarly, I think deepening is about creating a deeper engagement with the institution. It could be deeper and more frequent program attendance.

The Guadeloupe Cultural Arts Center is one of our grantees, and one of the goals that they're trying to do in deepening is realize that they have 20 outstanding programs, but there's very

little internal crossover. They've determined that if they brought their internal programs so that audiences were using two or three of their programs, they're going to have a deeper connection to the institution.

And broadening is an increase, taking up the numbers.

Here are some lessons that we've extracted from the work we've done. The first lesson is institutional practice equals participation. If you look at everything an organization is doing, and all of its creators, audiences and stewards, it's almost always in a perfect balance. If you're talking about trying to change participation over time, you're really talking about changing institutional practice. Similarly, as you change audiences, it will change the way the institution has to do business in some anticipated ways and some unanticipated ways.

A big lesson is that it really is about institutional change. That's a second point: influencing long-term participation, and long-term practice. It's very difficult to do it through short-term projects.

We've learned that targeting and measuring is really important. It's not important in the absolute, but it's much more important for understanding cause and effect. The learning that goes on inside an institution by finding what it takes to move an organization along in this work is very, very valuable and allows them to ramp up to other issues.

Be modest and be specific is a real key to our work. It's very easy to get in a dialog with grantees that they're going to promise to do the moon and you're going to give them exactly a quarter to do that. Both are really served well if you can be very focused about what the outcomes are. Be very modest, but be there for the long term.

Another point is being careful about what you ask. I mean that literally. A lot of the language that we use in our RFPs, in our reports, how we talk about this work, really sends messages to the organizations that is read in some intentional and unintentional ways. Exactly to your point about talking about diversity or the goals of programs, I think you have to be very careful

and intentional about it. Craft language that gets you close to the organization and the strategic needs of the institution.

The other thing that we've found is the importance of following the leaders in doing this work. There are a lot of payoffs to this. The organizations that have done this well, have seen their artistry go up, their standing in the community, a lot of returns on the work. But it's difficult work, and we have found it's better to work with leaders that are going in that direction than try to, as I say, build the bridge where the creek is its widest. It's better to move the work as quickly as possible.

So with that, I'll turn back to John.

**Killacky:** Everything Michael said is also something that I think we have to be careful of in the foundation world when we're promising this to our boards of directors and our trustees. When we're asking them to invest in something, we have to be clear, modest, and articulate in looking at the long term. Otherwise, things like the \$2.5 million from Pew will not be remembered very well afterwards because maybe it was a little too grand and overarching. Michael's lessons are important, not just for your grantees, but also internally for your own organization as you set up these new initiatives.

We're going to turn next to Frances Phillips, who's a poet, a mom, a great grantmaker here in town at the Walter and Elise Haas Fund, and she used to run a scrappy organization called Intersection for the Arts. She's been there, wondering how to pay for the electricity bill for decades in this town. Frances is going to start with some of her early stories and then tell us a bit about this amazing research project that she and the Irvine Foundation and the Hewlett Foundation have joined forces in.

**Phillips:** Thanks. I have three hair shirt stories, which was more than we were allotted. The first was when I was thinking about this paper last night, I realized I had a literal hair shirt story, so I'll tell you that one and then I tell you my audience development ones.

This is the story of Julia Sansome. Julia Sansome sat behind me in Algebra II in high

school, and she told me everything I needed to know about what was of extraordinary quality. She got me to see the Rolling Stones before they recorded a record. She got me to see Rudolf Nureyev leap. She read Dylan Thomas aloud to me when we were supposed to be paying attention to Mr. Fred Koch. And one year Julia Sansome and Carol Hellie went to the Los Angeles Teen Fair and they found these two singers and brought them back to Carol's house and started the Sonny and Cher fan club.

The next year, because I knew she could be trusted, when Julia went to the LA Teen Fair and she came back with a British rock star, I thought, I will be the fan club president. Unfortunately, it was the one time Julia was wrong. She discovered Dick Michaels. He had a record called *You Make Me Feel So Groovy* and he wore a literal pony hair shirt. That was his thing; it was sort of a Carnaby Street thing. At fan club meetings we got to pass this shirt around and wear it briefly. It was really unpleasant. My husband has told me a story, he's from a small town in the Midwest, about having to eat badger. It kind of reminds me of the equivalent of having to eat badger. I didn't have a joke, but I had a hair shirt story.

The next story I have to tell is not entirely mine, because I applied for one of these grants and didn't get one. In 1988-89, Sarah Lutman, who was then at the Fleishhacker Foundation, had a little epiphany. She was sitting in an audience in a theater and she looked around and realized that everyone else in the theater also worked for a foundation. She realized that the theater knew how to market itself to us, but it didn't now how to market itself to anyone other than foundation people. She had the thought that there should be some initiative to get arts organizations in the Bay Area thinking about how you market to people other than foundation executives.

This was a three-year initiative. We've referred to it as ADI, Audience Development Initiative. [Funded by Grants for the Arts, the Mortimer Fleishhacker Foundation, the Wallace Alexander Gerbode Foundation, and the Haas Fund.] Each organization received consulting, then they got \$63,000 over three years. They did some planning up-front. There was an evaluation after the fact.

I'm going to tell you a little later about some successes from this, but at the very bottom line, if you were a board member, when we looked at the organizations' budgets after three years, the increase in their income was \$1.2 million, which was exactly equivalent to the amount that the three foundations had put into them. So that's the second hair shirt.

In 1989 there was an earthquake here, so what they were doing happened at possibly the worst possible moment. There were some organizations that really succeeded in that and learned things, so it was not entirely a bad thing.

The third hair shirt is one that I'm really struggling with. I've been thinking about it a lot today. I was thinking about it this morning in Arts Markets presentation. It's something that I find a split in myself as a grantmaker.

Yesterday morning, I was at the roundtable on Funding Literature. Sheila was describing public radio and the use of public radio as being very effective for getting literature "out to people you otherwise would in no way reach." All of us around the table had this little collective sigh. It's a very satisfying concept of making the arts, something we dearly love, be something like a public library that's serving everyone and that's really available to all.

Yet, what we've done to evaluate our grantees is to look at whether they've improved the ratio of their earned-to-contributed income; whether they've increased their ticket sales; whether they have increased their paying audiences.

At the Haas Fund I've had a huge spreadsheet of what all of our grantees have accomplished. Collectively over time – there are exceptions to this – they are financially better off. The Bay Area economy is very good and that has something to do with it. Generally their deficits are lower or they have paid them off. They look fairly healthy. They are selling fewer tickets. They are serving many more people. They are earning a lot more money. That's the pattern.

It was like not what we wanted, not what we thought would happen. They are giving more away. My assumptions are this: they are giving more away; they are charging more to the people who are paying for it; and they also



have – and this may be a good thing – developed some other kinds of products, CDs, T-shirts, other things that they are selling as well.

But we thought the boats would rise in a logical way. That's my third hair shirt story. It's the lesson we took from ADI. We stayed the course and that's where we ended up. It's an odd moment.

Jumping back to ADI, John asked me when I look back at the organizations that were part of that, do I still see some results from it? And I do.

ODC/San Francisco, which is a local dance company, created a performance called *The Velvetten Rabbit*. It's a modern dance answer to *The Nutcracker*. It's very high quality. It's brought new audiences to them year after year. They're serving families because of this. They're still performing it during the holidays every year, and it was developed with that money.

Jazz in the City, the San Francisco Jazz Festival, was one of the very successful organizations in the initiative. They brought their outside resourced marketing and ticket sales and advertising work all inside their office and created a little marketing ad agency within their office. They won an award for a PSA they created in the last year. They took what had been out and they made it all internal. That was a lasting benefit.

Another one is San Francisco Chanticleer. When they increased their ticket sales, they took the money and invested it in a CD that got them a commercial CD label. They now have another line of earned income from the sale of their CD.

So three out of 14 organizations have something that ten years later is making them healthier organizations. I now take off the hair shirt. There have been some pretty profound, lasting benefits.

When my trustees starting hemming and hawing about whether or not we were going to continue doing this kind of work, I went and interviewed them. I have six trustees, and they wanted to find out six different things. These were the answers to their questions. Your boards are probably similar.

One of them wanted to know, is this a good investment? Are we wasting our money? One of them wanted to know, are we learning anything? Are the organizations learning something and then it just disappears? Or are there brief projects and then they go away? If an organization does succeed, does that infiltrate other areas of organizational strength? Do they have more volunteers? Do their boards become better? Or is it only happening in one particular piece of the organization? Does it matter in a deeper way? My board chair wanted to know if the art was good. I'm glad he asked. One wanted to know what other grant-makers are doing and why are they doing it? What kind of research are they doing? The hardest question they wanted answered: is it possible to grow audience? This is an incredible entertainment and arts market here. Maybe there's too much product. What does it mean?

Some of my trustees used to own the Oakland A's. And one of the reason they sold the Oakland A's was when they looked around they decided there was too much professional sports product in the Bay Area. Was this same thing true in the arts?

None of them suggested we were going to go out and shoot off some arts organizations. They wanted to know, how wise is it to send people out on something that might be a wild goose chase. So those were the questions we started with.

We decided to invest in some research about these questions. When Cora and Melanie at Hewlett and Irvine came into the study, they were interested in finding about this saturation question, and how it might be addressed in all of California because they have broader geographic boundaries. It was interesting to compare what might be going on in San Francisco that is different from the other cities. I'll tell you a little bit about the results.

The study is in draft form, and we're still talking about how it's going to be released. All of you will find out how we're making it available when we figure it out. We'll know that fairly soon. These are some things that I learned.

First of all, arts participation in San Francisco is very good. The whole picture is very scary, but

San Francisco sells a relatively high proportion of the available seats. They're selling 86 percent of the available ticket seats in the performing arts in theaters. Now, the downside of that is we have a high performing symphony and opera with a whole lot of seats. This is all the seats added up, all the seats filled. Most organizations are filling about 64 percent of their seats. The ones with bigger marketing budgets generally are selling more. Although there is a moment up around the \$5 million marketing budget mark where people are spending a lot more to market, and they're not exponentially doing fabulously well by doing so.

People are drifting away from subscriptions. You knew that, but we heard it loud and clear. The audiences in San Francisco were generally pretty socio-economically diverse. One thing I found out made me very happy, which was that the Haas Funds grantees were more socio-economically diverse than a broader picture of what was going on. We were infiltrating some really hard-to-get populations. They were buying tickets. It was not freebies. So that was good.

We don't need more product, but it doesn't necessarily mean that product needs to go away. We definitely need to keep in mind the idea of the amount of product. Just 40 percent of the theaters in San Francisco responded to a survey – when I say theater, that includes concert halls, other kinds of venues for performing arts – and those 40 percent could fill another half million seats every year collectively. That means there's at least a million seats that aren't filled out there.

What audiences wanted was high quality, predictable product. They really wanted a great arts experience. I know that in some ways the mission of many of the organizations I'm supporting is to be inventive, experimental, difficult. They're not always going to be the pleasers in that way. We need to think about how that's going to work.

One was that we could use commercial indexing and marketing information to think about marketing smarter. I have a lot of more specific information about that, which is why when we

finally have the report, it can be genuinely useful.

It's going to be very expensive to use. Those of you who were in the little round table this morning were all kind of eye-glazed. It's going to be very expensive because a lot of organizations don't have basic information. Maybe they have a database about their subscribers. Maybe. A lot of them have a different database about their subscribers. Maybe. A lot of them have a different database in development or have no database at all. They certainly don't know much about their single-ticket buyers who are going to become their future. So they don't even really have good data about whom they're reaching, and that's a big problem if they're going to try to do better.

Plus, like me, there's a part of them that is resistant to making a consumer-driven model for how the arts should behave. There are some of us who think that's sullying what we're about. That's going to be a very difficult attitude for all of us to think around.

These are the thoughts that linger and trouble me. How do you get more people out there talking to people? We all know word-of-mouth is the most powerful means of marketing the arts. When you have people who are mavens – a word my high school friend Julia Samsone would have never used – how do you unleash the power of that? How do more people get to hear what's really interesting and why they might like it? I don't know if any of you read Malcolm Gladwell's article in *The New Yorker* about three weeks ago about marketing according to taste. You buy a certain number of books and then they start telling you about other books that people like you like? That's interesting. That's something that we might all be moving towards being able to do.

Another thing that interests me as a model. There's a man named Ronald Chase, who was affiliated with the local high school for the arts, and he started something called the Art and Cinema Club. I wish someone would start this for adults. But this is how it works. Every other Saturday morning, they meet just outside John's place [John Killacky, the Yerba Buena Center] for coffee, and sometimes they go to

John's place after that and they eat together. They go out to a bunch of galleries and talk about the work. Then they go either to a film at Dolby Studios that is discussed by a Stanford film professor with them, or they go to a matinee at the opera or ACT or anything else that they've been able to get mostly donated tickets to. If you belong to this club, as seats become available to things, you develop points, sort of seniority within it. The more points you get, when five opera tickets are available, you're the first one who hears about it. So the more you go, the more positive reinforcement you get for going. The top dozen kids who have the top-most points at the end of the year, he takes them to Europe. Isn't that cool? Where is Ronald Chase for all of us?

Finally, the other thing I come back to is, I was trained as a poet. One of the things that was said to us again and again in creative writing school, which is a quote from T.S. Elliot, is, "Once you write the poem, you must become the reader." The writer of the poem and the reader are different from one another. They are the same person but they are different ways of thinking.

We all know as funders that we've had a lot to do with the economy of why things are the way we are. We've created a lot of the situation that organizations are in. One small instance I can think of that we might change our behavior around is something that grantees complain to me about. We mounted a show last year; it was really well received. But all we can get money to do is create something new or premier a new work. We're not allowed to apply to make that better or remount it. We might think about investing in a slower and longer and ongoing development of new work, if that's your interest, as opposed to what Amelia Mesa Baines refers to as "the tyranny of post modernism": that everything has to be new all the time. So that's one lingering thought.

**Killacky:** Thank you, Frances. As you were telling the story about bringing the kids to Europe, I thought about next summer we're negotiating to bring an incredible theater company from Tel Aviv and they're going to be doing an eight-hour production of the Bible in Hebrew. I've seen it. It's amazing. It's also very

expensive. So as we were doing budgets for it, someone on my staff said, You know, John, we could actually probably fly the number of people that would see this to Tel Aviv and spend less money than to bring this extraordinary company here. But I said, well the point is not to bring our people to Tel Aviv, it is to bring Tel Aviv to our people. So we are going to make that investment. But I'm going to join them on the Europe tour.

I think we're now going to learn a bit more from Janet about more of this commercial indexing and the consumer-driven model that Frances talked about. The Heinz Endowments have been doing some pretty incredible research and developing some PSAs.

**Sarbaugh:** Good morning everyone. My presentation today is going to be about one community. One community's exploration of participation, both from the foundation perspective and probably more importantly, from our cultural community's perspective in Pittsburgh. It was our foundation's attempt a year ago to reorient itself, to connect itself more powerfully to community. It was our cultural community's attempt and growing self-awareness to figure out ways to make themselves more relevant in the community, more accessible and more known to consumers.

The work that I'm going to talk about is really young. The research is about a year old. The campaign that resulted from it is about three-months old, so it's all really new. We have an inchoate sense of excitement about it, in particular, our arts organizations do. I don't have a lot to tell you right now about what its impact is. At least for our community, it's the beginning steps toward building a relationship with, an understanding of, and an openness to the arts on a broader community level than we've ever tried to do in Pittsburgh and in southwestern Pennsylvania.

Like a lot of philanthropies and like many of you who are family foundations and older family foundations, we do periodic reviews of our work. We undertook a review of our program last year and we took more time to reflect on our style. Our philanthropic style at the Heinz Endowments over about fifty years

probably mirrors the giving evolution of a lot of you in the room. We started with one style. We didn't drop any of the styles, we just kept expanding inexorably over the decades into all these different realms.

This is not rocket science here, this is pretty common sensical. But it probably resonates with a lot of you. We started 50 years ago purely as patrons of major cultural organizations. After 15 or 20 years of that work, we had a critical mass of institutions. We became more focused on the investor role, investing in the development of a cultural district, in facilities, in buildings, places where major cultural institutions could perform and present.

Like the rest of the world in the late '60s and early '70s, we moved more into the developer role. We became aware of the broader fabric of our cultural community and the fact that we weren't supporting a huge panoply of smaller organizations in the community. We took a role with a lot of other philanthropies in our community, more as a developer of smaller cultural institutions.

Finally, the youngest and newest role for us that we're still thrashing around is the one of catalyst and looking at our cultural community as it relates to other sectors in our community. Its civic linkages. And guess what? The consumer is the general public. What do they think and feel about the arts?

We've become just now involved in a more systemic way in cultural tourism, in parks development, in public art and all its facets in our city. We're still learning how to build those community connections.

When we looked at this, we got a little bit overwhelmed and thought we're going to try to keep doing all these four roles. What should our foundation choose in terms of the balance between these four roles? The short answer is we decided to move further to the right. Not to desert our traditional roles as patron and investor, but to make a conscious decision to move more of our money into the catalyst column and into the civic linkages and consumer column.

To begin to do that, we commissioned a lot of research in 1998 that looked at our community and looked at ourselves in different ways. We organized the research around the not-new notion of a cultural ecosystem, which does include the major institutions. It does include the facilities in the cultural district. It includes consumers, the public sector, a wide range of interdependent parts within that cultural ecosystem. We conducted research into areas of consumer life that we realized we didn't know anything about: schools, civic organizations, social service organizations, and the general public.

We came to realize painfully that we didn't have, and our cultural community really didn't have, decent information about participation patterns or about audience feelings. We had good national studies like the NEA participation studies. We had a lot of individual cultural organization studies. They had studied their current audiences to death, and knew where they were. But we didn't have a lot of information about consumers.

We started asking ourselves the questions right along with our cultural community. What do people think and feel about the arts? Not a specific art form. Not the work of a specific organization or artist. But what role does creativity play in their lives? Why or how are the arts important to them? And we became convinced that we needed to try to understand these questions without an audience development objective attached to the process, but rather an open process that would try to understand what consumers think about the arts.

So we decided to do something completely different. We turned to the Harvard Business School. A local ad agency that did a lot of arts marketing in our community pointed us to the Harvard Business School and a guy at the Harvard Business School named Dr. Jerry Zaltzman, who has something there called The Mind of the Market Lab. It's exclusively used for for-profit consumer work. Reebok shoes uses this research to figure out how to sell workout shoes, for instance. Or Proctor and Gamble, or PG&E, I believe, has used this process. Its previous applications are all for-profit.

It finds its inspiration in the fact that most human communication is nonverbal and that people think in images rather than words. So on any given subject, the process attempts to gather thousands of mental images and piece them together into a coherent picture.

Even though there were for-profit utilizations of this, we were intrigued because we thought that there was a natural connection to the arts, with its emphasis on images, on pictures, on feelings, rather than focus groups, and statistically significant samples. By the way, this process does not have a statistically significant sample, and Kevin McCarthy is shaking his head, no, it doesn't. It has been controversial for that reason. But it's resonated a lot with our cultural community.

The participants are asked to think about questions. This question: We're interested in learning about your thoughts and feelings concerning the arts and the role they play in your life. When you think about the arts, what thoughts and feelings come to mind? It was that simple. The participants had to spend about a week assembling images from magazines – clippings, or other sources – that immediately resonated with the set of questions for them. They were asked not be literal, i.e., if you like ballet, don't cut a picture of ballet shoes, but rather select images that evoke feelings that you experience when you think about the arts. Then you spend a lot of time, two to three hours, talking about your images, and it's tape recorded with a researcher.

This consumer chose a whole bunch of different pictures, and he said he picked the kid because he felt that kind of whimsy when he went to the arts. And the roller coaster, the same thing, excitement and stimulation. A volcano down at the bottom. Then a kid in the corner who doesn't get it, who doesn't get either the process or the product. This person chose pictures of candles that evoked for them a sense of energy and light and stimulation and excitement about the arts.

I'll just show you one other one because they're all very different. This one is a very Pittsburgh thing. This woman picked trees bursting into bloom and she said that's the way that music

made her feel when she listened to it. She picked a photograph that she took taking her child to see King Friday of *Mr. Roger's Neighborhood*, because that was all about fantasy and make-believe. She picked a picture of a man carrying a crash dummy saying that, you know, the arts mean tragedy, mean sadness to me as well. Of course, she's got one of the Pittsburgh Penguins carrying the Stanley Cup, and that's about triumph or extreme excitement. Those are just two of the images. There are about 30 or 40 of them.

You might well ask, what the heck are you going to do with these interesting images? That's what we said, too. In fact, my boss particularly said that. And I have to say the jury is still out.

But here's what they do with all this information and hours and hours of tape recordings of listening to people talk about their feelings. They go through all this material and they scour all the images and all the language for similarities of thought and meaning.

On one level, they're looking for what they call constructs, basic ideas that people hold in common, even though they may refer to them in different ways. At an even deeper level, they look for what they call in the jargon "deep metaphors" – hidden feelings and thoughts that are described in terms of something else. It's very complicated stuff, but I have a booklet up here that describes the whole thing if you'd like a copy of it

Here are the major constructs. They're commonsensical but they resonate particularly when they're connected. Discovery, the idea of finding something new and unexpected, gaining a new perspective, experiencing a welcome change or departure from the familiar. Energy and stimulation, the idea of feeling energized, having more endurance, experiencing emotional and physical stimulation and feeling refreshed and renewed. Relaxed, at peace, content, the idea of experiencing serenity and calm and satisfaction. And self-esteem, the idea of feeling proud or confident or secure. Or as they said, because all these have opposite meanings, conversely, suffering a lack of

confidence due to inexperience or a negative experience of the arts.

These were the metaphors. Three key ones are resource, orientation and balance.

In resource, participants identify the arts with a concept of resources. They associated them with obtaining valued ends like knowledge, skills, energy; or intangibles like guidance and motivation. Resource led to connection, i.e., the notion of connection that's central to people's thoughts and feelings. It captures a sense that the arts connect people to others, connect them with their own inner selves, with the past, with the future, with the familiar, and with the foreign. And transformation, the power of the arts to move you from one mental state to another to escape from your everyday life, and to transport you in time or place.

The other two, balance and orientation, relate to a sense of equilibrium in your life. Or in the case of orientation, they found that people made repeated references to how the arts change their spatial orientation. "They enlarged my perspective." "They uplifted me." "They brought me down to earth." Or "they heightened my awareness." So this metaphor got the sense of transforming you or taking you to another place.

The findings argue that these constructs and these metaphors are essential building blocks with which any participation strategy could be built. A quote from the report, stated that, "People vary greatly in their understanding of the arts, and they display a wide range of activities that satisfy their need to do the special things that these constructs and metaphors refer to. Cultural institutions and foundations should try to foster a public understanding of the arts that encompasses the practices of a wide spectrum of people who do a great many things to feel special."

It's careful to stress that this universality of the arts, however, doesn't relieve a marketer of the need to understand his or her audience. The report goes on to point that a person who's been a decades-long subscriber to the symphony, has a lot in common with an individual who's devoted to a country and western station, even if they've never experienced any other represen-

tation of art. It's very important that the different ways in which the constructs are experienced are reflected in the communications by the symphony or the radio station. In other words, marketers and audience development staff have to be savvy enough to translate some of these very universal concepts into the everyday vernacular of their particular audiences.

So you might ask them, what have we done with the metaphors, the constructs, etc. Well, for one, this research and a whole lot of other research that we did, has shifted us on the continuum to focusing more clearly on consumers. We're doing a lot more work at the Heinz Endowments on consumers in a lot of different realms.

The more interesting thing is what our cultural community did with this. We did this research at a time when our cultural groups were coming together in a small way to promote themselves more aggressively. They formed a cultural alliance in Pittsburgh with the idea of doing some small advocacy projects. They'd also just been approached by our local paper for a deal on group ads: we'll give you a cut-rate price if all of you band together and take out more ads.

As we discussed this research with them, they got a bit intrigued by it. In the words of the coach of the coalition, Mark Masterson, who's a theater person in Pittsburgh, he said instead of just taking out a few ads, what if we developed a whole campaign to raise the profile of the arts that was bigger than any one of us, but together would give us a chance to create a new presence for ourselves.

In other words, their idea was to seize the day, create our own message, argue themselves about their community value and their personal value. A couple of months ago they launched a major awareness campaign based upon this research.

They have a tagline: The arts bring life to life. All the cultural organizations in the community are using this now. They're interpreting it in a lot of different ways. All our arts managers, all our artists, all over town have these pins that say the arts bring life to life. They have pins, buttons, the typical public awareness stuff.

Even more compellingly, they've got radio spots and TV ads. Interesting stuff. Is it about participation? Yes. Is it measurable? No. We have some ideas of how to measure it. The real test will be to see how individual institutions can use it to deliver their own message.

**Killacky:** Thanks, Janet. Holly has asked us to invite Jerry Yoshitomi into this as the respondent. Jerry is now the CEO of the Cabinet of 1001 Crazy Ideas, as he calls them. I recently had the honor and the pleasure of having Jerry come in and help me think some things out at the Center. There is no one more expansive and more brilliant and more inventive and more idiosyncratic and crazy than Jerry Yoshitomi. So come on in, Jerry.

**Yoshitomi:** Thank you. Because I'm now independent and I don't have any grants pending anywhere, I can actually do my own hair shirt story, trying to speak truth. Much of the last ten months or so, I've been talking, reading, and learning a great deal from a lot of folks. Many of you in this room have helped me with a lot of the work that I've been doing, but also with some of the thinking here.

I want to begin with that and say that this is not necessarily just a Jerry Yoshitomi, but it's fitting with a lot of things, and also some things I heard earlier this morning and from the panel today. This idea of metaphor and image is important, I'd like to have each of us think about our youth and a church or temple or religious organization that we might have attended in our youth. Let me see how many people attended some kind of a religious organization in their youth? That's a pretty large number.

I'd like you to think about that organization, that entity. How it met your needs, didn't meet your needs. I'd like to ask you to hold that in your memory bank and to also then look at how many people currently attend services of religious institutions on a regular basis in the room. The number has dropped significantly.

I would suggest that what we are dealing with in the arts, frankly, is a situation that many churches and religious institutions are going through. I think the metaphors are appropriate,

those are the metaphors and the constructs that we see. What I'm trying to do is get you to a place that acknowledges getting people to arts activities, to engage them, to engage greater audiences, is like getting each of you who do not now attend services to go to church. So that's what we need to do, not actually, but that's the process. There's the difficulty, right?

I would say that as a field, we do not have sufficient understanding or capacity today to significantly engage audiences. We do not have the capacity or the understanding. There's a sense, particularly in many of the sessions in the room, that we actually need to build a body of knowledge. We need to build research and we need to get there. But it's the first step on a marathon. It's a first three months of a 25-year process. It's very much of a beginning.

A lot of this comes from a certain history that we have. I call myself an NEA baby because I started 25 years ago in this field and I learned what a state arts agency was. I learned what public funding was. I think we've actually ended up with a lot of what I call the Seven Deadly Virtues of Activity. Many of us, including myself, do sometimes a very good job of marketing to foundations and marketing to funding sources, but we frankly don't do as good a job as we should in terms of reaching individuals and consumers.

We also have skills in seeking contributed dollars from wealthier individuals. But again – I think this was talked about in one of the earlier sessions this morning – that turns us away from individuals. What that results in is the fact that we have a loss of time. We don't really have the time to assess what it is that we're doing, because we are seeking those dollars.

I had a discussion with a colleague recently about the pathology of the grantor/grantee relationships. The idea that we create projects that have not been as successful as they could have been. Partly, the lack of success has to do with the fact that we were not focusing on the right place. I'll talk in a minute about the fact that we clearly have to focus on the individuals.

Organizations, frankly, are taking on projects and taking on activities with which we don't

have the capacities. Jerry Yoshitomi, maybe I was a very good and persuasive grant seeker, but I was not particularly good in engaging my staff and my community with all of the tools and the skills that they needed to engage people as deeply as possible.

Some of these conclusions I came to in my last few years at the JACCC, when I realized that people, my own relatives, were not attending events. This is not unlike the church activity. Each of you, I think, can think about relatives – siblings, parents, children, aunts, uncles, in your own communities or maybe across the country – who are not attending arts events. You buy them tickets, come with me, let's have dinner, let's do this. But, there was no interest. If I cannot engage my cousin to attend, how can I engage a stranger? What's wrong?

The first thing I thought about was, is there something wrong with the art? I realized as I looked at the art, yes, that some of the art we're presenting could actually be stronger, be better. I also acknowledged that the problem was in me and in my own organization, in my own capacity to deliver a product. What I saw was family members spending significant amounts of money on a lot of other entertainment activity, whether they be sports activities or commercial entertainment, or whatever those things may be, but I was not engaging them. I could not actually, in fact, get them to come.

Something is wrong here. We have a situation. We have good product. We have a persuasive person. We have a relationship there. We still have no attendance. What I realized was, going back to the church model, we were dealing with inclined audiences. This is reading from Nello and George Thorn and some other publications. What we're dealing with was an inclined arts audience. People who were passionate. People who had been to the arts. People who had positive values about the arts. And a disinclined audience.

What we needed to do was to reach the disinclined, people who are unfamiliar. I think Diane Mataraza made a comment this morning that an arts event for some people is a non-event. I said, what? She said, because you can't talk to

each other at the event. I can't say in the middle of a concert, what is this? I don't understand this. Why did he write it this way? If I said that in the middle of a concert, that would not be appropriate behavior.

What we're actually having is these events that are non-events! I realized we were in a process of focusing on the musician, because we wanted to create the perfect environment for the musician, and we're ending up not having an experience for the audience.

A few months after that, I came across a former superintendent who had been involved in school reform and was teaching other academics and principals and superintendents about school reform. And she said, school reform works when we focus on the needs of the students, not on the needs of the teachers. She is also the chair of the board of an arts organization. I said, well, what is the parallel? And she did a click, and she said you're right. We have to focus not on the needs of the musicians or the actors. We have to focus on the needs of the audience.

I also recognized that we don't have a word to describe these people. We're calling it consumer-centric and we think that's not right. Is it marketing? Is it audience? Is it individual? We do not have a word! We don't have a word to really talk about these individuals in a specific way. That's why we're in the beginning of a process, because we don't even have the vocabulary. I hope that the writers amongst us will help us to craft words.

In other fields there's been progress. I mentioned churches. The mega churches that are very active in our communities have figured this out and for the last ten years, there's been an entire system of engagement, of participation, of marketing, of consumer-centric, whatever you want to call it. Churches are way ahead of us. There's been consolidations in a lot of other industries as we talked about in other parts of the conference.

We are behind. At the same time we have some beginnings of what I called breakthrough documents and breakthrough thinking. I mentioned earlier Nello and George Thorn's book, *Learning Audiences*. That's a book that was



published about two years ago by the Association of Performing Arts Presenters. I did not read that book until February.

I read this book in February and thought, this is breakthrough information. I asked Nello and George if they had offered a workshop? Yes, they had. Maybe 90 people across four different workshops have attended it over two years. Most of them have been marketing directors and audience education people.

I went around the country and talked to my peers in the presenting field about this book. And they said, what book? Oh, that book that George and Nello did. It's an education book, right? It's a 100-page publication, great airplane reading. You read it on the way home and it changes the way you think about the way we do business.

In their book, they talked about a book called *Flow*, which is written by a psychologist at the University of Chicago, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. *Flow* talks about the psychology of optimal experience. So I see this book and I think, that's us! This is art! This is the optimal experience, right? He very clearly talks about how people are engaged in flow activity, and how we reach optimal experience.

I talked with arts colleagues. We're not using that information. I talked to people in the Recreation and Leaders Studies field and it's now in the freshman curriculum for people in Leisure Studies.

There are a lot of things that we are very close to. We can engage in a process of going to people, like George and Nello, or others who are studying flow, and get to the place where we can make a lot of progress. I'm fascinated by the work that they're doing in Pittsburgh, because that's exactly the kind of thing that we should be doing.

These are some rambling conversations. It's my view that there's a lot of information here, and what I would call it unrest. I feel now, frankly, a sense of urgency. People saying, I only have a decade left of professional work in this field. We've got to make changes, and we've got to start today.

As a grantee here in this process, I would encourage the wisdom in this room to gather together and to get out from the room. If you look at things like Learning Audiences information, it's my view that the break-through information is there. We have to get out and change the pathology. We have to change the pathology with the directors of arts organizations, with the boards of directors. We have to change the pathology with your own trustees.

There was a conversation in this room yesterday where they were talking about ideas of how information stays in the field and evaluations are done and spiral inward. And my suggestion is that we actually have to have conversations that really encourage truth and encourage speaking out and spiraling up.

I tell Anne that *GIA [Newsletter]*, the publication, is the most important and valuable thing that I read in this field. The information that's in there actually should be other places.

The point is, we're not there, we do not have the capacity. Don't expect us to have the capacity because we're not trained and equipped to do it. I think we can have the capacity if we work together. Thank you.

**Killacky:** We're going to open up for questions.

**Question:** My question is for Jerry, could you tell a little bit more about that statement about we're not having experiences. Because what I interpreted from that is if the audience isn't interacting somehow, it's not a valid arts experience. Is that what you were saying?

**Yoshitomi:** It's my sense that we have to create opportunities for people to have. Corporations are doing well. There's a term called mass customization. You have 2,000 people in the hall, but they all have their own experience. Some come early, some go to a lecture, some smoke a cigar before the performance, some drink a glass of wine.

Somebody was talking to me about rock concerts where there's the mosh pit. The mosh pit actually becomes part of the experience for those who don't want to be down there and are sitting up in the bleachers. My sense is there are

two different experiences going on with the same event. I would suggest we have to create a process by which we actually talk about customization.

We have to talk to the people who are in our audiences today. Do you want to broaden, diversify, engage others? Or is this about being here so you're buried with the music? That's the question.

We have to speak truths like that. It's not whether or not I cough and someone hands me a lozenge. It's about having the conversation. Is this about the current generation and future generation of audiences or is this about the last generation?

**Question:** I'm from the Jerome Foundation. Years ago the Cleveland Foundation did a study in which they found in their community that the strongest indicator of active participation as an audience member or viewer was whether you had art and music and drama instruction in K-12 education. And it wasn't just field trips. It was the presence of regular offerings.

Currently, are any of the projects that you're engaged with telling you that as well? Generally, across the U.S., we've lost a lot of arts teachers. How direct of a tie is that to audience participation?

**Killacky:** I remember the Cleveland Foundation went even a step deeper and said it was hands-on activities. It wasn't just watching; it was doing. In the study we did in Philadelphia at the Pew with 28 organizations, we found that those who studied dance when they were little, loved dance. I don't know about those who studied music.

**Sarbaugh:** I realized after I sat down that everyone was not at the breakfast round table this morning so they didn't know the research I mentioned was done by Arts Market. They didn't know a lot of things. I should give Louise credit certainly, for the hard work they've put into this.

But the SPPA, the NEA study, puts overall level of education as the highest indicator, and then arts participation as a young person as another

very important indicator slightly below overall education level. Education being more important than financial wealth.

**Phillips:** I wanted to add something from our own research, too. We did some more traditional research on adults in a multi-county area and asked them their levels of arts education. We then tried to correlate their early experiences with arts education to current participation and to current attitudes. We found a very striking correlation. The people who had early arts education experiences tended to support tax dollars going to the arts more, and tended to be more frequent consumers. It's a validation of that Cleveland work.

**Killacky:** There are a couple of things that it doesn't tell you. It doesn't tell you why people participate when that is not the case. Knowing that people do that is not as informative as knowing why it is that people who don't have the same level of education or wealth, are participating. That's actually a much more interesting question.

We're also very interested in looking at information that is actionable by an institution. Such as, if we invest X many dollars in music education for fourth grade, years from now we'll have symphonies subscribers. That is just not a reasonable solution. I also cringe that that's not the reason to invest in arts education. What we keep trying to push towards is that it's really about the ways organizations are doing their business.

I would like to make the caveat that this is not my assumption or any funder's assumption that this should be the way every institution does their work. Using a lens of looking at who participates in an institution, how they participate, and how that institution shapes that, is a very valuable lens for understanding that institution. The questions that you raise about those organizations whose function and mission is not going to ever be audience-driven, is really critical. Looking at that in the context about what that organization returns to the community, how it's embedded, is very important. You can ask a whole lot of different questions about how do you structure a system that makes sure it's a rich ecology, not that you're

trying to torque every organization to be all things to all people.

**Question:** We've done some initial research that supports some of the things that Jerry was saying earlier. Participation in museums programs seems to be growing faster than that for the performing arts organizations. One of the things that we discovered was, museums are always there. You don't necessarily have to dress up to go to them. They're often open in the evenings or in the daytime when women and their children would go to visit them. They don't require you to serve the performers.

That's something that the performing arts have to be thinking about in the future in terms of how we're going to reach people with limited time, limited income. We can't all get dressed up and go to a performance at 8:00 at night. That's a new aspect that I think the performing arts have to look at, and we as funders have to begin to look at as well.

The correlation between doing and participating really holds up. Yes, it's true that there aren't as many arts educators in the classroom as there used to be. People are finding art things differently defined in their lives, it can include participating in choirs, church groups in churches, and other kinds of activities. That's a whole other thing for us to begin thinking about as funders, too. I don't have a question, but I did want to validate some of the comments that were made.

**Killacky:** A couple of weeks ago, the Gilman Foundation had a weekend retreat about looking at the future of funding for dance. One of the choreographers who was there said, well, maybe it's about time that we figure out how to put food on the seats.

**Question:** This is for Michael. You had talked about the fact that organizations had fundamentally changed how they do their business. Can you talk about that some more?

**Moore:** Sure. I'll use two museums that were equally committed to trying to diversify their attendance, and both were actually very successful. They used very different strategies for doing that.

In one organization they targeted specific low-income neighborhoods adjacent to the museum. They really went inside those neighborhoods, and discovered enormous artistic wealth. They found an amazing photographer that had a really rich photography program for young people. They asked the young people why they don't attend the museum and the kids were very straightforward. "There's nothing there for us."

Then the museum started taking notice of these kids' work. When the curator started looking at it and said, this work is phenomenal, this actually should be inside the institution, then they began to establish a reciprocal relationship. The kids started having access to the collection. The curator started looking at the work in the community. The museum actually started commissioning public artworks for the neighborhood. They started teaching Spanish to all their staff. The customer service issues became part of the compensation system inside the museum, where staff were graded for performance reviews on the quality of the work that they're doing to make the institution both of high artistic quality and high community value.

When it works, it has to permeate the whole institution. One aspect where it doesn't register can erase the progress of another area.

The other example is a counter example. The same desire, but the institution said, in order for us to reach this community, we have to really diversify our governance. What we're going to target is the upper middle-class to become part of this institution and really change the structure of the institution. A lot of activities to do that, coupled with programming, coupled with other kinds of outreach. But again, it was an institution-wide commitment to make a change and track what that change would be like.

What's critical for us is that when we have found it to be successful, it's been where there's strong leadership and a commitment to marry the artistic mission and the community mission equally, and to make institutional change inside the organization.

To come into an organization and say, you must diversify your audience by having community partnerships, or you must diversify your audience by diversifying your board, just doesn't work. You have to register with the institution and get them investing in their strategic best interest.

It's a different mode for funders to be in. They want to dictate the process. They don't want to dictate and look at the outcomes.

We also function in this illusion that our money and influence operates in a vacuum once it goes inside an institution, and that's just not the case. It's part of a large mix of what's going on. The closer you can get to that, and take a read on what the institution's doing, helps the institution because it's not pulling it aside. It actually helps the return on your investment.

**Question:** My remarks come from the experiences that I've had at the Community Foundation. First of all I want to say, I am so glad that this conversation is taking place and I want to thank my colleagues for putting together this panel. Because what I really felt was missing from the discussion and almost all the discussions I've been hearing about cultural policy, is this part of the discussion. Which is, what do we want policies for? We keep talking about the mechanisms and about the data collection, without talking about the goal. Before we talk about environmental policy, we know what the goal is. We want clean air. We want clean water. We want clean land to live on. We want to be healthy individuals. What do we want in the arts? That's what I feel this discussion is about.

I'd like to hear more discussion about this. Maria Jackson made a passing comment in the cultural policy discussion, that we've missed putting the arts on the agenda with the other work that goes on in community development and youth development and school reform. It's not a part of the discussion.

I wanted to bring that up about value. What is the value of our work and where it sits. I really appreciate the work that Janet presented because it centers it back on individuals and their experience of art and what makes a life worth living aside from having good schools

and a good health program and clean air. What else do we need in our lives? I just want to hear more discussion about establishing that guide for individuals to have the arts really in their lives.

I also want to underline what Jerry said about school reform, that school reforms have to be discussions not just about teacher development. Not that teacher development isn't important, but I think the parallel for the arts community is not to just look at the nonprofit arts institutions or artists, but about these experiences that people want to have.

**Question:** I'm concerned about the research and development, and how people engage with art. We keep doing this in the arts. We think that there's a next right thing and that despite everything around we're going to be concerned about the experimental artists. If we're concerned with the experimental artists, we've somehow undermined the symphony. All that's about resources. Because we're in this room, we're concerned with resources. We see it in a way that the community doesn't experience it. People in their own communities and their own lives don't deal with the dualities we deal with.

The notion that art, for example, is tied to higher education comes from a massive amount of research that's based on defining art in a certain way by a certain group of people for an entire nation. Not starting with how people experience art in their lives and how they would build a construct.

There was a meeting at Princeton a couple of years ago that researched that question. A bunch of researchers in social sciences talked about the status of researching the arts. Basically the answer was, it doesn't matter. To begin with there is a saying that it doesn't even begin to touch the beginning of the question. What came out of the meeting that I thought was really sad, was the fact no one was really interested. They didn't want to know. They didn't want to deal with the truth.

The latest NEA report noted 30 percent of all Americans go to see musical theater. At one point I said, I just know if I went around knocking on the doors in America, one out of

every three doors isn't going to see musical theater! It was bad data. But in fact, that's the same news cranked out every year.

The notion of getting deeper into the process, of being willing to share a hundred years of channeling that we all know really isn't right, doesn't solve the problems.

**Phillips:** One of the things in the SPPA study, which is raw data, is the number of people who participate in dance or take dance classes, is greater than the number of people who sit in audiences watching dance. I've heard that cited as a shame, but I say what's wrong with that? I think it's wonderful. It has to do with what we're asking, we need to be asking people where they meet the arts, how they meet the arts, and how they're engaged in them. It isn't only sitting in a seat.

**Question:** We tried to get the Irvine Institute to work outside of the SPPA, which, in fact is this incredibly limited research tool. But it is the basis for all of our understanding of what happens to the arts in America.

It was a difficult thing mainly because the people who were highly educated and would come to something like the SPPA, assume in their own lives underlying notions. If you took a group of poor people who were factory workers who are probably as involved in the arts in their own ways as anyone else, and had them deal with the conversation, it would be something really different. But it's very, very hard work.

**Killacky:** I want us to keep on track that it is funders in this room talking to funders. Jerry brought up a very interesting thing about pathology. He brought it up from a grantee perspective, but when we were on the phone we had a very incredible conversation about the dual pathology in the relationships from the funding agencies to your grantees as well.

**Moore:** That's a really critical issue, that's difficult and complex on both sides. Because foundations of all stripe, are constantly trying to focus the investment that they're making, which generates guidelines and trying to

articulate a field of interest. A funder or grantee is trying to get access to that.

I think what is missing is an interactive ongoing conversation between the funder and the grantee outside of the cycle of funding. One of the issues that we're working on is that we think we are as much in the knowledge business as we are in the money business.

What is it that our grantees are learning? What is it that they're struggling to know more about that can enhance our work? How do you create learning communities among your grantees and among other funders that allows you to rise above the immediate pathology of, I've got this money to give away or, I want this money. That's one issue.

The other issue is that we're not good at building on the work of our other funders. Some of the best successes have been where there's local work that has started down the road and we've been able to sit down and say okay, where do we need to go next? We've got to be much, much better at doing that. We want to copy or one-up each other in terms of program or process. The interest of the organizations has to be in greater foreground.

**Question:** I'd like to go all the way back to one of the first comments about the amount of ink that newspapers give the arts. I think it is terrible and I think it isn't intentional, it's just something that happens. I'd also like to quote Chris Weber, who was the first national cultural correspondent to *The New York Times*. He described the thought process *The Times* went through when they set this up, and they said basically, *The New York Times* is a lot of people's second read. They decided that people might be interested in hearing about what was happening in the arts outside of New York. So they sent him around the country where he did wonderful stuff about what's playing in Peoria. Look at this exciting arts festival that goes on in Anchorage.

We had him come and speak to the Chicago Funders and ask him what he thought. He chided us, he scolded us. He said, you have not made the kind of case that environmentalists

and health people and all those other people  
have made in their field that is indispensable.

Until we have the kind of research that is  
absolutely very strong and unassailable, you're  
not going to even be able to talk about it.

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