Grantmakers in the Arts
2003 Conference

THE EDGE

Proceedings from the Conference
October 19–22, 2003
W Hotel
Seattle, Washington

MEMBER REPORT
CULTURAL VITALITY: ARTS, CULTURE
AND THE SOCIAL HEALTH OF THE NATION

This session highlighted recent research about cultural
indicators and the role of the arts in creating healthy and vibrant
communities. Sandra Opdycke of the Fordham Institute for
Innovation in Social Policy presented the first in a series of
National Social Surveys examining the relationships between
the arts, culture, and the social health of the nation. Maria-
Rosario Jackson and Joaquin Herranz, Jr. from the Arts and
Culture Indicators Project of the Urban Institute presented new
research that defines and measures cultural vitality as an asset in
community building. Copies of the reports and policy briefs were
available at the session.

Session Designer   Joan Shigekawa
and Moderator: *Rockefeller Foundation*

Panelists: Sandra Opdycke
                             Fordham Institute for Innovation in Social Policy

                             Maria-Rosario Jackson
                             Urban Institute

                             Joaquin Herranz, Jr.
                             MIT

                             October 20, 2003, 10:00 a.m.

SHIGEKAWA: First of all Marc Miringoff sends his regrets, he's not well. But we have a great person here, this is not Mark Miringoff, this is Sandra Opdycke and she is associate director of the Fordham Institute for Innovation in Social Policy where she is full-time now. She is a former professor of history, among other things and also was one of the key players on the study released this year, *Arts, Culture and the Social Health of the Nation*. She'll be speaking about this document, a national social survey about what Americans think about the relationship between arts and culture and our social health in general. So Sandra is going to kick-off today's discussion.

And then, some of you remember meeting Maria Rosario Jackson, and Joaquin Herranz last year when we presented one of the Urban Institute's Policy Briefs of the Culture, Creativity and Communities Program, *A Framework for Measurement*. They will be presenting part two of that series, the preliminary findings of their next monograph, as well as some cultural policy briefs. They're with the Urban Institute, The Arts and Culture Indicators in Community Building Project (ACIP), and have been working on these issues for five plus years. They have gradually been building a methodology and an approach to the way the culture works at a community level. They will be speaking second, and then we'll take questions from everybody.

Because there are a lot of folks in this room, as I look around, who have a lot of experience in these issues and on the ground, and with research as well, we're not going to waste any time because we have lots to talk about.

I'm going to start with Sandra and her report, *Arts, Culture and the Social Health of the Nation*.

OPDYCKE: I actually have two stories I want to tell you in my brief time, and the first is about the project we did on the role that arts and culture play in American life. The second is the role that creative grantmaking played in bringing this project to life.

So let me start with some background about us at Fordham Institute. We spent nearly 20 years analyzing and publishing reports on social indicators as a way of monitoring the social health of the country. It's our opinion that the social side, including culture and arts, of our national experience doesn't get the attention it deserves.

And in way that's ironic because this is a society that measures just about everything! I mean, we measure traffic, we measure baseball scores, we measure TV show ratings, we measure weather,

we measure political opinions. And of course most of all, we measure the economy. Measures like the Dow Jones, like the GDP are features of our daily existence. And in fact economic indicators seem to have become the only accepted language for talking about how we're doing as a country.

We think that there is a lot more to how we are doing as a country than just how the economy is doing. We think that the quality of life depends on how many children make it through their first year of life, how many kids finish high school, how many families have health insurance, how many old people live in poverty, how safe the streets are. All these things.

But we hear much less about these issues. Information on them takes much longer to get released, it appears much less often, and it gets less attention when it comes out. In fact, if you want to see the dream of how things might be different, I don't know who got the *USA Today,* but here is a <u>weekly</u> feature on market trends. Now what you would really love would be how many people go to museums and how many children die and so on, but of course that is not what it is about. And that is what we would like to see changed.

Now one answer would be to do at least one annual report that pulls all these things together, but we don't get that either. Virtually every other industrial country does a regular national social report that pulls some of this information along with economic stuff together. But we do not do that.

So it is easy to lose sight of all the issues besides economic issues that shape the lives that we lead. And that's what we at the Institute have always been interested in changing. Our goal is to make social and cultural issues as widely discussed, as seriously argued about, and as consistently monitored as economic issues.

In pursuit of this goal we publish many, many reports. We did a book called *Social Health of the Nation: How America is Really Doing.* And we publish an Index of Social Health that tracks the nation's performance on 16 key social indicators and it comes up with one number for each year so you can look at change over time.

In the late 1990s we got a grant from the Ford Foundation to establish a two-year working group on social indicators to explore how we might expand the impact of our group. Then we got a call from Joan Shigekawa at the Rockefeller Foundation. She'd heard about our project and she wanted to know whether we were going to be

looking at cultural and arts indicators as well as social.

Well the answer was no, we had not thought of that. But her question rang a bell. You know how I said that we don't have a national social report that's published regularly, but there have been a few stand-alone reports over the years. And one of the ones that we especially admire was called *Recent Social Trends* and it was commissioned by President Herbert Hoover way back in the 1920s.

Recent Social Trends had chapters on various different social issues of the kind that I am talking about, as well as economic, but it also had a chapter on the arts. We had noticed this and we had talked among ourselves about it, but we had never done anything about it. Clearly the arts represent a vital part of our national experience, but they aren't often looked at in the context of overall social well-being. And we hadn't done it either in spite of the example of recent social trends.

But as we talked to Joan, we saw how considering the arts could enrich the picture that we presented of the nation's overall social health. So what started out with a grantmaker's question led to a dialogue that made us recognize new directions for our own work.

The outcome was that with Rockefeller's support we administered a two-year working group on the arts and humanities that ran parallel to the Ford group, and spent that time with scholars and artists, looking at how we could assess the role of the arts in the nation's social health.

Early in our deliberations we realized that in the arts, as Joan said earlier, we couldn't count on the kind of standard data sources that we were used to in our social work. No Bureau of Labor Statistics, no Census, no Uniform Crime Report, no Department of Vital Statistics and so on. The only thing even close that we saw that was regular were the audience participation surveys that are done by the National Endowment for the Arts. The audience participation part only comes out every five years, and there were a lot of things we wanted to know that they didn't ask.

So the working group said, you are going to have to run your own survey. Now as it happened, the final recommendations of the Ford group, looking at social indicators, had said also that they thought a survey would be indicated. So building on the ideas of both these groups, we did design a national social survey, the Fordham Institute's National Social Survey, and we administered it twice in 2000 as a pilot, and then in 2002. And again, both surveys were carried out with the help of Ford and Rockefeller.

We did a number of publications based on our findings, including a document called The Social Report, which represents a pilot for a national social report that I talked to you about earlier. But the publication I wanted to tell you about today is drawn from the second expanded survey in 2002, and it focuses specifically on arts and culture and this is it. I brought a few copies and there is a sign-up list if you would like them.

Basically there were three questions we were asking. How are people participating in the arts? What does that involvement mean to them, both personally, and what does it mean to us as a society? And are there barriers that keep people from participating as much as they'd like?

So let me start with what we found people were actually doing in the arts. Now this is a question that would seem like familiar ground and yet right away we found we had some important choices to make.

When we started reviewing the literature we saw that information about participation is generally divided up into the main categories of performance: music, art, dance, and so on. But as we thought about it, we came to feel that from the point of view of the actual social experience of arts participation, the more important question was whether you went to a live performance of any kind, or to some kind of museum exhibit or art show, or you enjoy the arts at home, like say listening to music, or did you create something yourself? So that influenced the questions we asked and the way we organized our findings.

Talking to people as consumers of the arts we found that the overwhelming favorite activity was listening to music at home. Virtually everyone we surveyed reported doing this at least sometimes, and almost 90% said that they did it often. Also, three-fifths of the people we talked to said they read at least four books a year.

When we asked people about attending arts events we got lower numbers. About two-thirds of the people we talked to had been to at least one movie in the past year, and about as many had attended at least one live performance: a play or a concert or a dance recital. But only about one-third said that they did these things even fairly often. And the levels were lower for art shows and museums.

Now these aren't bad numbers, but they do leave a significant number of Americans out. In fact about a third of the people we surveyed had not seen a single movie in the past year or attended a single live performance. And a majority of

those surveyed had not gone to any art show or museum.

So with this somewhat mixed picture in mind, we turned to asking people about their own creative work. And there we found considerably higher levels of participation. I should say that in this area we decided to cast a very wide net. So we asked people not just about activities like painting and dancing and singing which you might think of as high art, we also included a whole lot of activities like sewing, weaving, woodworking, restoring furniture. A whole range of activities in which people who might not even think of themselves as artists still do get a chance to express their skill and their creativity.

Here's what we found. More than 80% of the people we talked to said they'd done at least some creative work in the past year, and most of those people said they did it often. We found this very interesting. It seems to represent a whole underground world of artistic activity that exists under the radar of the sorts of cultural activities that we usually see in reports like focusing on who goes to symphony orchestras or who goes to museums.

We also looked at what children do in the arts. Schools obviously play a big role here, and of course we were talking to the parents, not to the kids. But when we asked the parents how they felt about their children's school art programs, a lot said they were satisfied, but a good many were not. In fact, almost 40% of the people we talked to said their children's art programs were only fair or poor.

Even so when we asked people about their children's participation with the arts, we learned that American kids seem to be getting more chances than their parents in virtually every area we looked at. More children than adults go to live performances. More of them go to arts shows and museums. And more and virtually all of them spend at least some time on creative work of their own.

So now we had some idea of the kinds of arts activities that people engaged in. But we still wanted to know what these activities meant to them, and we also wanted to explore what they meant to us as a society.

In terms of personal involvement, here's some of what we learned. More than 80% of the people in the survey feel that the creative work they do is important to their lives. About the same percent say how important it is to them that their children should be involved in the arts. Nearly two-thirds say that music is very important to

them and that it helps to define who they are. And more than two-thirds say they wish they'd had greater arts opportunities when they were young. So that suggests the importance of the arts at the personal level.

It's always harder to measure the social implications, but one way that we chose to do this was to look at whether involvement in the arts fosters communication with other people. In this respect we were interested to learn that about half the people they interviewed said they often had discussions with friends about movies or books or about their own creative work or about musical performances.

It was striking too, what happened when we asked people to respond to a list of ways in which participating in the arts might contribute to your life. The statement they agreed with the most emphatically was the idea that cultural and creative activities help them to see things from other people's perspectives. This suggests an important link between the arts and social health, the idea that this kind of activity can enhance our ability to empathize with other people's experience.

And of course that can come in so many different ways. You can read *To Kill a Mockingbird* or you can look at Picasso's "Guernica" or you can try and draw somebody you saw in the street, or you can sing "We Shall Overcome." But in all these ways it did seem that arts participation was contributing to their sense of connection to the world.

Now given the personal and social values of these experiences it would obviously be ideal if everybody could do it all the time. So the final area we explored in our survey was whether people felt there were barriers that interfered with their participation. And the answer was emphatically yes.

We offered people a list of possible barriers to respond to, thinking we would just get a sprinkling of agreement with some of them. But the response was must stronger than we expected. It varied somewhat depending on what kind of activity you are talking about, but in every category, roughly half the people we talked to said they would participate more if it cost less, if there were more information about what was available, and if locations were more convenient. Some people also cited physical problems and concerns about safety. And a surprising number, just exactly, I think, one out of four said they would go more often if they had someone to go with, which is interesting.

The same issue came up when people talked about their children's participation in the arts. More than half the parents indicated that barriers of cost and information and location kept their children from participating as actively as they'd like. They also cited the need for more arts programs in school and after school.

The strong response to the cost of participation suggests that income itself is an important barrier, and in fact we found this issue ran through the whole survey. On every kind of arts activity outside the home, we found that participation levels were directly related to income. The poorer the people were, the less they participate. This was true even among children, where you might think that schools would be an equalizing factor.

And of course one possible explanation is that maybe because of educational levels poor people just aren't as interested in the arts. But our survey results certainly do not bear that out.

For one thing, as you might expect, many more low income people cited cost as a major barrier to participation, both for themselves and for their children. But it goes beyond that. Low income people reported more trouble with every kind of barrier that I talked about, including physical difficulties and safety and even having somebody to go with. And that obviously has helped to lower their participation levels.

But it's not just the ways that people's answers differ by income which sheds light on this issue. We were also struck by the questions to which people of all income levels gave similar answers.

For instance, exactly the same proportion of poor people as wealthy ones, 73%, say they wish they'd had more arts opportunities when they were young. Exactly the same proportion of parents, rich and poor, 85%, say it's very important to them that their children should participate in the arts. Poor people listen to music at home just as frequently as people with more money, and they respond even more positively to the question about music as a defining element in their lives.

Poor people also do creative work of their own at nearly the same rate as higher income people and they feel just as strongly about its importance to their lives. Furthermore if you look at those who do engage in their own creative work, poor people do it just as often as upper income people and they're more likely to talk about it with friends. Put all this information together and it seems clear that reducing financial barriers to participation could enrich many American's lives

and make a real difference to the level of cultural activity around the country.

So overall, here is what we learned from the survey:

Most Americans feel that the arts are important in their lives and in the lives of their children. A majority of Americans attend arts events of some kind, but at least a third report going a whole year without attending a single live performance, a single museum or art show, a single movie.

At home Americans are much more active in the arts. Virtually all of them listen to music and a great majority do some creative work of their own.

American children seem to get more arts opportunities than adults do, but their parents would like to see those opportunities greater.

There's clear evidence that people's participation in the arts strengthens their sense of social connection.

And finally, American's engagement with the arts could be enhanced if barriers to participation were reduced, especially financial barriers.

Now, we think these are valuable findings and many of you might enjoy looking at the report, but we don't think our work is over. If we really want Americans to be aware of social issues including arts and culture, it won't happen with any single report, however striking its findings. What we need is consistency, true monitoring of what is going on from year-to-year so that policy makers and scholars and the general public are kept keenly aware of the issues involved. I don't think we'll rest until we're on the back page of USA Today, although I'm not sure that will happen this week or next.

Anyway, with that in mind, we've just received support from the Rockefeller Foundation for a new social survey next year, so we can keep developing our understanding of what the arts contribute to social health, and also keep on top of what's changing and identify emerging areas of need.

So five years ago we got a call from the Rockefeller Foundation and a very creative grantmaker, Joan Shigekawa got us started thinking about the connections between arts and social health. So I'm happy to say that the seed that Joan planted is still bearing fruit. Thank you very much.

SHIGEKAWA: It is interesting that some of the findings from this survey actually sync up with

the findings from the RAND, the Wallace work, the RAND work on public participation in the arts, especially *Americans as a Creative Nation*. And how we think about ourselves as a creative nation when you take all cultures and you look broadly across being creative producers.

The other interesting thing about this survey is that it provides a kind of umbrella from the top down look, with rather more traditional frameworks on the arts. So they can link up with the work that is being done in Boston and Chicago and Silicon Valley and a variety of other places where they are looking closer to the ground.

And Maria Jackson and Joaquin Herranz from the Urban Institute are looking close to the ground, but also, they're trying to do all three levels, top, middle, and also grassroots pilot studies. They are taking, as did the Fordham Institute, a very inclusive look at art making and what is art and what is culture at the community level.

So they're going to unpack some of that for you and share some of their most recent findings. And then we'll do some Q & A because we'd love to hear from the folks here who are doing similar work. Maria?

JACKSON: Good morning. The remarks Joaquin and I are going to share with you this morning are going to come from two sources, the Arts and Culture Indicators Project is the umbrella. We're going to review the first few years of work that we did, and then are going to talk about some work that we are in the midst of wrapping-up or writing about. There are two publications that I'm going to refer to, as well as some briefs that I brought to share with you.

And many of the origin issues, Sandra has already spoken to because like the work that Sandra presented, Joan was very much responsible for pushing this along. We started out at the Urban Institute several years ago now with a project called the National Neighborhood Indicators project. I know for some people this is a little bit of a rerun, but I'll go over it anyway.

The National Neighborhood Indicators project was and is a network of several organizations that are committed to pushing the state of the art on quality of life measurement systems, but from a community perspective and at the community level. It was, in a sense, in response to national data sets and a critique of the use of national level information to make assertions about health of neighborhoods knowing that there are many nuances and differences from neighborhood to

neighborhood, community to community. So as a way to supplement the kind of information that was available at the national level, the National Neighborhood Indicators project was launched to collect information at the neighborhood level that said something that would be more specific to the various communities that were involved in this work.

And when this project got started, not unlike what Sandra described, National Neighborhood Indicators project did not have an arts and culture focus. They were looking at all kinds of dimensions of community, including employment, educational attainment, housing issues, etc., but there was no focus on arts and culture. And Joan called the Institute and gave us the charge of figuring out how we would integrate arts and culture into quality of life measurement systems at the local level.

Having had some experience in working in communities – both of us and another colleague, Florence Kabwasa-Green, are urban planners and come at this from that perspective. So we're very much interested in understanding the characteristics of place, and at the local level in particular. And our question was, if we're going to integrate arts and culture into quality of life measurement systems, what are the kinds of questions that we need to be asking? What are the kinds of things that we need to be looking at?

And we knew at the very beginning that there were two tracks that we had to take from the inception. One was to figure out what kind of data was already out there and available. And a second piece consistent with the kind of work that was going on with the National Neighborhood Indicators project, to do some ethnographic-based work in different communities and figure out, what do people care about? What do they say is important to them? What do they find meaningful and valuable as it relates to arts and culture?

So we set out on this two-track process and we did a data reconnaissance and found very much what Sandra found, but also at the local level, that most of the information that was collected wasn't resonating with the kind of findings we were getting from the ethnographic-based work. So a lot of the data that was consistently and reliably collected had to do with large cultural institutions very much focused on the funding fiscal status of those organizations and audience counts.

What we were finding from the ethnographic-based work, and this was focus group discussions, many, many interviews and

participant observation in seven different communities around the country – mostly moderate low income, often communities of color, but we assert that these things hold for many kinds of communities, not just those – we were finding that the definition of arts and culture needed to be expanded to include the kinds of things that people said they found valuable, which ranged from the traditionally understood arts, if you will, in formal cultural institutions to other kinds of arts and creative expression that are very much embedded in other community processes and happen not necessarily explicitly in cultural venues.

So where we arrived, putting together both our findings from the data reconnaissance as well as our findings from the ethnographic work was at a set of principles in what ended up becoming a framework for measurement, and I'll go over it quickly.

The principles are that, one, the presence of arts and culture in a community needs to be informed by the values and realities of the community in question. So opening up the question about what matters.

Secondly, that participation isn't just about audience or consumer actions, but that in fact people participate in a broad range of ways that include making art, teaching art, learning art, consuming it, participating as audience, but engaging in it also as supporters and people who validate work. So there are all these verbs that hadn't really been part of the mix before, in terms of how it is that people engage. Moreover, it's not just in the most acknowledged Western European based canons, right? But that there is expression that is ethnic specific and generative as well. New kinds of identities that are being forged and people creating new kinds of expressions and genres and what have you. So taking into consideration this broader range of participation is really seminal to understanding what's going on at the local level.

A third piece is that the value of that kind of activity is not only aesthetic and technical, but that because these things are part of everyday lived experience and inextricable from other community processes, they're also valuable for other reasons. So for example, a youth dance in a community can be valuable because of its aesthetic and technical qualities, but also because it's part of youth development, or because it's an affirmation of ethnic identity. And those things are not necessarily in opposition to each other.

Coming from that point as well, when you think about our fourth element which is support, we have to move away from only thinking about support systems for cultural expression as just involving the cultural sector. But because there are many stakeholders in the kind of activity that we're concerned about capturing, you have to understand that the support systems are also relationships among very dissimilar kinds of entities, individuals as well as institutions and funding streams, that converge and are not always so clearly visible.

So the framework that we arrived at has those four dimensions. And we're saying that we have to press forward and be more aggressive about getting better information about the presence of opportunities for cultural engagement, which is the first domain, participation as we've defined it very broadly with all the different verbs. The impacts, so what are the contributions of arts and culture, not only in the cultural realm but to these other realms where arts and culture intersect. And the fourth, which is supports. What are the support systems, particularly if we're thinking about them more comprehensively now as not only being cultural but intersecting with other spheres.

So the first monograph that we pulled together which Joan held up earlier, contains a fuller discussion of these four domains of measurement, domains of inquiry. And what we're pushing on, is in each of those to get a better sense of the kinds of data that's already out there, to measure those dimensions, as well as pushing on the conceptual work. How do we think more clearly about what are systems of support? Or how do we unpack the notion of participation in a way that it can be operationalized and people can in fact think more clearly and proactively about documenting participation?

So that is in a sense what's captured in the first monograph, and we've brought briefs that were just produced that take several pieces of that framework and push it forward. So one is an unpacking participation, another is some initial thinking about systems of support. And then the framework as a whole is summarized so you don't have to go through 40 pages or so in the larger document. So these are here and there are more downstairs if people are interested.

So in the second monograph we're building on that work. I brought these also which will summarize most of the points that I'm making here, and this is a preview in a sense of the piece that we're in the midst of writing.

One step forward I think in the second piece is that we're moving away from thinking about arts

and culture data and research in just a general way. I don't want to say without any grounding because that's the wrong word, but we've been talking about arts and culture data in a more expanded notion, thinking about these four domains of inquiry and the kind of information that would be useful to have in the community.

What we're moving towards is a notion of cultural vitality. What we learned in our work to date is that this notion of presence of opportunities for engagement, actual rates of participation, the impacts and the support systems that make all of that possible, these things are interrelated. And we find that if you think about not just arts and culture in a general sense, but the notion of cultural vitality as a way of bundling those different elements together and being able to be concerned with all of those dimensions.

Again we're coming from this focus on thinking about neighborhood health. So it wouldn't make sense to think only about participation rates or only about presence of opportunities for engagement, or only about potentially what the impacts are, or only about the systems of support, but all of these things in tandem and to try to get a sense of how they relate to each other.

We say that the notion of cultural vitality is a useful way of bundling this together. And we've defined cultural vitality consistent with the principles that I talked about earlier, as a community's capacity for the practice of creating, disseminating, supporting and validating creative expression on its own terms.

We're moving away from just audience counts or just consumerism or even thinking about only making or doing in an isolated way, but we're asking, what is a community's capacity to engage in all of these different ways that we've talked about? We care about the broad range of opportunities for engagement that we discussed earlier, ranging from amateur to professional or from across the different disciplines.

Some of the questions that are tied to that notion of cultural vitality are as follows: What kind of opportunities are there for making art? For teaching or learning art? Participating as an audience member or consumer, validating art, supporting art?

Other questions: Do opportunities for these kinds of artistic engagement exist and is there evidence of engagement across artistic disciplines? Is there evidence of engagement or opportunities for diverse cultures? And that may vary depending on the demographic composition

of various communities. Are different skill levels available for engagement -- from amateur to professional? Is there opportunity for generative as well as interpretive work?

Other questions are, are these opportunities accessible economically, geographically and otherwise, and what mechanisms exist to support the wide range of things that we're concerned with?

We're not in a position to answer all or even many of these questions, but to put them out there and to think about cultural vitality rather than arts and culture more broadly defined and not tied to any framework that in fact captures all of the dimensions that we're concerned with, I think is an important step in our work.

The other thing that's important to note is that when I was talking about our framework before and I was saying that data about presence of opportunities for engagement, cultural participation or engagement itself, impacts and systems, is really important. As we're moving forward we know that those four domains aren't all the same, or they can't be treated in the same way. And what we're arriving at is that if you have better information about the presence of opportunities for engagement, actual participation and support systems, you get a better sense of what the potential contributions or impacts are. Because once you have that data, you're able to ask about some relationships that you couldn't ask about before.

So for example, if a community decides that opportunities for learning to make music are an important characteristic that they want to monitor over time and they have data about that and it's data that's reliably and consistently collected, you can start asking questions like, well what is the relationship between the rate of participation in people learning to make music and public safety? Or education? Or any number of other places where there may be intersection or correlation if you will.

Without that kind of information you can't ask those questions and you can't move away from only the qualitative approach to understanding impacts. That's not to say that the qualitative approach isn't important, because it is. But to be able to move from that into also using quantitative information to begin to test some assertions that a lot of people are working with, gives a lot of capacity to move in a more serious way into policy discussions where arts and culture are not taken that seriously right now.

So we're saying that information about those

three domains – presence, participation and support – can really help to fill out questions that lie in the impacts domain, or in the contributions domain.

So those are two steps forward. And to give you a sense of the kinds of data that we think is useful for measuring these various aspects of cultural vitality that I've been talking about, I'm going to go through some examples and then Joaquin is going to talk about how to address the data need and where is the information available, where is it not available and what do we know so far?

So in the presence domain, we think the following are the kinds of information that would be interesting or useful to collect. One is information about spaces or events where multiple forms of cultural engagement are possible. So if people are saying that it's not just about audience and consumer, but that there are all of these other ways that matter, we're interested in arts organizations, yes, but we need to know more about what kinds of arts organizations because they're not all the same. A large cultural institution has one focus, smaller community-based organizations have a different focus. And that's not to say better or worse but it does mean different, and you have to understand what the different contributions are in order to know what it is that you're actually measuring. So a blanket count of arts organizations won't cut it. We need better information about what kinds of organizations there are, and what potentially they're involved in.

Festivals, and what is the incidence of or the availability of festivals and the kinds of public events where from the research that we've been doing and other research around, clearly those are opportunities for multiple kinds of engagement. Different kinds of public presenting venues, which may or may not be culturally focused. And ethnic organizations, in our work we've found that a lot community activity around arts and culture happens in places that are ethnic organizations and ethnically based, so those are important venues. We also need to know about the nature of programming in the kinds of venues I've been discussing.

Another category in the presence area is, are there opportunities for arts instruction and a few ways of thinking about this are arts education in K through 12, art schools, both degree-granting institutions as well as those focused on avocational students, and arts programs in non-arts venues such as the YMCA's community centers. Again, the nature of programming in these types of venues.

Another area to look at is what are the retail opportunities in a community? Or what do they have access to? Places to purchase music and musical instruments for example. Or bookstores, art supply stores, places to purchase other kinds of materials and equipment. Does the community have those kinds of amenities? You know, a lot of times people think about, where is there a dry cleaners, is there a post office close by? But what kinds of amenities are there with regard to facilitating the ability to make something.

And another is arts giving programs. Are they available to people? If people wanted to support and give, what kind of programs can they hook into? And what do they target? To whom? What are they actually supporting?

In the participation domain, we think that the following are important categories to consider. Surely audience attendance, but at a range of arts venues. So large mainstream institutions, mid-sized and small cultural organizations, movie theatres and art houses, how are people participating here? And by discipline it would be important and interesting to know whether a community is participating heavily in music and/or visual arts, is it skewed in one way or another? I think those point to some investment issues as well.

Audience attendance at arts-related events in non-arts venues such as parks, churches, community organizations, schools, libraries, again, ethnic organizations in other public spaces. And then other kinds of audience or consumer measures that haven't necessarily been taken into consideration so far, like book sales, library circulation, music sales. Certain types of TV viewership and certain types of radio listening. Sales of art pieces in the disciplines not listed above. So again, expanding the notion of, just outside the non-profit sector, but to also understand, what are some of the purchasing patterns and how does this relate to better understanding participation.

Then measures of making art. Again this goes back to some of the similar measures I've mentioned before, but sales in art supply stores, sale of musical instruments, sales of electronic equipment such as cameras, recording equipment, editing equipment. Particularly with young people, it would be interesting to see how that fares . Sales of arts related how-to books. Web use for arts-related activity, what kind of sites are people going to in the creative realm. Library circulation of arts related how-to programming. So you get the idea that there lots

of ways to look into this. And then copyright activity is also an interesting place to look.

For systems of support, and again this is one of the areas that is least developed in the four domains that we've been talking about, especially if you're thinking about systems of support as more than just cultural organizations. But some notions that we've been toying with are the idea of pillar organizations. And those are organizations that, more than supporting one particular event or class of events, or regular mainstays of whatever arts-related activities are currently important to a community.

So for example in many communities you've got certain organizations that year after year are involved either in certain neighborhood festivals or neighborhood community-based art activities. Their partners may change over time, but they're the mainstay.

So when you're tying to get measures of systems, it's not any old arts organizations at all, that won't do. But getting a sense of what kinds of organizations are playing what kinds of roles in communities gives you a better sense of the support available there. And it's not necessarily only arts organizations, in some communities you might find that the pillar organization for cultural activities isn't an arts organization at all, it might be something else.

Another element of the system is certainly sustained giving to the arts and whether it's public or private. And again, not the sporadic one-shot deal, not that those aren't important contributions, but what is the sustained giving that makes certain kinds of activities possible.

Another piece is the number of artists. Who are the artists in the community and how many are there, and the systems that enable them to do their work? What kind of support can they rely on?

So that's some initial thinking about the kinds of measures that would be desirable. And I'm going to pass to Joaquin now to talk a bit about what we know in terms of the data that might be available, that is available or that potentially could be available with some investment.

HERRANZ: To begin with there were a few criteria that we had in trying to identify and develop these measures. Because it was embedded, it grew out of National Neighborhood Indicators project, what we were interested in was having data that would be fairly dynamic, very flexible. So allowing local policy groups, advocates to slice and dice the information, that was one criteria.

Another one was that the information be comparable. So it's not just about one place, but something that could be applied and developed across the country. Of course it had to be also developed over time. An indicator is really good and most useful as a trend, so you can get a sense about how things are moving up and down. So that sort of set the stage.

Now as we were developing this we looked at the history of social indicators in the country and we learned quite a bit. There are things that we take for granted now, as we mentioned, things like the Dow Jones, unemployment rate and all this. These were highly contested measures, fought vigorously at various levels, particularly at the turn of the century. And what we learned is it took a long time. And there was an institutional process to identify and develop these measures that now become the frame for how we understand society.

We look at developing these cultural vitality measures in a similar way. It's a long process, but the stakes are very high.

We came up with were a series of trade-offs basically, in looking at what was appropriate as information sources for these measures.

What we found out was, basically an indicator is a measure. So at the end of the day there is a number attached to it. But it is important to distinguish that as a measure, it's really a proxy. It's a surrogate for something. It indicates something. So not to get confused about what we're measuring, and what we're really talking about, the meaning behind the measure. And that's why we developed this cultural vitality framework, as a way to keep us grounded into what we are really talking about. So that is one important consideration.

That said, we need actual data points. What we found was that there are basically trade-offs in both indicator efforts at the national level and at the local level. One has to do with databases, regularly collected information. Now one of the advantages of things that are already collected, for example IRS records that tell a lot of information about arts organizations, is that they're systematic, you know it's been ongoing, we can use that, it's almost turnkey.

Now the problem is it's very limited. It misses the smaller organizations under $25,000 and has all the complex characteristics of organizations. And so what we found is that, to some degree local areas are developing their own databases around these arts organizations as a way of balancing and contextualizing these larger databases.

So those are the two main sources of data that we're finding. There are these large databases and there are also these ones that are being developed now. The trade-off of course is that at the local level, people are doing it for their purposes in that region, but they tend to be a little idiosyncratic, so that's one of the trade-offs.

The second major source of information is surveys. There are national surveys that are very promising, and help set a national frame, and are useful for a local area to look at their measures and contextualize it and compare across.

We think some of the most promising examples are local survey attempts. There are three that really stand out that we discussed in the monograph. Jacksonville, Florida is one, Boston, and then San Jose. What they've done is tried to take these very complex and nuanced ways of understanding cultural vitality and both administer surveys of organizations, arts and culture organizations, and ask them for examples like in San Jose, the extent that they partner with other social service or non-arts organizations. We think of it as a systemic indicator, to asking people about their participation in open door festivals. Again, to get out of the box on how we think about venues.

So very, very promising. Of course the big trade-off there is they tend to be highly specific, very particular to a local region, which is wonderful but it is problematic when we try to look at some cross-city, cross-region analysis.

Also there's a range of cost. There's resources involved. You can do some quick and dirty surveys, some online surveys for example that Boston's doing. Or they can be very, very expensive. And the challenge there is how do you sustain it? Now again one of the main criteria is a sustainable indicator.

So what we'll do in the next monograph is break these down, these trade-offs, and then talk about what we think are the next directions. At the same time, what we do is we come up with a three tier that we describe information. For people who are just ready to go, to jump out the gate and develop the indicators, we call these Tier B. Mostly reliant on existing databases, but understanding the limits of those databases, you can go out and start doing some comparable measures. And so we list out the sources and give some examples and also how to interpret some of those things.

At the same time we talk about these Tier B, which is the second level of available data. In many cases these are surveys, and they allow

people to go out and customize their information. There are some good examples, some good templates. We think that there's been really a surge in the last few years of these examples. And we think we're moving towards trying to identify some things that others can begin to regularize, so that we move towards some standardization. I think that's still a little way off, but the Tier B outlines the most promising kinds of measures.

And finally there's Tier C, and those require still considerable research and development. They are things like Dun and Bradstreet information on retail establishments. Now some of these national neighbor indicator partner cities have been exploring some of those things to look at economic activity. So they're pushing the envelope on trying to develop similar information for a local level, and again we think that's very promising. We'll specify some examples and do some blue-sky thinking as well.

Compared to the development of other social indicators, we think we're in the middle. And some of you who were at the morning session today, there's a lot of institutional forces collecting data as we move towards developing frameworks and making sense of that, we think we'll be moving towards these measures that because they're contextualized will allow us to discuss these things and they'll be indications, but again, it's not about what we're measuring, it's about the meaning behind the measure.

SHIGEKAWA: Thank you. Before we have some questions would you talk a little bit about scalability? About taking all these experiments to some kind of national scale potentially over the next five years?

JACKSON: I think there are a few ways to take that particular theme, and one I suppose is almost more philosophical. One of the contributions that we're making in this second piece is this notion of cultural vitality and defining it in a particular way so that individual measures are nested in a larger meaning.

When you talk about the meaning behind the measure, it's not just about audience counts or sales, but it's about that as a dimension of cultural vitality which is this larger thing.

Getting some traction with that particular philosophical umbrella, if you will, which is grounded in the research, so I shouldn't call it so much a philosophical umbrella, but it can be perceived that way, you're thinking about cultural vitality as a whole and if there is a critical mass of people who buy into that

interpretation, then the measures that follow are fitting into something that is greater.

On the methodological or data-specific tip, if you will, the ability to have less isolation and more collaboration among the various indicator initiatives that are underway, and I think through the Arts and Culture Indicators project there is some of that already, but we're hoping to expand the relationships among the various kinds of entities that are doing local work so that there is more capacity for comparability.

The trade-off is that on one hand because you have these disparate pieces working on their own, they're coming up with some pretty interesting and innovative things that they may not have come up with if they were all working together. The trade-off though is that there isn't a lot of consistency in terms of what the measures are. So as we move forward with the work, being able to temper that, so that the experimentation can continue, because there is still a lot of work to do, given all the information that is potentially desirable. There is also an opportunity for, where the data is already more or less available, consistent use of it across cities or communities, is an important piece as well.

SHIGEKAWA: So now we are at the question and answer part and comment part and critique part.

MORIARTY: You were talking about opportunities for generative as well as interpretive participation. Could you talk a little bit about what that means?

JACKSON: Something that I think came out of the ethnographic-based work is both an interest in being able to create new kinds of art or new kinds of creative expression, as well as being able to pass on whatever that canon is. If you think about a community and its cultural vitality or its cultural health, you have to think about roots and wings in a sense.

Is there an opportunity to draw from pre-existing expressions, traditions, and sustain those, as well as be able to create new kinds of expressions? That's an interesting way of thinking about community health. Does a community have the capacity to do both?

In a lot of communities, particularly communities of color and new immigrant communities, it's a very important question. When you have communities where there has been an interruption of cultural development, because either languages have been stripped or certain kinds of expression have not been encouraged or removed, it's something to consider, does a

community have that root and wing capacity? So that's one way of using that generative/interpretive language.

SHIGEKAWA: Would you all identify yourselves as you speak? That was Dr. Pia Moriarty and she is core to the Cultural Initiative Silicon Valley study and will be presenting twice later on in the life of this session.

AYERS: I'm Margaret Ayers from the Robert Sterling Clark Foundation. In listening to all of you my sense is that as you discuss community, you're really talking about community in the sense of place. One of the things that the Ford Foundation is interested in is the issue of censorship, and one of those things that we have followed over the years is the increase in fundamentalist religious artistic activity. Whether you look at the National Association of Religious Broadcasters and the role of the constituencies for the programs of these radio stations, or you look at the growth in religious recording companies, and records that if you weren't listening to the lyrics it would sound like a rock concert. But the growth of these very large religious concerts, the growth of religious recordings.

I wanted to know whether you in your interviewing and questioning, whether you did any interviewing of people who are connected to this primarily protestant fundamentalist religious artistic community? Whether you encountered any in the field out there?

OPDYCKE: It would not have been identified in our survey. It would certainly have been one of the things they might have been thinking of when they answered, but we wouldn't have known it.

JACKSON: I guess on this end, certainly in a lot of the ethnographic-based work that we did in communities, churches came up as important venues, parts of the support system, as well as places where people learn how to express. They didn't come up in the way that you are describing or characterizing them. I don't know if the folks that we talked with have connections to what you're describing, but it didn't come up as a strong vein in our particular work.

AYERS: Well, this is a very large community. I remember at one point I attended a meeting of the National Association of Religious Broadcasters. The number of religious broadcasters in this country has got to be in the millions. It's unbelievable! So I mean I just wondered if you had encountered that particular community. Thank you.

HARRIS: My name is Peggy Harris. I want to build on what she was saying. When you speak of what the community wants, is there an opportunity for its voice? If it is a community that has a strong fundamentalist voice, not necessarily in numbers but loudness or in power, is it possible to misread what the community wants? And then are there not some classes of individuals who don't speak up? That relates to, does the community have wings, because to speak of new things or speak of the unspeakable, is there a venue for that in the community? And to what degree does the community want to control that ability for the individual to have that mechanism for expression?

JACKSON: I'm trying to get clear on the question specifically.

HARRIS: The question is, when you speak of community, are you speaking very generically in broad strokes of community? And then how valid is that? If one were to take a look at the context of that community, who had loudest, strongest voices?

JACKSON: Joaquin, do you want to talk about the Boston example and their community vetting process? One way to address this is in the Arts and Culture Indicators project we have several affiliates, is what we call them. And these are people working at the local level to help push the envelope on any one of those domains that I've been talking about, or on the integration of arts and culture in the quality of life measurement systems.

And the Boston Community Building Network, based at the Boston Foundation, is one of the most active in our group in terms of trying to integrate arts and culture. And they had a community vetting process to get at these issues, that was actually quite a long-term thing.

HERRANZ: I think there are two responses to that question. One is, in Boston they had a whole process, citywide deliberative process involving residents and focus groups and seminars to develop the measures for a possible spectrum of sectors, so education, public safety, whatnot. They used the same process to come up with cultural vitality.

One of the things that emerged from that was some sensitivity to some of these issues, and consequently a desire to develop measures that would help them parse out, unpack some of that. Some of the measures, for example, they came up with, was the relative diversity on leadership of arts organizations in Boston. Again that's a move towards getting this idea. Another one is looking

at the percentage and distribution of ethnic associations to get this diversity issue.

They've also developed a matrix for themselves. It's sort of developmental, of more informal cultural artistic activity as it formalizes to institutions or even political influence, and administered what they call a cultural resources survey to organizations all over Boston, and it's online. They ask people to submit stuff, to start collecting some data points to get at it.

That's an example of an attempt to get at counterbalancing the limitations of the existing data set, which is just arts organizations which may lend themselves to interpretation. That's one generic way of interpreting what's going on in that community, and balancing it with the other contextual measures.

That is the first that comes to mind, it's an issue in some communities, some are more concerned about it than others. And I think that's reflected in what they consider as appropriate measures in that region.

SHIGEKAWA: It becomes an issue of what the root and branch energy is and how it's valued and shaped. So if the study defines branching as creating a creative space for a wide range of points of view, can flourish as being a value of branching because as culture attempts to express itself in its own terms, coming out of its own traditions, what are the barriers there and what are the possibilities as defined by the community itself?

So the question of how free the branching is which was your point, is key I think to the question that Peggy Harris is raising here. How do you capture the portrait of a community that is perhaps repressing artistic and creative expression? So that needs to be unpacked in the kind of looking at the value set.

Behind all of these are a set of assumptions and values which are transparent. You may choose to embrace those values or not. And one of the values is very strongly, it is a place-based strategy, and it's what is this neighborhood? Because this goes under the National Neighborhood Indicators project. So what is in this neighborhood, what are its assets, and how can they be recognized as assets? In an arts and culture environment, which has lived for 50 years counting other things and not necessarily the lived experience on the ground.

There's another connector here which I wish some of you would also address because you are closer to it than I am, which is this push that's happening now to look at the creative

sector, the creative sector broadening, and the assets in a community that make a city creative, a neighborhood creative, an area creative. And that's not just traditional artists but a wide range of players, and looking at that as an economic driver.

So for example earlier on folks were talking about the center for arts and culture. They're involved in a conversation now with the Bureau of Economic Indicators. And the bureau is trying to figure out how to measure the creative sector. They have no metrics for that. They understand that the next economy may perhaps be the creative economy, how do they think about that sector.

There are now tourism indicators. Twenty-five years ago there wasn't tourism. There was airplanes, there was hotels, but there wasn't something called tourism as something that they tracked and pulled data from all the federal sources on.

Now they're looking at the creative sector and it's a huge challenge. How do you define it? Who's in it? It includes the profits, the not-for-profit and the intermediate organizations. And cities and mayors, Boston in particular keeps coming up, Chicago is another one, are looking at this as a way to think about city planning. So that's another area where this work can have traction. Yes?

MORISETTE: This is related to what you were just saying. I'm Margaret Morisette, the Community Institute for the Arts, and I'm thinking, is anyone talking what exactly this community means? The people who move into it, the people who move out of it, the people who stay in the community, can you filter in any of these emerging indicators, the people who move from New York to Boston? Or choose to move to Chapel Hill or Winston Salem, moving in and out of communities or neighborhoods seems to be important when you think about some of the issues that you're raising about the choice of a community.

HERRANZ: One thing that we try to distinguish in our own work is the development of measures as indicators and then a research agenda. And then there is of course some blurring in the middle. So there are in a lot of communities a lot of interest and understanding, immigration, particularly those on the East Coast in the last ten years it's really exploded in trying to get at that.

So that's I think a place where surveys might help. And also just contextual understanding and research. Again to deepen the meaning so that as we have measures, you can make sense of it. I'm on this measure track right now in terms of my assignment for this panel.

I would say there aren't, again like in Boston trying to get the number ethnic associations is one. I know at a policy level there is quite a bit of interest in terms of understanding what is happening with artist migration, is another way of looking at that. So they're competing now, trying to attract artists, developing art districts.

So there's a lot of interesting research questions, I think, related to this stuff to try to get at. But in terms of our specific work I can't think of a measure.

SHIGEKAWA: John, you might want to speak to that also. Sandra?

OPDYCKE: I wanted to go back to what you said about the economic side because being based near New York, of course art has always been big business in New York. But I think there's the whole idea of the arts workforce and what that means. The bigger that is in a city, the more you really need to think about the fact that these people have no health insurance, that a lot of people do it until they're 30 and then they simply can't live on what they make and then what happens to them?

So that there's that whole economic side. One is the dollars that they bring in. But there's also, what happens to the artist as economic player and how does that go? And what role does a community take in that? Do they have any obligation, if these are the people that are bringing in all the tourists, do they have economic obligations to them, is there any kind of fair wage? Or any of those issues as well.

AUDIENCE: I just wanted to underline what Maria was saying about the need for consistency in follow-through over time. Because especially on this issue of what do we mean when we say "community" or even more presumptuously "the community," what we're finding in Silicon Valley is that we're living in a world that is very mobile, where the boundaries are very permeable, where community constellations are shifting and changing. Somebody who comes in as a new immigrant relating to their own group, quickly is making alliances across other groups.

Sometimes because of the kind of threats and pressures of the recent political situation, all of the sudden we have people from the Japanese American Museum inviting folks from the local Mosque to talk about internment. And last weekend they had a major conference at the San Jose Museum of Art in which people who had been interned in camps during World War II were speaking with Chinese folks who had been

interned on the island and carved poetry into the walls of the dorms there.

So there's all kinds of new constellations that are happening. And in order not to redefine communities, you're really going to have to keep up over time with what's actually happening because there is lots of wings happening.

SHIGEKAWA: One of the questions is, Where is the administrative data that tells us the ebb and flow of people? Where is it housed? Is it at the county level, the state level? Is it only just every ten years? How do we find out? That was your question, where is the administrative data housed that can help us understand the ways things are changing. Does anybody know the answer to that?

OPDYCKE: Well the American Community Survey helps some, because this is a rolling kind of census thing that gets you at least some patterns. I don't think it would say downtown…

AUDIENCE: What's it called?

OPDYCKE: American Community Survey. And I don't think that will say, "Here's what's happening in downtown Oakland." But it will certainly say, more people are moving. You'll get at least some patterns and some snapshots you didn't used to get.

But I think that would be very hard still to apply in, especially smaller communities.

HERRANZ: I can tell you that in Oakland , one way we tried to get at that was using school information. So every year you could find out for children, for students, their country of origin, the country of origin of their parents, and their primary language at home. And year by year you could, if you mapped it in Oakland, see how it moved and shifted.

JACKSON: If I could just add to this notion of defining community, in our experience I think there is at least two points where it makes sense to really pay attention. And one is the first input point. We've been talking about a planning process, which is not the same thing as a statistical analysis of a community.

You are trying in that deliberative process to get people to participate in civic discourse about, what do they want their community to look like, how do they want to shape it, what are the things that matter to them? And the kinds of engagement strategies or outreach processes that that activity dictates, it suffers from all of

the limitations that any planning process does, whether it's inclusive enough or not.

So that's one input point to pay attention to, which I think is a bit different but related to the notion of consistency in trying to get a better sense of who is actually in the geographic area that we're concerned with, over time.

SHIGEKAWA: The other that's happening is because of the administrative data sets, many are being transferred into GIS, into sectors of community. It is becoming increasingly possible to layer administrative data over a certain neighborhood or a certain area, and look at juvenile justice data, education data, other data, and ask a series of basically data mining questions that can end up with an arts and cultural result.

The question is, where's the funding driver for that? How are we going to make that happen? There are some initiatives out there. Those folks aren't here today, they're from housing and other places in the community development world. And that actually speaks to an interesting conversation maybe we should have next year, bringing together folks from community development and folks from the arts and culture sector, and the creative sector planning folks, to talk about if this stuff has any legs for the future for our folks.

BILL AGUADO: Okay, my name is Bill Aguado. Thirty years ago I was involved with a couple of research studies at Fordham at Institute for Social Research. I don't know if they exist anymore. I was always trying to identify what our community is, who are members of the community.

I took one component of that study which was a structural analysis of a community, trying to get a picture of a community. And I hired a couple of researchers and we identified a ten block radius of this community in the South Bronx. And what we wanted to find out is, who are the information agents? What are the local and very transient community structures that exist? What may exist today, may not exist tomorrow.

So we decided to look at various open spaces, meeting places, store fronts, businesses where people may congregate at any given time. And beyond the obvious hair salons and laundromats and bodegas, which all are not primary information agents for us to disseminate information to the community, not always to receive information from the community. We also found storefront churches, basements, parks,

abandoned buildings, abandoned storefronts. You had different communities of young people and adults who are looking for ways to create a home for themselves. In many of them there are some cultural activities or some manifestations of cultural activities.

As we started to track several of the young people and young adults, people in their mid 20s with families, we found that they had several other communities that they identified with. So what was consistent in a public park, with hanging out in the evening, was not necessarily consistent with hanging out in a church group, or was not necessarily consistent with hanging out in a store front.

And what it's given us is a picture of what that community is, what the vitality is, who the agents are and how you translate information and turn this information and provide it to a lot of our cultural groups, to begin to adapt what they're doing in terms of the agents that exist within the communities.

One thing that came up constantly was the notion of class, class within the community. Or why am I not going to a museum or a performing center? Is it because I'm not wanted, that's not my home? Yet they'll go home and enjoy the very same things. How do we build that bridge? How do we as cultural workers, cultural activists, turn this around and say, "This is your home"?

And it's a mindset that we have found that a lot of cultural organizations have to learn to not define what they mean by the community of the arts, but to learn from their community to begin to define what they need and to become a composite of what the priorities of the cultural organization are, as well as the priorities of the community at large.

And this is, what's going on is a short term survey. It's a picture.

OPDYCKE: One of the subtexts of what you're talking about makes me think, we really have not talked so much about architecture and space, physical space and the role that that plays in all of this. It seems so clear from what you say that one of the things that has to happen is that the culture has to come to them, it can't always be that they have to go there. And that wherever they gather there have to be opportunities so that it isn't always that you grit your teeth and go through the door of the Metropolitan Opera House.

In some other work that I've done I've looked a lot at public space and I think that that is in some ways an endangered species in a lot of

communities around the country now, with more cars and more malls and more sorting out by economic order. The chance to brush shoulders with strangers and to have some common experience with them is not so common. And you rent the video instead of going to the movie theater, and you watch the ballgame at home instead of going to the game and so on. I think if we're going to add community development, people, let's really think about architecture and urban planning and that kind of thing also.

JACKSON: I think you opened a can of worms, when you talk about the role of institutions and how do you make bridges and the relevance issue. I think, and we're still working on this concept, but this notion of a pillar organization or a pillar entity which by definition as we're defining it, is an entity that is critical to the system of support and it is so because it is making possible the various dimensions of cultural vitality.

So it's not just serving as a presenting venue, but it has to reach into other spheres, whether it is community development or social services. It's a consistent entity that partners with various agencies, and it's concerned with a broad definition of participation, not just consumer or audience, and in thinking about what are the pillar institutions in a particular community, I think it starts to get at some of your point, the relevance issue, particularly if this notion of cultural vitality more broadly defined is taken seriously.

SHIGEKAWA: Okay go ahead Kelly.

KELLY: I have a big question and then a more specific question. So I'm going to toss the big one there, but maybe you'll answer it via the more specific one.

One of the things that I am thinking about as I hear about this research is, what's your vision of how policy makers would ideally use this type of information, and how can we at a policy level, advance toward cultural vitality in this country?

It strikes me that the three of you, having spent time with the data, having spent time with the mainstays, on Main Street, in living rooms, having worked through both the very theoretical and the very experiential aspects of this, you three may have some specific impression or notions or idea about what are the policy levers for making that happen. I'd like to hear a little bit of brainstorming.

What are the policy levers that open up opportunity? What are the policy levers that bring about the type of participation as it's being

redefined through this research? What are the policy levers that can effectively build the types of support systems as we're better understanding them through your research?

I'm just trying to stretch not only the definitions of what we're counting, but also to stretch our minds in terms of what we do with that information on the backend. So can you spin on that a little bit?

JACKSON: Sure. A premise in the ACI project from the very beginning has been… Again the grant came to us from the then Arts and Culture Division at Rockefeller, but we didn't start with it from an arts and culture perspective. The question was about how can inclusion of arts and culture facilitate a more comprehensive and useful understanding of community conditions and dynamics.

So to that end our inquiry about arts and culture wasn't only within the cultural bubble, but it was from the very beginning trying to understand, how does this matter in a broader realm? How does it connect to these various other things that people clearly care about, like education, like community development, economic development, etc.?

The extent that the kinds of activities and resources that we are trying to better document and monitor over time, to the extent that they're understood not only as exclusively useful to the cultural sector, but also to these other things, and we're not making it up, there are connections, to the extent that those connections can be better articulated and documented, I think that's a whole bunch of policy levers. Because then people concerned with education will see arts and culture as a dimension of that. Or people concerned with economic development will see arts and culture as a dimension of that. So the batches of stakeholders gets more diversified in a sense.

But it isn't until those connections are more clearly articulated and better documented that that kind of policy discussion can have real traction in a way that's not marginal.

HERRANZ: Can I just tell a brief story to illustrate this? Again, in Boston, when we approached them in I think 1999, when they were nearly done with developing their measures across all these other sectors, you know, education, public safety, there was nothing for arts and culture. As we work with them, they developed these measures, some of them were placeholders, it got in the first report.

A lot has changed in a few years, as many of you know, about how creativity is contextualized now. In their most recent report that was published this year, the whole theme of the report is around creativity and making Boston competitive. So regardless of where you stand on Richard Florida's work, it's really been a powerful lever, talk about a policy way of changing how people think about this.

So now this particular section in Boston's indicator report, it's their second report now and they've got trend data. It's a centerpiece on creativity and the value of it. This has happened not only at the local level and the regional level but at the state level. So Massachusetts has recently developed a creativity council tied to the governor's office to look at all the various ways that creative industries and arts and culture can lead to make the state competitive.

So there are clearly policy discussions happening. There are clearly institutions being experimented with and implemented and developed as we speak. The question now is how to maintain an arts and culture connection to that so we don't lose it and have it be subsumed. Tat's one of the policy challenges right now in how we think about the measures and the meaning behind the measures.

JACKSON: Just to piggyback on that, it's important in thinking about policy levers to think about – and this is the wrong language but this is the best I can do right now – short-term and long-term levers. And that's not to say that the interest in creativity as it's gotten into the water with the Florida work and other work, isn't necessarily a long-term thing.

But other issues like education, like housing, like economic development, those aren't going away. They've been around a long time. So cultivating the ability to articulate those connections I think is as important as is being able to recognize opportunities that are either emerging and potentially are long-term or even short-term opportunities. So I think it's important to know that there's a couple of different kinds of levers to consider.

OPDYCKE: One more thing. Those other sectors are also being starved these days. And we really do have to confront the fact that there is a starved public sector and that that is larger problem and that as long as we're simply trying to negotiate with other sectors to fight for this diminishing pie, it really is a losing proposition.

The larger vision of a flourishing public welfare in the broadest sense really has to be there

because all the rest really depends on that. As long as that is just narrowing and narrowing and narrowing, it's harder and harder to find our own place in it.

AUDIENCE: Actually this anticipates my own question. The pragmatist in me makes me say, what is all this for? And how do we use this information? And it's actually perhaps more of a question maybe for Joan or Michael or Miriam, I mean people who are funding these studies.

I know a lot of people do not know how to use this data. They get it and they don't know how to make sense of it and how to make it really effective as an advocacy tool for themselves at the local level, the regional level, to argue against the privatization of space, to argue for more resources for underserved populations.

I mention some of this research to people in my field, and their eyes just glaze over. They know it's important, but they don't know how to use it.

SHIGEKAWA: That's people in the arts and culture field.

OPDYCKE: There needs to be intermediaries who can help at the civic level, the neighborhood level, to translate this. So for example, I'll give you a fantasy. It's a fantasy because there are no facts attached to it at the moment.

But there are various national data sets which are being mapped as interactive sites, including Fannie Mae's Knowledge Quest, which has a powerful server and is bringing data sets and giving communities the opportunity to look at a series of data sets and ask about their own neighborhood. That was what I was talking about before.

So you can look at a number of situations in your own community on this Fannie Mae site. They're putting up data from all kinds of neighborhoods. Suppose we did come to a definition of cultural vitality? Suppose we were able to chart and map that and get that up on a national data set that anyone could have access to? Then in a way, the actual software program does a lot of, a lot of the things that you're talking about.

Because it's hard to crunch those numbers, you can't do it by yourself when you're running an arts organization. So there has to be intermediary capacity in some way, within the city, within the city cultural agencies, within neighborhood and ethnic groups, to do that. It would have been very far-fetched 15 years ago. It's not so far-fetched now. Because there are ways of pumping in the data and asking it questions.

First we have to figure out if we can create and defend a cultural vitality measurement at all that's sturdy and that cuts across class, that cuts across neighborhood. And then we have to see if we can get data into it that will stand up, that's pulled from not only the arts and culture data but from other administrative data, I would assume. And that's a fairly sophisticated and tough thing to do.

So you are right that the arts organizations all by themselves are going to be able to some, using CPANDA and others, to do some in-depth research let's say on dance and the state of dance and dance funding. But to get to this level is going to require places like the Urban Institute. Or Lester Salamon's thing at Johns Hopkins, or other initiatives to be funded to help conceptualize the templates, so that people can do it easily and reasonably financially. Otherwise we're going down a road that we won't be able to sustain.

So I think it's a huge challenge. But we have to be able to make the policy case somehow.

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