

Cultural capital and the value of taking part in arts and culture

Dr Kerry Wilson, ICC Head of Research, Liverpool John Moores University

Sacred Heart Catholic College, Crosby: VI Form IAG Session

10.30am Monday 10th February 2020

Today's IAG session

- Defining cultural capital
- Introducing research at the Institute of Cultural Capital
- Understanding the value of arts and culture
- Taking part in the Liverpool City Region

What do we mean by 'cultural capital'?

- Academically speaking, the concept is most readily associated with French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002).
- Refers to the cultural knowledge and assets that we accumulate and how these are used as a social relation to confer power and status.
- Our accumulated cultural capital, according to Bourdieu's theory, includes:
 - **Embodied cultural capital** – language; social characteristics; cultural traditions and heritage.
 - **Objectified cultural capital** – property or [physical] cultural assets with economic value.
 - **Institutionalised cultural capital** – formally recognised cultural assets including academic education; professional qualifications.
- Published in 1980s and 'of its time' in privileging some cultures over others (e.g. the 'high arts') in its representations of social mobility and educational inequalities.



Introducing the Institute of Cultural Capital

- Collaboration between University of Liverpool (UoL) and Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU), launched in 2010.
- Universities had collaborated on large-scale evaluation of Liverpool's year as European Capital of Culture 2008 – *Impacts 08*
 - The ICC formed as legacy project of '08 in and of itself
 - Broadly aiming to be leading research centre on social and economic impact of arts and culture
 - Capitalising on Liverpool location as a vanguard 'cultural city'
- Using 'cultural capital' in our title is a play on words because of Capital of Culture connection. Interested in the **value of arts and culture to people and communities** but not conforming to ideas of power and status.

Researching the impact of Liverpool 08

- The first [substantive evaluation](#), both in terms of complexity and scale, of any European Capital of Culture (ECoC)
- Significant financial investment from city council, facilitated long-term, mixed-method collaborative research programme, exploring 'impact' from multiple perspectives (2005-10)



Impacts 08 'headline' findings

- Liverpool's year as ECoC regarded as most successful to date, according to research headlines:
 - £130m income over 6 years
 - 9.7m additional visits to Liverpool in 2008
 - 10% rise in arts audiences each year 2006-08
 - Positive press coverage and enhanced media 'city image'
 - Enhanced partnership working and ongoing cultural strategy and investment
- Important to note: **not achieved in complete (attributable) isolation**, but in parallel with other developments such as Liverpool 1; bid based on existing cultural infrastructure, and legacy of 20+ years of European investment (e.g. Albert Dock as an earlier, hugely successful regeneration programme).

([Garcia et al, 2010](#))

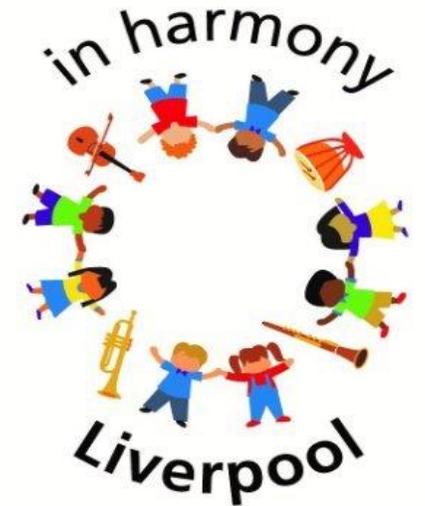


Developing the institute's research agenda

- Part of the ICC's remit in 2010 was to widen its research focus to include:
 - Different forms of arts and culture;
 - Responses to and engagement with cross-government **public policy** agendas;
 - Collaborations with – and the added value generated for – other public services and professional organisations/sectors;
 - With a particular interest in mental **health and wellbeing** outcomes.
- Other signature projects include:
 - Research on the health benefits of **arts on prescription**
 - Research on cultural work in **criminal justice** settings (e.g. prison libraries)
 - Research on the In Harmony **music education** project in West Everton with the **Royal Liverpool Philharmonic**
 - Research on the value of **museums** in **dementia care** with **National Museums Liverpool**

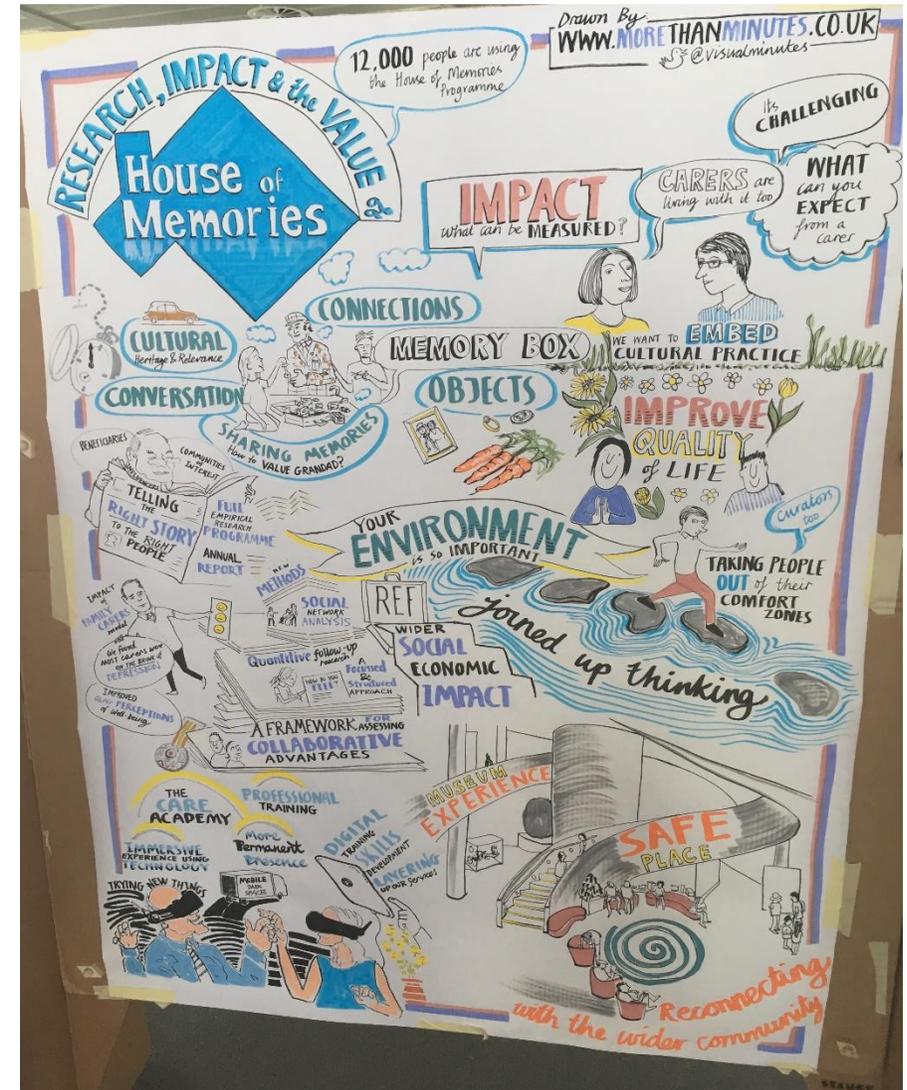
In Harmony Liverpool Research Network

- Inspired by the Venezuelan El Sistema initiative, In Harmony Liverpool uses the symphony orchestra as a means of engaging young children (aged 4 years upwards) in music education and performance.
- Evaluation of the programme consistently suggests:
 - Improved educational performance of participating children across different subjects.
 - Improvements in participating children's confidence, self-esteem and participation in school life.
 - Wider benefits to the community and family relationships including local pride and parents/carers' engagement with child's education.
- Celebrated its [10 year anniversary](#) in 2019.



Crossing Boundaries: the value of museums in dementia care

- Evaluation of different models of the programme has consistently shown positive outcomes for participating carers, including:
 - improvements in their subjective wellbeing;
 - improved awareness and understanding of dementia and its implications;
 - empathic skills development in person-centred care;
 - and renewed confidence in trying alternative, creative approaches to living well with dementia.
- It has also been possible to evidence the cumulative social value of the programme and the 'cost benefit' afforded to health commissioners, using social return on investment (SROI) analysis.



New research on Liverpool City Region Borough(s) of Culture programme

- The Liverpool City Region (LCR) Combined Authority launched the Borough of Culture programme in March 2018 as part of the LCR's [Culture and Creativity Strategy](#).
- Title is awarded on a rotational basis every year, with each BoC tasked with creating its own themed programme of cultural and creative events, to include the following five key elements:
 1. Children and young people: accessing, enjoying, learning through culture and creative engagement, developing skills and talents.
 2. Positive outcomes: wellbeing, health, education, cohesion and future world of work.
 3. Communities: increasing opportunities for participation and involvement.
 4. Distinctiveness of place: promoting the creative and cultural offer to local people and visitors.
 5. Infrastructure and legacy.
- ICC helping each borough to evaluate the programme, according to these core objectives, from February 2020.



Why do we need to understand the value of arts and culture?

- **Political reasons**

- If we are to continue to have publically subsidised arts and culture, Government needs to understand the value that is generated for society as a whole and the relative return on investment. This has been especially true in recent years for local government with regards to cuts in spending (austerity measures).

- **Individual reasons**

- Important for us to understand if and how participating in arts and culture can help us to feel happier, healthier, more confident and connected.

- **Ethical reasons**

- If this is true, we need to understand who is taking part in (and benefiting from) arts and culture and ensure that opportunities to engage are open and accessible to everyone.

- **Collective reasons**

- Only then can we understand how arts and culture can help us to build and support stronger, healthier and more resilient communities.

Taking part in the Liverpool City Region

Examples of opportunities to volunteer and learning more about our FREE cultural assets, including:

- The Reader Organisation and Reader Leaders
- Open Culture and Liverpool LightNight

The Reader Organisation and Reader Leaders

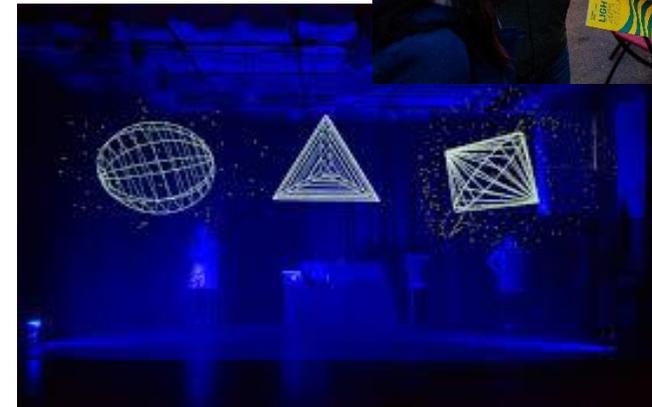
- The Reader is based at Calderstones Mansion in South Liverpool.
- National charity that runs shared reading grouping in different community settings.
- Strong research evidence base on the value of reading aloud together for health and wellbeing of participants.
- You can [volunteer](#) to run reading groups (or other volunteering roles) with full training and ongoing support.



Open Culture and Liverpool LightNight

- [Open Culture](#) is a grassroots arts agency based in Liverpool.
- LightNight is an annual Open Culture event, whereby arts organisations and other venues run a programme of 'late night' performances and activities.
- LightNight volunteers work on individual events, serve as front-of-house for audiences, sell merchandise and help gather information to evaluate the festival. Click [here](#) for more information on getting involved.

OPEN CULTURE



Important things to remember...

- Our **public libraries** are FREE to access and will often have a range of arts/cultural events taking place with opportunities to volunteer.
- Liverpool's impressive range of national **museums** are also free to access.
- Crosby's *Another Place* is one of the most visited/treasured cultural assets in the region – **public art** an important asset for local identity and pride.
- See what Sefton 2020 has to offer and celebrate being part of the current Borough of Culture. 😊

Thanks and any questions?

- www.iccliverpool.ac.uk
- K.m.Wilson@ljmu.ac.uk

