



The Orchestra, the Community and Cultural Value

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A report on the *In Harmony Liverpool Research Network* led by the Institute of Cultural Capital in association with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic

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1 INTRODUCTION

The In Harmony Liverpool Research Network brought together an international community of interest to consider and debate the impact and value of the In Harmony Liverpool¹ programme, led by the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic (RLP). 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, adopting the Sistema philosophy of working with children from the most deprived parts of the country. Launched in 2009 and now one of seven programmes supported by the charity In Harmony Sistema England, In Harmony Liverpool has become an embedded feature of cultural life in Liverpool's West Everton community.

The network is led by Kerry Wilson² (Principal Investigator), Head of Research at the Institute of Cultural Capital and is funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) in the UK as part of the cross-council Connected Communities³ programme. Its formation was prompted and inspired by the commissioned evaluation⁴ of In Harmony Liverpool (2009-12), which has consistently indicated a range of positive impacts upon participating children, their families and the West Everton community, and made a number of operational and strategic recommendations regarding the programme's on-going effectiveness. The network was convened to begin to consider in more critical depth emerging ideas concerning the potential long-term social and economic value of In Harmony Liverpool, which have been organised using three distinct but inter-related research themes. These include:

- Cultural Capital in the Community
- Healthy Communities
- Music Education and Impact

Between March and May 2013, the network participated in three research workshops (one per theme) to explore and debate both evaluation findings, and related interests within the context of existing interdisciplinary research. Workshop participants included academic colleagues from a range of disciplines, including centres for research on Socio-Cultural Change (University of Manchester); Applied Educational Research (University of Strathclyde); and Health Inequalities (University of Liverpool). Other participants have included Sistema experts from New England Conservatory, Boston and In Harmony Sistema England programmes; local authority and health trusts; and key In Harmony Liverpool representatives including the RLP education team and the programme's independent evaluators. The report that follows presents a summary of the network's activities, including a final conference held on Wednesday 17th July 2013 – *The Orchestra, the Community and Cultural Value* – where ideas emerging from workshop discussions were shared with an extended audience. The network has revealed considerable potential for a fascinating, longitudinal programme of research that considers the true, nuanced, causal impact and cultural value of In Harmony Liverpool as the programme progresses.

¹ For more information on In Harmony Liverpool, please see attached factsheet (appendix 1) or visit:

<http://www.liverpoolphil.com/inharmony>

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³ For more information on Connected Communities please see: <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/Funding-Opportunities/Research-funding/Connected-Communities/Pages/Connected-Communities.aspx>

⁴ Available from: <http://inharmonyresearch.net/wp/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/In-Harmony-Liverpool-Year-3-Interim-Report-March-2012.pdf>

2 CULTURAL CAPITAL IN THE COMMUNITY

During its first research workshop held in March 2013, the network discussed the theme of cultural capital in the community⁵. Increased access and openness to new cultural activities and opportunities (for the whole community) is described as a positive outcome in the most recent full In Harmony Liverpool (hereafter IHL) evaluation report (Burns and Bewick, 2012). These include for example evidence of increased community participation in events and performances at Philharmonic Hall, indicated by postcode box office data (pp. 59). The report goes on to recommend that consistent effort is made as the programme progresses to improve and enhance community participation, with initiatives and activities including the formation of a community choir. Cultural capital as a desired outcome of IHL was downplayed however in the evaluation team's presentation during the workshop, which prioritised social outcomes and the value of *social* capital. The evaluators explained that IHL is primarily regarded (and subsequently evaluated) as a social programme, and indicated that musical prowess and ability for example are not prioritised as part of the evaluation⁶. The evaluation team helpfully framed this within the context of established theories of cultural capital, including 'dimensions of cultural impact' (Pierre Bourdieu's embodied, objectified and institutionalised dimensions as defined in *The Forms of Capital*, 1986), indicating that these "must be correlated with the social capital (networks, relationships and resources) being developed within the various communities (*fields*) at play".

This creates some epistemological challenges – and therefore research opportunities – linked to the idea and practice of IHL being a social project that uses a cultural intervention as a means rather than an end. This was especially problematic for some participants: it raises questions on the significance of the *cultural* intervention if purely designed to fulfil social objectives, including would any other type of intervention requiring less unique professional commitment have the same impact? There are potentially risks involved and missed learning opportunities if not fully considering the cultural impact – particularly in terms of musical and artistic capacity - of a major strategic music education intervention. Other implications of IHL as a social mission were discussed within the context of previous research on El Sistema, and on cultural capital from sociological and educational perspectives, following three inspiring and provocative presentations from our guest speakers.

Dr Geoff Baker (Research Associate, Faculty of Music, University of Oxford and Reader in Musicology and Ethnomusicology, Department of Music, Royal Holloway, University of London) gave an illuminating talk on the culture of El Sistema based solely on his fieldwork in Venezuela. With his research⁷ Geoff calls into critical question some of the cultural assumptions made about Sistema and its social impact, in both socio-political and artistic contexts. Social inclusion is often the political watchword associated with the movement, but this is narrowly defined and is yet to be systematically proven. The political associations and rhetoric around Sistema in Venezuela, led by its founder Jose Antonio Abreu, have seemingly had chameleon-like qualities, starting with strong neo-

⁵ For a full review of the Cultural Capital in the Community research workshop please see: http://inharmonyresearch.net/?page_id=128

⁶ It should be noted that some commentary on musical progression is included in the evaluation report (e.g. the progression of four randomly selected 'case study' children using a measure designed by RLP, pp. 28-30; qualitative evidence on the musical progression and maturity of one member of West Everton Super Strings, pp. 35) To date there has been no correlation between musical progression and other variables used in the evaluation.

⁷ For more information please see: <http://geoffbakermusic.wordpress.com/el-sistema-the-system/>

liberal, right-wing and essentially capitalist connotations to the more socialist utopian ideals associated with the movement today, and appropriated in Venezuela in the Chavez era from 1996 onwards.

In an artistic capacity, Baker highlights the tensions between the orchestra as a metaphor in Sistema discourse and as a cultural reality. Drawing upon Max Weber's classical organizational theory and Spitzer and Zaslav's *Birth of the Orchestra* (2005), the orchestra is described as complex, competitive, stratified and dysfunctional; autocratic and elite. Whereas Sistema and now IHL suggest that the 'orchestra as community' model creates an equal and equitable learning environment, traditionally the orchestra has a much more problematic, hierarchical value system. Similarly in Baker's view the Sistema model presents other elitist artistic challenges – its focus on classical (or more accurately orchestral) music excludes other musical forms and traditions which may be of equal or more cultural value to participating children and communities. His suggested approach to researching the 'cultural capital' impacts of IHL subsequently focussed on the role of the orchestra, its comparative value to other musical forms, and implied capitalist ideologies – encouraging 'disciplined and productive subjects' – as compared to the social revolutionary model presented by Sistema. Citing Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1996), an approach that considers communities' own cultural capital and musical tastes to have the same value was recommended.

Building upon these recommendations, Dr Andy Miles (Reader in Sociology, ESRC Centre for Research on Socio-Cultural Change, University of Manchester) discussed his research on existing forms of cultural capital in 'excluded' communities, and within the context of the structural governance of culture. Starting with Bourdieu's premise that cultural tastes are organised by social class (2010), many such assumptions ignore other relevant variables such as age and 'life-course' influences. The concept of 'omnivourness' was introduced to the group as a prominent feature of British cultural capital, reflecting the fact that people have varied cultural tastes, the capacity to sample and enjoy different cultural activities and take equal satisfaction from them. Cultural policy however in recent years has focused on disengagement – or non-participation in organised culture - as a social problem, particularly in relation to New Labour's social inclusion objectives. Referring to research undertaken with communities in Manchester that would be politically defined as culturally excluded, Andy described a number of 'everyday' community-based cultural practices that go beyond the ordinary (e.g. becoming a self-taught, enthusiastic and proficient cook after being inspired by TV cookery programme) and forms of 'ghostly participation' involving self-motivated activities undertaken in own time and outside formal structures.

Miles described "vibrant, vernacular" community-based cultures reminiscent of Raymond Williams' thesis on 'culture as a way of life' (1983). Cultural policy however tends to disregard the 'everyday', focusing instead on psychological barriers to full participation in organised culture (e.g. lack of confidence in formal institutions and perceived 'not for me' attitudinal barriers). Real studies of cultural participation and capital need to be located spatially as well as structurally: this becomes a more challenging social question when cultural capital is continually associated with life improvement, and purposeful interventions seek to extract participation from communities and conform to middle class values. IHL presents an alternative model, in being an immersive community-based intervention using 'legitimate' cultural forms. The network was reminded however that interventions like IHL and El Sistema do not exist in cultural isolation, but rather

complement existing forms of community-based cultural capital. Previous discussions between members of the network's Steering Group for example have reflected upon the history of music making in traditional working class communities such as West Everton, where older generations will have been proficient musicians (e.g. pianists) but rarely classically trained.

Various sociological challenges in researching cultural capital as an outcome of IHL were discussed; both in its own right and when articulated as enhanced social capital through cultural participation and engagement. These included the conventional relationship between cultural capital, interventions with a social purpose and socio-economic mobility. Alastair Wilson (Senior Research Fellow, Applied Educational Research Centre, University of Strathclyde) gave an example of how cultural capital is being used within a purposeful 'life improvement' context with the Intergenerational Mentoring Programme, led by the University of Strathclyde. The programme raises lots of interesting questions on the ethics of social mobility, cultural capital and educational inequality. The mentoring scheme provides one-to-one guidance from retired, professional university alumni for young people in disadvantaged communities in Glasgow, who show academic promise but have relatively little social and cultural capital, or immediate peer support. The aim is to support identified young people into higher education and improve their chances of entering the professions.

Wilson spoke of the inherent 'Eliza Doolittle' characteristics of the programme and the challenges in creating a level social and cultural playing field between mentees and pupils from achieving schools. Where extra-curricular activities such as volunteer work and Duke of Edinburgh awards may be the norm for the latter, filling such gaps for mentees aiming to become first-generation university students has many cultural implications. Theories of global low self-esteem fail to rationalise cultural and educational deficits amongst the young people involved with the scheme, who are all perfectly confident in their 'own' surroundings. They subsequently have to be re-moulded and 'forced through the doors' of professional career routes. As the original RLP application for pilot project status included 'increases in take up of Further and Higher Education by people from West Everton' as a stated objective (Burns and Bewick, pp. 13), aspirations for the life trajectories of participating children and families need to be carefully considered and managed.

In this context, there is a fundamental question of community cohesion or fragmentation that should be considered in light of a long tradition of 'betterment' and enhanced entitlement within the working classes. Is the overarching ideology of IHL and El Sistema to improve chances for individuals or to improve the 'equality of condition' in communities themselves? If the former, the sociological implications of this should still be considered, i.e. what happens to communities when individual success stories (and cultural capital) leave? What is the wider social research project beyond evaluating IHL on linear input/output terms? The construction of community here is also important – Wilson commented that many of the Strathclyde mentees do not aspire to leave their communities for reasons of personal identity and security. The evaluation team and In Harmony Sistema England colleagues closed the discussion by stating that the programme is not about fuelling individual ambition, but involves a pragmatic approach to cultural capital, that is respectful of ingrained, traditional values but seeks to empower communities to "aspire" beyond current limits.

There is a growing appetite within the cultural policy research community to reframe this particular discourse beyond established, Bourdieuan paradigms of individual cultural capital and socio-

economic status, and build a more pertinent understanding of collective, contemporary cultural capital and its relative value. This is driven by a succession of recent cultural policy initiatives in the UK specifically that were driven by an explicit notion of increased access, inclusion and engagement within the 'legitimate' arts (see 'contemporary cultural value in the UK' chapter below), alongside a desire for a greater acknowledgement and understanding of existing and different forms of community cultural heritage, identities, production and practices. This appetite is represented by projects and initiatives such as the Stratification & Culture Research Network⁸ led by leading sociologists at the London School of Economics, City University London, University of York and University of Manchester. Other examples include major Connected Communities projects considering the relationship between communities and the creative economy, including Understanding Everyday Participation⁹ led by the University of Manchester, and Cultural Intermediation and the Creative Economy¹⁰ led by the University of Birmingham.

In this context the key cultural capital question may not be what the intervention does for the community, but what the community does for the cultural intervention... This is especially true when seeking to consider the extent to which interventions can be replicated or adapted in different community settings, as in the case of the global Sistema phenomenon and its various incarnations. In which case, a grounded theory approach that considers the complementary value of IHL set within the cultural heritage and existing cultural values of the West Everton community may be most useful and inspiring.

⁸ <http://stratificationandculture.wordpress.com/>

⁹ <http://everydayparticipation.wordpress.com/>

¹⁰ <https://culturalintermediation.wordpress.com/>

3 HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Evaluation research findings are beginning to indicate an attitudinal shift within West Everton that has implications for the longer-term health, wellbeing and resilience of the community: indicators to date suggest for example a strong attitudinal shift within the community concerning parental responsibility and proactive engagement with health professionals at preventive stages. The RLP team is subsequently keen to develop a longitudinal research programme in association with academic colleagues that tests this tentative hypothesis, and the Healthy Communities research workshop¹¹ was designed to begin to unpack some of the relative conditions for and suggested approaches to this kind of research. Professor Jude Robinson, Health Anthropologist at the University of Liverpool (and network Co-investigator) opened the discussion, drawing upon her own recent research with Liverpool-based Reader Organisation¹² exploring the health impacts of group reading experiences. Findings resonate strongly with qualitative data from the IHL evaluation, especially concerning ‘motivational’ indicators such as improved confidence and self-esteem.

Robinson stressed that there remains a need however to “move beyond symptom impact” in such studies, in order to fully understand the underlying causes of ‘symptoms’ such as low self-esteem, and truly consider the impact of cultural interventions on ‘root cause’ medical health as well as symptomatic wellbeing. This requires participatory methodologies that reflect the inherent qualities of the community-based interventions being assessed, in order to accurately identify “directly attributable” consistent changes in health values *and* behaviours. Where such ‘cause and effect’ cannot be proven, stakeholders and researchers need to be open to and accepting of such ‘impact limitations’, as there may still be useful learning outcomes for communities involved and health impact research more generally. In this respect, IHL presents a fully immersive intervention, with a number of social and cultural contexts that could facilitate a hugely informative longitudinal study of health and wellbeing.

These research challenges and opportunities were echoed by Justine Karpusheff during a presentation on research exploring the impact of creative approaches in mental health care undertaken on behalf of Mersey Care NHS Trust. Numerous examples of powerful narrative evidence from the recent Shift Happens (Karpusheff, 2011) report were discussed, including the tensions between the persuasiveness of such data that reflects the ‘lived experience’ of individuals compared to the perceived reliability of large-scale statistical studies in the health care sector – a challenge that will be instantly recognisable to researchers in the field and that recurred throughout our discussions. As a counter-balance to this challenge, Anne-Marie Martindale of the Liverpool Health Inequalities Research Institute gave an informative presentation on a systematic review of the literature on participatory arts interventions on health. From a methodological perspective, Martindale described how selection procedures in the review were based on the quality of how the evidence is used and presented in relevant studies (including qualitative and quantitative approaches), rather than the quality of the interventions themselves (the subjects of relevant studies). It was agreed by participants from policy and practice communities that it is equally important to consider the quality of research presented as evidence of impact and effectiveness when making funding decisions and justifying any investment already made.

¹¹ For the full Healthy Communities workshop review please see: http://inharmonyresearch.net/?page_id=156

¹² <http://www.thereader.org.uk/>

The full group discussion that followed presentations reiterated the need for longitudinal approaches that consider the impact of In Harmony Liverpool as a 20-year immersive programme, set within the numerous situated contexts that apply, particularly within a community that has inadvertently become a 'go-to' regeneration neighbourhood, with a legacy of both infrastructural investment and short-term project-based interventions (a feature shared by other In Harmony Sistema England initiatives). It is important to acknowledge for example that as the programme becomes more habitual than 'novel', impacts are likely to be less 'big bang' and require more subtle or nuanced evaluation and empirical research techniques. Other changes in the city are causing a demand for high quality evidence and a rigorous re-examination of public spending, including closure of the Primary Care Trust and transfer of public health department to the city council. The relative cost of cultural interventions such as In Harmony Liverpool should also be acknowledged, including the scale of "emotional labour" involved, and economic costs compared to other interventions. This is the first intervention in the West Everton community to be assessed on a 'before and after' basis and was commended as a "brave commitment" by all partners. Despite the explicit and frequently cited social and economic characteristics reflected by deprivation and health statistics, other cultural conditions such as the relative stability and sense of loyalty within the West Everton community were discussed.

In seeking to demonstrate therefore the economic value of IHL, the implications and secondary impacts of improved health and wellbeing are important (e.g. reduced crime; improved mental health) in relation to longer-term cost-savings. The expertise of a health economist would be integral to such research, in assessing for example the impact of increased proactive use of primary care resources in a preventive context, rather than reactive over-use of arguably more expensive emergency services. IHL already has a useful infrastructure in relation to its collaborative model and partnerships with key agencies including health care providers, and it is the *added value* in terms of economic implications that needs to be demonstrated to have relevance for health services, e.g. using economic valuation methods such as social return on investment (SROI).

Set against the challenges of health sector restructures, workshop participants discussed the strong culture of arts, health and wellbeing initiatives and research in the city, which has otherwise received little national attention. Any IHL research going forward would be welcomed by regional stakeholders in providing an opportunity to capitalise for example on the momentum generated by the city's 2020 Decade of Health and Wellbeing¹³. The active backing of the city's health sector [including match funding in 2011/12 and 2012/13] has been crucial to IHL's profile in the city, with [recent] structural changes informing RLP's current desire to be much more consistent and systematic in evaluating and reporting the health and wellbeing outcomes of IHL:

"The partnership with Liverpool PCT is primarily driven by the Stakeholder Engagement Department and the public health agenda... Given the changes within the National Health Service, which will see the closure of PCTs by April 2013 and the transfer of commissioning responsibilities to GP consortia, and public health responsibilities to local authorities, this relationship is a critical one for the future of the In Harmony programme". (Burns and Bewick 2012, pp. 62).

Health and wellbeing therefore was considered by workshop participants to be worthy of further scholarly investigation in relation to the on-going impact and value of IHL. A number of conditions

¹³ <http://www.2020healthandwellbeing.org.uk/index.php>

and caveats were offered to ensure its validity and reliability. A comparative framework, including baseline indicators, control groups and comparative case studies relating to other forms of intervention and cultural participation, was recommended. Environmental factors are especially important, both metaphorically (e.g. the 'home' metaphor applied to the project) and practically, including the cultural life of the city, its policy frameworks and infrastructural support for initiatives such as IHL. The level of support provided by the PCT, and central commitment to culture following Liverpool 08 (European Capital of Culture status) within the city for example may have been more difficult to secure in other environments. On-going research should be similarly mindful of the wider Sistema phenomenon, and how IHL has been adapted as a 'microcosm of a national model'. In health and wellbeing terms this raises questions of scale and replicability, within the context of the numerous city and community-based conditions already described. As there is little academic research on Sistema, we need to consider what the incentive was in adapting an international initiative. As In Harmony Sistema England has developed, was this essentially 'social project' seen as appealing to liberal left-leaning arts and appealing to the austerity mentality of Coalition governance? Has this in itself encouraged 'buy in' to health and wellbeing implications?

With health and wellbeing research, it is important to avoid stigmatising the West Everton community by presenting another 'academically imposed' research proposal that appears to judge lifestyles and make class-based assumptions. It is similarly important to be sensitive to mental health issues. Framing the study around stress and anxiety, and using impact upon children as the focus, could help to overcome this and was put forward as a proposal that can be developed with immediate effect under Jude Robinson's leadership. Such a project would also facilitate an indirect consideration of related behaviours including smoking, alcohol consumption, nutrition and other public health agendas.

In this context it is also vitally important to respect the level of trust established within the community by the RLP and partners, and to ensure that research is co-produced by new members to the research network, existing partners and the West Everton community alike.

4 MUSIC EDUCATION AND IMPACT

Conversations with key stakeholders during the planning stages of bringing the network together revealed a desire to examine in greater depth the pedagogical characteristics of IHL and their causal relationship with emerging indicators of educational attainment amongst participating children. This included the ‘orchestra as community’ model of learning; the holistic learning environments created between artists [professional musicians] and school teachers; and music education leadership, professional development and practice. The executive summary of the latest published IHL evaluation report lists the following positive educational outcomes:

“Data on educational attainment at Faith Primary School continues to evidence significant quantitative improvements in children’s academic performance and positive impact on the significant number of children with SEN... Data on musical attainment demonstrates quantitative improvements in the musical skills being developed, with Ofsted confirming a high quality music programme... Data gathered from teachers evidences an ongoing improvement within the school community, continuing the notion of a learning community”. (Burns and Bewick 2012, pp. 5)

Peter Garden, Executive Director of Learning at the RLP opened discussion during the Music Education and Impact workshop in May¹⁴, with a presentation on the IHL programme to date in relation to its operation, impact and learning outcomes for RLP as the lead organisation. Insightful, reflexive ideas on how emerging research questions can also shape the future development of RLP were presented, both as a learning organisation and iconic cultural institution, and how this compares to the orchestra as a learning environment, including its individual and collective sense of achievement. Peter commented for example on the skills required from RLP musicians when working as part of IHL, including the obvious technical mastery of their instruments, combined with the interpersonal, highly empathic skills and characteristics required to motivate and engage participating children. As the success of IHL is based on relationships at several levels – between musicians on a day-to-day basis, and at a more strategic level between collaborating organisations – understanding the learning process is critical to its future development. For RLP as the lead organisation, this includes its own philosophical and practical approach to the future professional development of its musicians and staff, and the professional culture of the organisation as a whole.

Such impact on the learning culture of organisations is also reflected in the experiences of Faith Primary School, where IHL is based. Such is the immersive quality of the programme, the school has now reached a stage where participating teachers are starting to critique IHL practice and put their own ideas forward. Similarly, IHL has always been part of the whole school curriculum and experience for some younger children, and is therefore ‘normal’ to them, prompting changing levels of expectation and engagement. As such, Peter was keen to stress that IHL is “not a static model”, as it needs to be able to respond flexibly. At the same time, there is also a desire to protect the programme due to the level of trust established between RLP and the West Everton community (as inferred in previous health and wellbeing discussions) – IHL is not seen as part of ‘the state’ or the public sector and associated services. In this context, it is important that the programme does not become a “Trojan horse” for other sectors. This raises interesting questions on the educational leadership of RLP as an iconic cultural institution, in relation to the association, respect and trust

¹⁴ For the full review of the Music Education & Impact workshop please see: http://inharmonyresearch.net/?page_id=187

invested in it from the community. There are implications therefore for the public value of the RLP and the cultural sector as a whole, within and beyond the city.

The network also welcomed Jonathan Govias, a Sistema practitioner and consultant based in Boston, USA for this session. A graduate of the Sistema Fellows programme at New England Conservatory, he developed his own model of Sistema in 2010. Jonathan gave a lively, analytical presentation on his Sistema experiences, and how these have shaped his own interpretation of the phenomenon, which he describes as a 'statement of intention' rather than practice. He has previously written on the five fundamentals of Sistema (Govias, 2011): social change through the pursuit of musical excellence; ensembles; frequency; accessibility; and connectivity – and argues that it is the explicit social change 'intent' that primarily defines the movement, as the other four qualities can be applied to all or any model of music education in the US. The aspirational aspects of the model however can be problematic and misleading – the consistent use of descriptive terms such as 'joy' and 'passion' imply that these are somehow missing from other models of music education. Following on from Peter's presentation, the implications for the professional development of musicians and music educators were also discussed, with the observation that Sistema practitioners must be multi-skilled, multi-faceted, professional musicians, social workers, performers and teachers, potentially leaving many new graduates "behind the curve" in relation to teaching and artistry.

In this context, Jonathan discussed some of the political and social conditions within which Sistema and its professional characteristics has most relevance – its native Venezuela for example does not have access to the same network of health and social care professionals as compared to the western world. As the model is adapted globally, the 'professional composition' of different projects and practitioners may vary considerably. A provocative question was raised as to whether In Harmony is really about the 'control and promotion of western orchestras'? An In Harmony Sistema England colleague responded that there is a 'fine line' between social control and social impact, and that the political conditions behind any adaptation of Sistema/In Harmony are of huge relevance, indicating that the current UK government was mostly privately educated within the centre-right, and that their expectations are very different to that of Hugo Chavez! A quote from journalist Ed Vulliamy included in the IHL evaluation report (pp. 44) illustrates the conservative (albeit 'small c') appeal of the Sistema movement in contemporary cultural Britain:

"It cuts, for all its apparently relaxed joviality, against the zeitgeist of almost every other influence and impact upon these children in a digital, post-modern, post-moral society seeped in celebrity culture and the creatively pointless quest for quick-hit reward – as was fully intended by the Venezuelans who created El Sistema".¹⁵

Continuing on the government policy theme, Dick Hallam MBE gave an informative presentation on how the In Harmony Sistema England programme fits within the trajectory of music education policy from the introduction of the National Curriculum in 1988. The act included music education for all children aged 5 to 14 but had many limitations in practice, which led to a number of initiatives under New Labour designed to make music education more accessible and inclusive, including Wider Opportunities (2000; 2006) and Music Manifesto (2004; 2007), with the pilot In Harmony programme (Liverpool, Lambeth and Norwich projects) accounting for 1% of the music settlement 2008-2011. Despite a retraction in music funding in recent years, the In Harmony Sistema England

¹⁵ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2010/oct/03/britain-children-orchestra-sistema>

programme has expanded to 6 projects, funded via Department for Education and Arts Council England, and featuring in the National Plan for Music Education. In Harmony Sistema England has differentiated itself so far by setting out to impact upon the child, the family *and* the community, with a genuine philosophy of equality and equitability. Hallam summarised by observing that UK music education policy and Sistema have a lot to learn from each other in terms of pedagogical practice, as they share many of the same core values in relation to access, aspiration and teamwork.

The debate that followed presentations from invited speakers indicated a desire for pedagogical research that compares IHL with other ensemble forms and examples of group activity, with suggestions including other international models such as Brazil's AfroReggae project. This is especially pertinent when considering the social impact of IHL. Issues on the scalability of different musical forms, including the infrastructure in place and access to repertoire, were considered in great depth. The culture of professional orchestras, including audition processes, professional development opportunities and musicians' contractual obligations were discussed as potential challenges to the role of orchestras as social education reformers. IHL is beginning to transform some of these deep-rooted professional characteristics of RLP – representatives of other In Harmony Sistema programmes made the same observation: one example that uses a chamber orchestra structure is "beginning to liberate musicians from the toil of orchestral life", enabling the use of skills that usually lie dormant or are only exercised through tuition. Emerging research suggestions and recommendations emulated those made during previous research workshops, including a need for ethnographic, comparative approaches that help to distinguish what is 'uniquely Sistema' about IHL's educational methods, philosophy and impact. When combined it is hoped that the three themes used throughout the network project can create a richer understanding of the holistic cultural value of IHL via such dedicated research programmes.

5 THE CONTEMPORARY CULTURAL VALUE DEBATE IN THE UK

In 2010, the UK's Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) published a decisive consideration of how cultural value can be expressed in economic terms similar to other areas of Government spending. *Measuring the Value of Culture* (O'Brien, 2010), profiles the appropriateness of various economic and impact valuation methods in seeking to inform a more rigorous culture of economic evaluation in the subsidised arts and cultural and creative industries. O'Brien concludes by recommending that DCMS "create clear guidelines on measuring cultural value based on the *Green Book*-consistent economic valuation techniques described in this report" (pp. 48). This report was the result of a DCMS fellowship/placement dedicated to informing the cultural value debate, and supported by research councils UK (RCUK). As a further example of the strategic commitment to this cause, a subsequent placement and report was funded to complement O'Brien's economic evaluation recommendations. *A Holistic Approach to Valuing our Culture* (Donovan, 2013) recommends "that DCMS adopt a holistic approach to valuing our culture, recognising a combination of economic and non-economic approaches are valid, depending on context." (pp. 16). This second project also saw the launch of the 'Priceless?'¹⁶ blog, which opened the debate to a range of interested observers and stakeholders.

The current 'debate' on cultural value is not a new experience for the sector or its critical observers – it simply reflects attempts to re-position an on-going debate in line with current political contexts, expectations and objectives. Under the previous New Labour administration in the UK (1997-2010), a 'third way' rhetoric was created around public service that aimed to fuel a cross-government synthesis of democratic ideals of civil, political and social equality (Levitas, 2005); the result for publicly-funded organisations was one of increased accountability with regards to service standards, performance indicators and the need to prove *social* value and impact (Percy-Smith, 2000). During a large-scale public consultation on the value of the arts in England (Keaney et al, 2007), a number of 'obligations' linked to subsidized arts organizations were identified, including:

'the responsibility to ensure that both the art and the organisation are accessible and inclusive; the importance of reaching out to those who would not normally engage with the arts; the importance of ensuring diversity and equality in the kind of work the organisation supports, the types of artists that they work with and the way that they treat staff and the public' (pp. 7).

The public's perceptions of such responsibilities therefore seemingly resonated with political expectations of the arts in relation to public policy, their contribution and *impact* – a (formerly) more frequently used expression than 'value'. It has been argued however that the over 'instrumentalisation' of the arts triggered by the 'third way' hallmark of New Labour objectives caused a counter-reaction and questioning of cultural policy, particularly with regards to perceived limitations of evidence-based policy making in relation to the arts. Belfiore and Bennett (2008) for example point to the myriad of available studies representing the arts as an expanding economy, tourism stimulus, catalyst for urban renewal, social inclusion and community cohesion and improved health. They go on to warn however that policy agendas have blurred the boundaries between advocacy and research, with studies commissioned to 'find' the evidence to support certain claims rather than objectively appraise what is available. Holden (2004) explicitly rejected the political

¹⁶ http://blogs.culture.gov.uk/main/2012/01/welcome_to_the_priceless_blog.html

colonisation of the sector, and recommended re-defining cultural *value* to preserve and balance instrumental *and* intrinsic qualities, observing that:

“The cultural aims and practices of organizations have been subverted. Energies have been directed into chasing funding and collecting evidence rather than achieving cultural purposes. In the search for outcomes and ancillary benefits, the essence of culture has been lost.” (pp. 20).

DCMS subsequently made its own attempts to reconcile the tensions between intrinsic and instrumental value of the arts, and in 2007 commissioned an independent review on ‘how the system of public sector support for the arts can encourage excellence, risk-taking and innovation; how artistic excellence can encourage wider and deeper engagement with the arts by audiences; how to establish a light touch and non-bureaucratic method to judge the quality of the arts in the future’. The resulting report, ‘Supporting Excellence in the Arts: From Measurement to Judgment’ (McMaster, 2008), re-emphasizes quality (‘excellence’) as an intrinsic value that in turn enables instrumental impact of the arts in encouraging participation, engagement and enjoyment. McMaster states that “excellence in culture occurs when an experience affects and changes an individual” (pp. 9). Quite notably, McMaster directly associates excellence with relevance, and notes that a perceived lack of relevance has previously been a significant barrier to engagement with the arts:

“I believe that to be excellent, the arts must be relevant. However I am concerned that there is still a large portion of the population who believe the arts are not for them and that they are neither relevant nor accessible. The ‘it’s not for me’ syndrome, combined with high ticket prices in many cultural organizations has conspired to put off many potential audience members and exclude them from experiences that could transform their lives” (pp. 17).

Despite a series of recommendations designed to ensure excellence and encourage engagement, the report received little practical attention. What it did achieve was to open up the debate on the impact of the arts once more:

“Perhaps, in the end, what really needs to be excellent is the conversation we have about culture and the experiences it offers us, individually and collectively. And a rich, generous and democratic debate about our culture is entirely achievable – if we want it” (Matarasso, 2008).

Undoubtedly the recent DCMS initiatives on measuring cultural value (O’Brien, 2010; Donovan, 2013) have had the same effect in stimulating discussion and debate by front-loading economic impact and value as core government imperatives. This had led to other discussion platforms such as the Cultural Value initiative led by the University of Warwick¹⁷. These discussions and indeed the various elements of cultural value discussed by the In Harmony Liverpool Research Network, all resonate with established and respected taxonomies of cultural value, including the multi-faceted model defined by Throsby (2001), which included aesthetic, spiritual, social, historical, symbolic and authentic value indicators. The opportunity and challenge now presented to IHL and potential academic partners, is how to effectively use the programme as a test-bed for holistic value measurement, taking into consideration the potential, deeply *situated* economic implications of improved educational attainment, health and wellbeing, cultural and social capital, if indeed these can be directly attributed to the cultural intervention taking place. If not, it is the *added [cultural]*

¹⁷ <http://culturalvalueinitiative.org/>

value that interventions such as IHL make within the context of existing social, educational and economic infrastructures, and alongside other interventionist strategies and practices, that should be considered, and would be of real value to the on-going debate on the measurement of impact within the cultural sector as a whole.

6 CROSS-CUTTING THEMES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT

All three workshop discussions pointed to a need for deeply embedded **ethnographic** approaches to future research on IHL and associated programmes, in order to fully consider and understand the situated contexts of participating communities, their cultural identities and heritage; infrastructural conditions and ‘other’ services and interventions to which outcomes may be jointly [or singularly] attributed; and to ensure the support and participation of all relevant community members and stakeholders.

A number of workshop participants across the three themes indicated a preference for **comparative** studies in order to fully articulate the unique and complementary characteristics and values of IHL and the Sistema movement including comparisons for example between other group artistic forms and social interventions.

The notion of **community** offers a potential model for framing IHL research along several dimensions, including: geographical and physical boundaries of participating neighbourhoods; the orchestra as a community model of learning; communities of practice including professional musicians, school teachers and young people; interdisciplinary and cross-sector collaborative research communities; and the international Sistema community to provide an underpinning foundation for comprehensive comparative study.

There is an opportunity to systematically **reframe the economic value debate** to move away from nervousness around considering culture solely as ‘a commodity’, but as a form of added economic value to other forms of social, educational and health services, creating a greater degree of synergy between contemporary discussions on cultural value and the preceding proliferation of instrumental policies and directives within the UK’s cultural sector.

Although not explicitly addressed during workshop discussions, there are a number of current **public policy agendas** that are of paramount significance to IHL and can be woven into research proposals and narratives on the impact and value of the programme. These clearly include cultural policy and music education policy, and other associated agendas including preventive public health agendas, debates surrounding localism and the Big Society that call for more holistic, collaborative community approaches across the full range of publicly-funded services and sectors.

7 THE NETWORK CONFERENCE AND KEYNOTE RESPONSES

The network held its final conference on Wednesday 17th July 2013 at the Merseyside Maritime Museum in Liverpool. The conference was open to the public as well as existing network members, creating the opportunity to share and debate emerging ideas and recommendations in an open forum. The programme (attached as appendix 2) included introductory talks on In Harmony Liverpool and network activities to date, along with considered responses from invited speakers with expertise in the global Sistema movement, music education, cultural policy and cultural value research in the UK and cultural economics. Sections 1-6 above were shared beforehand with invited guest speakers in the form of an interim report and presented at the launch of the conference by the network's Principal Investigator.

Delegates engaged in a lively critical debate on the ideology and ethical implications of El Sistema and its re-adaptation as 'Sistema-inspired' programmes in different socio-cultural contexts. The persistent application of a 'deficit model' of communities was perceived as especially problematic, with the consensus being that there was not enough evidence to uniquely differentiate the Sistema model and its effectiveness from other music education programmes and research. Following the conference, keynote speakers - including Sistema Fellow Elaine Sandoval, cultural policy scholar Dr Dave O'Brien and cultural economist Professor David Throsby - were invited to contribute written responses for inclusion in this final report, which are included below (pp. 18 – 25).

Elaine Sandoval recently graduated from the Sistema Fellows Program at New England Conservatory, following a Masters degree in ethnomusicology from Oxford University and a B.A. in liberal arts/humanities from Soka University of America. Besides El Sistema and ethnomusicology, her research interests include cosmopolitanism, Soka education, multicultural music education, and culturally-relevant pedagogy. She hopes to contribute to increasing academic inquiry within the El Sistema field and is committed to developing an El Sistema-inspired cosmopolitan music education program in the future.

Those of us involved in the burgeoning international El Sistema-inspired movement have probably realized that despite the ever-increasing discussion forums, conferences, and sheer multitude of programs, there is no conclusive definition of what El Sistema actually *does*. I use this verb in two senses – what an El Sistema-inspired program does on a quotidian basis in the day-to-day practices of teaching and learning, as well as what an El Sistema-inspired program does in the long-term, what goals it strives to accomplish.

While Jonathan Govias asserts that there are five fundamental characteristics defining El Sistema-inspired work and Eric Booth argues for ten,¹⁸ I'm interested in El Sistema for two characteristics which underscore what the program does – that it 1. has a goal to contribute to society through the practice of music-making and, 2. emphasizes collective (ensemble) music-making as the educational practice that best supports social transformation. These characteristics resonate most with my own research background in ethnomusicology as well as my formative experiences participating in various musical ensembles.

However, I fully allow that these two fundamentals remain broad, offering nothing more than a vague hint at the philosophical underpinnings of an El Sistema-inspired program and a pedagogical suggestion. This is true of the current state of the movement as well. While El Sistema-inspired programs seek social transformation, most are hard-pressed to define specific objectives or definitions of success; surveying the mission statements of programs in the United States offers a scatter-shot including everything from reducing poverty to providing a joyful musical experience. Many programs consider their objective as offering music education to the most “disadvantaged” young people, using free or reduced school lunches (defined in the US by household income) as a qualifier for participation. I believe this is a misconception arising from media portrayals of El Sistema in Venezuela, which highlight El Sistema students as coming from the slums. In my (admittedly brief) experience with El Sistema in Venezuela, however, the concept of transformation focuses more on social integration than simply providing for deprived students – not all, and perhaps not even the majority, of El Sistema students are from disadvantaged backgrounds. Even the famed *Manos Blancas* choir, which appears in documentary footage as a program for students with special needs, is in actuality based on the inclusion of *both* students with special needs and those without.

In terms of El Sistema's educational practices, the use of the ensemble has been touted as a revolutionary pedagogical development. Geoff Baker has discussed the fallacy of defining El Sistema as revolutionary, pointing out that classical music education programs with similar goals were

¹⁸ Booth, Eric. "The Fundamentals of El Sistema which Inform and Guide El Sistema-inspired Programs." *Eric Booth*. N.p., Jan. 2012. Web. 3 Sept. 2013. <<http://ericbooth.net/the-fundamentals-of-el-sistema/>>.

widespread in Europe long before.¹⁹ I'd go a step further and say that El Sistema is not revolutionary because its social philosophy and emphasis on collective music-making are in fact fundamental to most music cultures; its underpinning concept is as old as humanity, and El Sistema only serves to make it explicit as a program. From my experience in Venezuela, I began to realize that this "innovative" ensemble focus mostly came about only as a response to limited resources, and that private lessons tend to supersede ensemble education when resources allow. In fact, teaching and learning looks no different pedagogically than most classical music education anywhere else.

While this lack of specified social objectives and best teaching practices does present a challenge, it more excitingly presents an opportunity. El Sistema-inspired programs continue to pop up rapidly and in varied locations, and I believe each presents a chance to reconsider and re-determine what that individual El Sistema program actually strives for and practices.

As a Sistema Fellow charged with contributing to the development of El Sistema-inspired programs worldwide, questions of clear objectives and best practices were always at the forefront of my mind. This inquiry launched me into developing a framework for an El Sistema-inspired program based on educational cosmopolitanism, which I hope to develop in the future. In the twenty-first century, globalization is a definitive (and often perplexing) force in many societies, and young people need increased educational support to respond to cultural diversity and navigate a complex world. I draw upon David Hansen's work on cosmopolitanism, understanding it as an "orientation [in which] a person or community juxtaposes reflective openness to new influences with reflective loyalty toward the tried and known... cosmopolitanism is a name for an outlook toward the challenges and opportunities of being a person or community dwelling in a world of ongoing social transformation."²⁰

With cosmopolitanism as an objective, I've considered educational practices which embody this duality of openness to the new with loyalty to the known. To begin with, if cosmopolitanism engages "reflective openness to the new," an integral aspect of music education should involve exposure to new and unfamiliar music traditions. Having the experience of newness in the music classroom can be extended into the student's daily lives, supporting them as they navigate encounters with "other" cultural experiences. However, this argument for exposure to diverse cultures is not necessarily an argument for multicultural music education as it typically occurs. Rather than shallow forays into a wide variety of musics, the emphasis should be on meaningful experiences with even just one or two new music cultures, giving students the opportunity to practice navigating and becoming open to the unknown.

Second, a cosmopolitan music education would require a loyalty to the known, a pedagogy which arises out of the student's lived experience in the Freirean sense.²¹ I see such curriculum as stemming from the local music culture of a community, the music a student is familiar with and interacts with regularly. In order to best understand what music to bring into a program, I propose

¹⁹ Baker, Geoff. "A revolutionary project." *Geoff Baker Music, El Sistema Blog*. N.p., 2013. Web. 3 Sept. 2013. <<http://geoffbakermusic.wordpress.com/el-sistema-the-system/el-sistema-blog/a-revolutionary-project/>>.

²⁰ Hansen, D. T., Burdick-Shepherd, S., Cammarano, C. & Obelleiro, G., 2009. Education, Values, and Valuing in Cosmopolitan Perspective. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 39(5), pp. 587.

²¹ Burawoy, Michael. "Pedagogy of the Oppressed: Freire Meets Bourdieu." *Conversations with Pierre Bourdieu: The Johannesburg Movement* (2011) Accessed June 10, 2012. <http://burawoy.berkeley.edu/Bourdieu/6.Freire.pdf>. 2.

anthropological methods of discerning local music culture and cultural values as a first step in developing curriculum and choosing music to be used in the education program. Such loyalty to the local is important in any social intervention program; the IHLRN discussion on Cultural Capital in the Community includes the important question of young people participating in an intervention and then leaving their community, thus weakening the long-term impact of such work. Emphasizing local culture might reinforce a young person's long-term sense of connection in their community.

Finally, and returning to the significance of the ensemble in El Sistema-inspired work, I propose that a cosmopolitan music education include a variety of music ensembles which students can participate in. Hansen's view of cosmopolitanism includes supporting students as they understand their place in the world. Understanding the music ensemble as a microcosm of society – a concept common to both Jose Antonio Abreu's language on El Sistema as well as to the ethnomusicological concept of homology – we might develop educational practice which includes ensembles based on different musical interactions, thus allowing students to have an educational experience of "inhabiting" different worlds. This also responds to Geoff Baker's critique of the use of the classical symphony orchestra in El Sistema for the social paradigm it represents; using a variety of ensemble types offer alternative models of social organization and interaction without an implicit assertion of an ideal.

Significantly, a cosmopolitan music education raises questions of cultural value which intersect aptly with discussions held previously by the IHLRN. Unlike most music education programs, a cosmopolitan music education would necessitate the coexistence of multiple music cultures in one educational space. Even raising my ideas within the El Sistema field has indicated to me that using anything but or in addition to classical music is problematic to many El Sistema practitioners and leaders. While some argue that Bourdieuan notions of cultural capital (which establish a hierarchy of cultural value as related to class) have ceased, such ideology clearly prevails in the music education world. Andy Miles presented in the Cultural Capital in the Community session the concept of "omnivourness," that most people openly consume artefacts and practices from a multitude of cultures. However, true attitudes toward cultural value and cultural openness are arguably represented most clearly in what we include in education, and the resistance to ideas of cosmopolitan music education, particularly within the El Sistema-inspired community, demonstrates the continuing pertinence of questions of cultural value in this field.

Cosmopolitanism is one possible contribution to the renewal of El Sistema-inspired practice, and the ideas I've developed are only one example of taking advantage of our still-vague definitions of El Sistema. The In Harmony Liverpool Research Network, as a research endeavour linked so intimately with a practicing El Sistema-inspired program, presents a unique synergy in this field. The Network has an exciting capacity to both invigorate In Harmony Liverpool's educational objectives and practices with some of the foremost research, as well as an opportunity to reinforce and shape intellectual ideas based on what happens in rehearsal and in the classroom. I look forward to seeing the Network pave the way for more such endeavours in other communities of El Sistema-inspired programs, and hope that this might contribute to more focused understandings of what an El Sistema-inspired program, anywhere in the world, practices and might achieve.

Dr Dave O'Brien is a Lecturer in Cultural and Creative Industries at City University London and author of the DCMS Measuring the Value of Culture report.

The Orchestra, the Community and Cultural Value [interim report] provides a useful intervention into a series of on going debates within cultural policy that have importance for discussions in other areas of public policy and in academia. However, it does raise questions as to the extent that *In Harmony Liverpool* can be replicated and also raises specific methodological questions that have long been associated with research into cultural interventions.

In cultural policy there are a range of debates that have come to dominate contemporary policy and practice. A core debate is to do with evidence. For sure, there is the initial question of how to prove the impact of any cultural intervention. How do we know the positive impacts of engagement in music education, for individuals and communities? There has been extensive research into these sorts of questions and there is a growing literature that seeks to answer this. However, the much more complex and pressing question comes with comparison. How do we understand the comparative impacts of engagement in music as compared with visual arts? Or with sport?

The prevailing discourse in government has focused directly on the comparative question. Ben Goldacre has recently driven interest in trying to do comparisons based on randomisation, whereby the effects of an activity are compared with the effects of doing nothing at all, in randomly selected groups. *In Harmony Liverpool* comes from a different research tradition that has sought to focus on the project as it effects a range of participants. In other research projects these participants are defined narrowly, as in the research tradition of the random control trial. However, seeing the research participants in the widest sense, to include the school, the parents, the local community and the orchestra, on the level of individuals and organisations, offers a different picture to the one that would be generated by a randomised trial.

That is not to say that the research approach to *In Harmony Liverpool* was unproblematic. The obvious issue is how this project might compare if transferred to another context. Were the benefits the result of having a well-funded project, using a world-class cultural organisation? Would the benefits have been the same if the project had involved a different cultural activity, or a sporting organisation with similar expertise and status? As the second seminar discussions illustrate, these questions will need to be thought through in relation to the control trial paradigm that underpins what is considered to be valid and invalid research in the context of health.

Second there is the status of the intervention, in so far as it was conducted by an organisation that has an obvious legitimacy within the infrastructure of British culture. Seminar one usefully considered this issue, which is essential for understanding British cultural policy. *In Harmony Liverpool* offers a potentially radical intervention, given its association with a vision of the orchestra as a community with positive and transformative effects. However, the insistence on a specific form of excellence, which is understandable and essential in the context of education, becomes problematic in the context of culture. Consuming both the right sort of culture and consuming the right amounts, are both associated with normality in British society. However, this relegates other forms of cultural practice, whether the non-official and often market driven forms of culture or the non-engagement which is associated with both working- and middle-class groups. The danger is of marginalising the existing cultural practices of the community where the intervention is taking place

in favour of that provided by *In Harmony Liverpool*. The task, as illustrated by the discussions in seminars one and three is to bring these two together and not have one overwrite the other.

This point is important as it ties into a much broader issue about how we conceive of these types of programmes. On the one hand they can be categorised as social interventions, but they carry the assumptions of what are legitimate and what are illegitimate forms of culture within them. Because of the complex association between classical music and social positions, particularly in terms of age and social class, *In Harmony Liverpool* carries within a reflection of the on-going lack of strategic direction in British cultural policy.

This issue is shown very clearly in two recent speeches, by the ministers for culture in Britain and in Scotland. What is cultural policy for? The narrow economic version of culture outlined by Maria Miller would seem to have little room for a programme such as *In Harmony Liverpool*, given that its social outcomes are not directly targeted at generating employment and economic growth (and indeed we might find much easier and more cost-effective ways of generating these impacts). However, the project of community cohesion sits very uneasily with a classical music programme as the discussions of the flight of expertise in the report show. Moreover, although classical music is associated with the construction of identity, specifically national identity, these aspects are frequently forgotten in contemporary debates drawing on tropes of aestheticist art for art's sake arguments.

A further point is the way *In Harmony Liverpool* relates to the current debates over cultural value. Recent debates over public value, a forerunner of cultural value, have suggested there may be limits to the usefulness of the term value when applied to issues of public policy. Partially this is because of the lack of clarity over the term value, but it is also because of the way terms such as public value have been applied in policy discourses. Public value became associated with such a wide variety of uses, for example by Arts Council, Heritage Lottery Fund and BBC, as well as arts and humanities and social science academics. But these different uses did not have a clear, shared definition of the term, which was part of why the differing institutions were able to use it in different ways.

Cultural value is at somewhat of a crossroads. It is now the subject of a major Arts and Humanities Research Council project and the term is proliferating in policy and public discussions. *In Harmony Liverpool* shows clearly the crucial question that faces the emerging area of cultural value, which is what is the specifically *cultural* value generated by a project that seeks to narrate its worth in the terminology of cultural value.

In this sense *In Harmony Liverpool* suffers similar limitations to much research in the cultural sector, in that it lacks a well described theory of value as a basis for asserting the importance of the findings of the research. That issue notwithstanding, it does show how the traditional assumptions around high cultural activities, such as classical music, can be rethought based on interventions that are based in specific forms of community. The relationship between the community, which is the beneficiary of the cultural intervention, beyond those who would be described as direct participants, and the form of cultural practice from which the benefits are derived needs to be explored. In doing so we might see a reconfiguration of the understanding of culture that has underpinned the assumptions surrounding elite forms of culture and communities that have tended not to consume those cultural forms. Indicating the importance of understanding the everyday practices surrounding supposedly elite cultural forms, alongside the way in which these forms create relationships within

communities, is one clear way that *In Harmony Liverpool* has contributed to the research agenda for cultural value.

Finally *In Harmony Liverpool* raises an important question that is often not remarked upon in discussions of cultural interventions, which is the impact on the organisation. The project gets to the heart of what it is that orchestras are for, in an era of limited funding and contests over the legitimacy or otherwise of the classical canon. It also reminds us that the orchestra is both a site for the preservation and replication of culture and a collection of workers. The labour of the orchestra is bound up with its function, both for entertainment as well as for education. Furthermore, there is the place specific nature of the Liverpool Philharmonic and its relationship to the city in which it is based.

What is the status of a working orchestra, with all its social, economic and cultural effects, in a highly deprived and excluded setting? *In Harmony Liverpool* and the associated debates generated by the seminar series has given clues as to how to understand and answer these questions. These questions are precisely political, in the sense that they must be argued and debated in the context of research that is not just produced by the randomised control trial of the medical model of research. They are also cultural, as questions of the legitimacy of cultural forms and the relationship between orchestra and community are at the heart of the aesthetic issues surrounding the programme played by the Liverpool Philharmonic. It is here that we encounter the essential territory of Arts and Humanities scholarship, as these questions can only be addressed by research from this tradition. As such *In Harmony Liverpool* is the sort of project that can do much to show the worth of the Arts and Humanities to a range of public policy areas.

Professor David Throsby is a Distinguished Professor of Economics at Macquarie University, Sydney.

In my presentation to the conference on *The Orchestra, the Community and Cultural Value* on 17 July 2013, organised by the In Harmony Liverpool (IHL) Research Network, I drew attention to the economic distinction between *contribution* and *impact*, the former relating to the long-term economic benefits of an established cultural institution such as the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, and the latter to the impacts of a specific project over its lifetime and perhaps beyond, as has occurred, for example, with the IHL project. I also distinguished between the *economic value* and the *cultural value* generated in both of these contexts. In regard to the orchestra, conceptualisation and measurement of these dual sources of value is an ongoing issue as the orchestra seeks to identify the various ways in which it contributes to the community and to the wider musical world; measurement of these benefits provides a potentially strong element in the case for public funding of the orchestra's activities. Likewise in considering the impacts of the IHL project, it is important to specify the economic and cultural dimensions of the value created; by accounting for both sides of the coin – economic and cultural – a consolidated picture can emerge of the total value generated by the project. Note, however, that an appropriate counterfactual must be used in either case as a reference point to gauge the extent to which the effects measured can be attributed to the institution or the project.

Methodology for measuring the economic impacts of a project such as IHL is now well established. Application of the relevant techniques in the cultural sector is nowadays quite widespread – these methods are surveyed in David O'Brien's recent report for DCMS. My only comment in regard to the economic value of the IHL project is that the non-market or diffuse community benefits generated by the project are, at least in principle, capable of monetary evaluation and they may be quite significant relative to the direct revenue effects. It would thus be desirable to re-frame the discussion of the economic impacts of the project in future research in such a way as to enable this evaluation to be undertaken, if this is at all possible.

Turning to cultural value, the project report draws attention to the extensive debate over the past ten years concerning the neglect of cultural criteria in evaluating the funding of artistic and cultural activities; these criteria have tended to be side-lined in favour of instrumental criteria, including revenue generation, social impacts and so on. As is well known, these considerations have led the AHRC to set up a research project on cultural value, in an effort to stimulate thinking and add to understanding in regard to the effects of art and culture in society that go beyond the purely instrumental. Much of what has been achieved in the IHL project will shed light on these issues of cultural value, but there is still scope for further investigation. I will simply make the following points in regard to ongoing research:

- In investigating benefits, it is important to distinguish between the private benefits that accrue to participants in the project as individuals and the public-good or externality benefits that are enjoyed by a wider collective.
- Cultural value needs to be seen as an overarching concept; progress in measurement will depend on clearly articulating its various dimensions and to whom they accrue.
- Future research should be alert to new approaches to measuring cultural value that are currently being developed; these include:
 - various approaches to specifying the constituent elements of cultural value as a prelude to their measurement;
 - the application of Likert-scale methods to the rating of value attributes;
 - differentiation of value assessments between stakeholder groups such as experts and the general public;

- means for aggregating individual assessments of value into a group or representative judgement;
- methods that integrate aspects of both economic and cultural value into one evaluation instrument based, for example, on choice modelling methodologies.
- It is appropriate to adopt a broad cost-benefit-analysis framework (as per the *Green Book*) in evaluating cultural investment projects such as IHL, provided proper account is taken of both economic and cultural value and potential complementarities or trade-offs between them – in other words, provided the analysis goes beyond a purely instrumental assessment.

To conclude, the IHL Research Network has been effective in identifying the social and educational benefits that have been yielded by the application of the El Sistema principles in Liverpool. The work comprises an excellent case study to add to the many evaluations of El Sistema-inspired initiatives around the world. As with all good research, the project has generated an agenda for further theoretical and empirical enquiry. In this regard I would endorse, in particular, the recommendation to carry the economic debate further. As noted above, this debate in the cultural arena needs to look beyond the mechanical application of investment appraisal methods and to move towards the incorporation into the economic analysis of more wide-ranging concepts of value. I would see this as especially relevant in the context of contemporary cultural policy development in the UK.

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Appendix 1 – In Harmony Liverpool factsheet

- Inspired by Venezuela’s El Sistema
- Uses classical music via the symphony orchestra to motivate children, families and communities, to achieve social change through the pursuit of musical excellence:
 - Improved educational achievement and attendance at Faith Primary School where the programme is based
 - Improved child self-esteem, confidence and wellbeing
 - Improved family and community wellbeing
 - Community that feels ‘music is a normal part of life’
 - Sustained programme leading to generational change
- Originally one of 3 national In Harmony Sistema England (IHSE) pilots; now one of 6 regional IHSE projects <http://www.ihse.org.uk/>
- Located in West Everton community, working with children aged 3-14 years and range of partners including Faith Primary School; West Everton Community Council; Liverpool Hope University; Liverpool Music Support Service
- 193 children currently participating (283 since 2009)
- In Faith School: 4.5 hours of curriculum time given to music with some children participating up to 10 hours per week
- Ensemble structure including West Everton Children’s Orchestra and West Everton Super Strings
- Regular performances for all groups, including parents, public and for peers (particularly at younger age range). Includes community based performances, and high profile events at Liverpool Philharmonic Hall, St George’s Hall Concert Room, Southbank, Derry UK City of Culture, alongside RLPO at BBC Proms September 2013
- Supported by Arts Council England; Department for Education; Liverpool NHS Primary Care Trust and range of charitable foundations/trusts
- <http://www.liverpoolphil.com/193/in-harmony/changing-communities-through-music.html>

Appendix 2 – Conference programme

The Orchestra, the Community and Cultural Value

AHRC In Harmony Liverpool Research Network Conference, 17 July 2013
Merseyside Maritime Museum, Albert Dock, Liverpool, L3 4AQ

9.30 Registration and tea/coffee

10.00 Welcome to Conference

Professor Nigel Weatherill, Vice-Chancellor Liverpool John Moores University
Peter Garden, Executive Director (Learning and Engagement), Royal Liverpool Philharmonic

10.30 Screening of In Harmony Liverpool 4th anniversary concert

11.00 In Harmony Liverpool Research Network: origins and overview

Kerry Wilson, Institute of Cultural Capital

11.20 El Sistema in theory and practice

Elaine Sandoval, Sistema Fellow, New England Conservatory
Dr Andrea Creech, Institute of Education, University of London

12.15 Lunch and networking

1.15 The community impact of In Harmony Liverpool

Rod Skipp, Artistic Director, In Harmony Liverpool

1.45 In Harmony Liverpool and cultural value research

Dr David O'Brien, City University London

2.15 Keynote: The Economics of Cultural Value – the case of orchestras

Professor David Throsby, Macquarie University

2.45 Open floor

3.00 Thanks and close