

The creative city and cultural policy: opportunity or challenge?

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ABSTRACT

The creative city paradigm is an economic and managerial discourse concerned with the creation of successful and competitive cities and regions. This article examines how the discourse manages claims relating to the role of culture in the economy and culture's role in providing key attractions, amenities and atmospheres in cities (attracting 'the creative class' and corporate investment).¹ It also explores how the creative city acquired a progressive, benign public profile—a profile that aligns the creative city paradigm with the political, social and economic contexts and interests of cultural policymakers. This article proposes that the creative city paradigm and its related discourses operate as 'implicit' or 'effective' modes of cultural policy that impact on and potentially displace 'explicit' forms of cultural policy discourse. Through discourse analysis of key cultural policy documents produced between 2000 and 2010, this article establishes the extent of this impact within the Scottish and Finnish contexts. Furthermore, the article also investigates whether the creative city paradigm presents a challenge for cultural policy or public policy more broadly.

KEY WORDS

creative city, creative economy, creativity, Scottish cultural policy, Finnish cultural policy, colonisation

INTRODUCTION

Few models and discourses of urban development have been as wide-ranging, influential² and documented in recent years as the *creative city paradigm* (hereafter called ‘the creative city’). As an international discourse prevalent in Europe, North America and Asia, it has operated across local, regional and national levels and has been both benignly interpreted by city authorities and municipalities, as well as significantly critiqued and contested in the academic sphere (Peck 2005; Glaeser 2005).³ Yet, despite its quasi-cultural thematics and its inextricable links with the creative economy,⁴ cultural policy analysts have been relatively unengaged with the discourse. Although there are exceptions to this,⁵ the lack of an explicit dialogue about the creative city by policy analysts is significant given the scope and level of critique by other disciplines (sociology, social and political sciences, and economics in particular) and conversely, the attention the cultural policy analyst sector pays to related thematics.⁶ This lack of serious critical engagement between the two discourses might therefore suggest an absence of creative city thematics in cultural policy publications. However, cultural policies across Europe, in line with their respective economic and enterprise policies, are far from disinterested in the creative city. This is demonstrated by analyses of cultural policy discourse and texts over the first decade of the twenty-first century in Scottish and Finnish contexts, both of which show clear evidence of creative city discourse transfer, although often used disingenuously and without explicit attribution or citation of key creative city authors.

While there are different models of the creative city, it is political economist Richard Florida’s that dominates contemporary cultural policies. I will therefore focus heavily on Florida’s model here. Florida’s specific creative city consists of an urban and regional development concept tied to theories about work, place and creativity, and specifically the importance of place to job creation and private investment, the

contribution of cultural amenities and practitioners (or workers) to city and regional identity and liveability, as well as the necessity of creativity in constructing successful and globally competitive post-industrial cities and regions. Essentially therefore, this article argues that although the creative city offers an economic framework to city development, its role in advocacy for the inclusion of cultural activities, environments and people ('the creative classes') impacts on and influences culture and cultural production, rendering it an 'implicit' form of cultural policy. In so doing, it also impacts on 'explicit' (or nominal) cultural policy (Ahearne 2009).

Choosing to analyse cultural policy vis-à-vis creative city discourse, while acknowledging its location within the significantly broader creative economy discourse, allows for a detailed consideration of a discrete and specific narrative of culture, place and economic development which extends beyond the familiar economic tropes of 'creativity', 'innovation' and the 'cultural and creative industries'. This article offers an in-depth examination of specific policy documents, tracing particular themes and concepts, and in doing so indicates the influence of the creative city as a powerful model of local, regional and national regeneration through culture, providing for a more nuanced analysis of influences on cultural policy than the creative economy alone. The presence of the creative city discourse within cultural policy also demonstrates the continued influence of urban economic development narratives in cultural policy over the last forty years, and the significant impact of late 1990s EU regional development policies.

This article argues that the relationship between the creative city and cultural policy is under-examined and deserves closer scrutiny from a cultural policy perspective, because this can reveal hidden assumptions, private interests and discursive transfers, with potential impacts and legacies for culture and policy. Ultimately, it is contended that in order to understand the contemporary dynamics of both the creative city and

cultural policy, it is imperative to assess each through the lens of the other, thereby uncovering unexpected alignments, as well as conflicts, with potential consequences for both. In seeking to determine the exact nature of the relationship between the creative city discourse⁷ and cultural policy, this article will briefly introduce the various concepts, models, and discourses surrounding them, as well as describe the interaction and interconnection between them. In order to illustrate this, I will use specific examples from Scotland and Finland, introduce the notion of *displacement* in relation to cultural policy and conclude with a discussion of the implications of this displacement for culture.

Any discussion of cultural policy must start with reference to the ‘exceptionally complex term’ *culture* (Williams 1981: 10), which for the purposes of this article (and in relation to both cultural policy and the creative city), refers to the noun describing expressive and communicative activities whose outcomes are sometimes documented (for many, synonymous with ‘the arts’). Attempts to define cultural policy are therefore necessarily subject to the same heterogeneities as culture itself (Gray 2010), ranging from: ‘strategic courses of action designed to prescribe and shape cultural practices’ (Ahearne 2009: 144), to more Foucauldian interpretations:⁸ ‘cultural knowledges and practices that determine the formation and governance of subjects’ implying ‘the management of populations through suggested behaviour’ (Miller and Yudice 2002: 15). While it has been asserted that the creative city’s economically-driven mobilisation of culture (and creativity) is instrumental (Holden 2006: 14),⁹ many would argue that the complex influences at play and pressures within cultural policy render it no less strategic, being broadly based around national and government agendas, other policy areas, perceived benefits and value systems and different approaches and discourses (Belfiore 2008).¹⁰ Thus it has been asserted that ‘the very notion of a public policy for culture necessarily implies a view according to which the state supports the [arts/culture] on the grounds of its perceived ‘usefulness’ to achieve a welcome outcome’

(Belfiore and Bennett 2006: 6). Instrumentalism is therefore key to both the creative city and cultural policy.

THE CREATIVE CITY

Although the ‘creative city’ is reputed to have been first coined in Australia in the 1980s, (Landry 2006: 10) it only came into regular use in the late 1990s and early 2000s, occupying a historic continuum originating in the 1970s and centring on the application of culture to urban economic development.¹¹ Specifically, its origins lie in the post-war relationship between urban and cultural policy and the attempt to halt post-war urban decline, as well as the growth of interest in culture’s role in the economy, regeneration and the development of cities after the recessions of the 1970s (Bianchini 1993). From this interest in both regional development and city regeneration, two dominant interpretations of the creative city have emerged: that of the urban-centred view of culture and creativity (often aligned with discourses of ‘innovation’) as a ‘tool’ for re-energising and democratising cities (e.g. Landry and Bianchini 1995; Landry 2000; Bianchini 1993; Bianchini 2004) and Richard Florida’s (2002, 2005) economically-driven regional development thesis.

For Landry, the creative city proposes a culture-centric thesis where ‘cultural resources are the raw materials of the city and its value base; its assets replacing coal, steel or gold’ (Landry 2000: 7). In contrast, for Florida, the creative city aims to attract high earning and high human capital workers, who are ‘attracted more by cultural amenities than by recreational amenities and climate’ (Florida 2005: 99). These workers are Florida’s ‘creative class’, replacing ‘knowledge workers’,¹² and refer to highly valuable ‘talent’, or ‘people who add economic value through their creativity’ (Florida 2002: 68), rather than through manufacturing or delivering services. Although popularly misconstrued (usually by artists and designers) as referring to the culturally creative, the creative

classes actually refer to a disparate range of individuals from doctors, solicitors and health workers (the ‘problem solvers’), synonymous with the professional classes, to what Florida calls the ‘super creative core’, or scientists, engineers, IT workers, and cultural practitioners.¹³ While the economic contribution of the (cultural) super creatives is relatively neglected in Florida’s work, many interpretations of the creative city situate the ‘cultural and creative industries’ (CCIs) as a central economic contributor to cities, regions and nations and they are routinely described as one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world.¹⁴ In this way, the creative city uses creativity as a key value, employing it to describe important workers (as above), but also (and perhaps more associated with Landry), as a strategy to address a city’s social, environmental, and economic issues. In Florida’s ‘creative age’, jobs follow these highly educated and mobile workers, in contrast to the older industrial model of workers following jobs, illustrating his ‘3 Ts’ mnemonic relating to (the need for) technology, talent, and tolerance (i.e. diversity). Thus, despite the peripheral role accorded to artists in Florida’s thesis and the distinct romanticism surrounding descriptions of them (Florida 2002),¹⁵ as well as critiques of the term’s perceived exclusivity (Peck 2005), membership in the creative class has created increased political visibility for the culturally creative.

In addition to popularity at municipal levels, a benign view of creative city and creative economy discourses is also reflected in and enhanced by the media’s attachment to economically driven and ideologically optimistic knowledge economy frameworks, deploying apparently ‘progressive’ thematics such as creativity (used almost exclusively in economic contexts), innovation, growth, entrepreneurialism, and competition (Galloway and Dunlop 2007; Leadbetter 1999; Oakley 2009).¹⁶ These portrayals are typically framed within a meritocratic and sustainable narrative of urban development, with a focus on liveability, as well as culture (and or creativity),¹⁷ essentially harnessing the soft connotations of creativity and culture to

the hard promise of economics and creating a normative perception of the creative city and economy at a popular level.

The mixed set of agendas or uses for culture and cultural funding is demonstrated in shared histories between the creative city and cultural policy (particularly as it relates to urban development policies) as demonstrated earlier. In the well-documented cultural economic 'turn' of the 1980s and 1990s and growth of the local authority remit before that, cultural advocacy and the rhetoric of public investment and support for culture became hugely important (Bianchini and Parkinson 1993; Kong 2000; Hesmondhalgh and Pratt 2005; McGuigan 1996). Post-war welfare (Keynesian) cultural policies, emphasising state funding, national prestige and the 'autonomy' of art and cultural producers (based on non-economic and social arguments) gave way to explicitly economic cultural imperatives (using the language of 'investment' and 'return'), increased managerialism, the rise of the entrepreneur, the growth of the cultural (later creative) industries, and the normativity of privatization, neoliberalism and markets.¹⁸ By the end of the 1990s, the regional development agenda of the hugely (culturally) influential and massively funded European Structural Funds (Evans and Foord 1999) was only part of the context for the growth of creative city influence, but underlined the inextricable bridging of urban and regional development (encompassing social and economic concerns) with cultural policy.

In summation, the placing of culture as an important amenity in cities; the acknowledgement of its contribution to the economy through the cultural and creative industries; the platforming of the creative classes; and an emphasis on the importance of creativity (albeit undefined) and innovation, have created a convincing funding narrative for cultural advocacy and led to the creative city as a touchstone for cultural arguments in both planning and cultural contexts (whether explicit or not). Also, consistent with the more general definitions of cultural policy cited above, reading the creative city discourse as itself a mode of 'implicit' cultural policy (Ahearne 2009)¹⁹ allows us to look

constructively at the discourse and critically at ‘explicit’ cultural policy itself. Thus, a preliminary examination of both creative city and cultural policy discourses suggests that despite the creative city’s explicitly economic rationale, their interests, influences, themes and approaches are aligned: instrumentally deploying culture in the service of extrinsic (economic and social) objectives; the centrality of the creative industries²⁰ and cultural practitioners to both discourses; a shared concern for spatial planning and the environment; a shared urban and regeneration history; a shared understanding of culture as a ‘noun’; and a shared role as modes of cultural policy. Given these shared histories and interests, it is perhaps not surprising to find evidence of creative economy rhetoric in general and the creative city discourse in particular within European national cultural policies. Below, I focus specifically on evidence from Scotland and Finland.

SCOTTISH AND FINNISH CONTEXTS

In seeking evidence of the influence of the creative city discourse on cultural policy, two discursive strands are discernable: the ‘macro’ discourse of the creative economy and the ‘micro’ strand of the creative city. Within cultural policy, the creative economy discourse typically references themes of creativity (and derivations thereof) and innovation, the cultural and creative industries as a central progressive economic model (often mobilised around intellectual property)²¹ and the promotion of enterprise and entrepreneurialism. In Scottish and Finnish contexts, this is demonstrated through a liberal and at times relentless use of the ‘creative’ prefix, which, attached to various nouns and descriptors, operates as a talismanic word, reflecting a worldview of creativity as inherently progressive and benign. (According to Raymond Williams (1965: 19), ‘no word in English carries a more consistently positive reference than ‘creative’.) Alongside this, sits a tension between sub-discourses of creativity as indicative of an individual or ‘heroic’

model of individual talent, representing the traditional focus of cultural policy, and the promotion of apparently socially-driven, democratic and community discourses of creativity as a ubiquitous and equally distributed skill. Ultimately, it can be argued that the creativity prefix illustrates post-industrial and knowledge economy boosterism. Finally, as part of its continuing concern with economic justifications for culture, and with the renewed pressures of recession,²² creative economy discourses retain a strong focus on measurement, data and cultural evidence-gathering.

Observable within this macro discourse however sit specific creative city tropes, including invocations of ‘talent’ (and in particular ‘attracting’ and ‘harnessing’ talent), references to the creative class (with echoes of human capital and knowledge economy discourses), reiterations of the place-making and identity-building attributes of cultural amenities and cultural tourism, the need for technology and diversity, and Enlightenment/modernist notions of ‘progress’ and discourses of change, often cited without reference to the creative city or its authors.

Northern European, and in particular Scottish, cultural policy, provides an interesting account of creative economy and Floridian creative city influences. Thus Scottish cultural policy explicitly reflects thematics of attracting and retaining ‘talent’, the nurturing of diversity, tolerance and competition and an acknowledgement of the importance of technology in facilitating creativity (and vice versa). While ties with the creative economy (and consequently the creative city) have been perceived by many as a post-devolution spin-off from an ideologically English New Labour government (Schlesinger 2009b; Hassan 2010; Hibberd 2008; Mulholland 2008), when viewed against the backdrop of a history of city development and marketing activity in Scotland (as part of an interest in cities as central to the nation’s economy), a history of economically enforced emigration (prompting policies to ‘attract’ people back), and nationalist discourses of uniqueness and difference, the

creative city concept can be seen to have a particular resonance there. The lineage and import of city marketing is exemplified in activities leading up to and following Glasgow's City of Culture title acquisition in 1990 (Tretter 2009), as well as urban initiatives designed to leverage 'monopoly rents' from the symbolic value of cultural amenities²³ and showcase marketing (cultural branding) initiatives designed to increase private capital investment.

From 2000 to 2010, and following the birth of a new, officially devolved Scottish cultural policy, key political and cultural policy documents not only espouse nationalistic ideas of Scottish uniqueness (and advantage) and heroic notions of individuality, but also show significant assimilation and recitation of both creative economy *and* creative city references.²⁴ One of the most common examples of the latter in Scottish discourse is the lexicon of attraction, or repeated calls for using culture (and events) to attract workers (reflecting the problems of economic emigration alluded to above) and investment, as well as to enhance competitiveness. It is the specificity and combination of culture, creativity, place, competition, talent and amenity that eschews more general creative economy attribution, and takes us beyond familiar older discourses invoking culture and regeneration/development. Illustrating this, policymakers are challenged to 'ensure that Scotland can exploit its advantages to attract international events in all aspects of culture, including sport' (Scottish Executive 2000: n.p.), invocations of Scotland as 'a globally attractive location' and attempts to convince 'that more people [are] were choosing to live and work in Scotland' (Scottish Executive 2000: 13). Exhortations such as the 'extraordinary creativity of the Scots' (McConnell 2003) are common, as well as references to Scotland as a 'vibrant, cosmopolitan, competitive country and an internationally recognised creative hub' (Scottish Executive 2004: 1). Culture is described as a 'national dynamo' giving the Scots the 'edge we [they] need in a competitive world' (Scottish Executive 2004: 1, 4). Later documents explicitly cite 'the creative class' and name-

check Florida and Landry (Cultural Commission 2005),²⁵ indicating a confidence and willingness to attribute key conceptual sources less evident in earlier publications.

The narrative of success, attraction and ‘policy attachment’ (Gray 2007), or the idea of culture being used to deliver other government priorities (such as prosperity) remains central to cultural policy rhetoric of the Scottish Nationalist Party (SNP) since their election in 2007. The priorities for government, national and local, as well as cultural organisations like Creative Scotland, are a ‘successful and prosperous Scotland’ and SNP policy documents routinely outline how culture ‘can contribute to that success story’ (Scottish Government 2008: 1), unambiguously stating how culture can contribute to the ‘delivery’ of other government innovation and research outcomes. Culture (and creativity) is described as helping to ‘create a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish’ (*ibid.*), as well as attracting ‘international partners and new talent’ (*ibid.*: 2). Much of this discourse proposes existing scenarios (i.e. that Scotland is already attractive) while also proposing the need to become more so, citing Scotland as ‘the most attractive place for doing business in Europe’ (*ibid.*) and dependent on its provision of ‘a high quality cultural infrastructure and diverse recreation and participation opportunities’ (*ibid.*).

Many also see the new and heavily critiqued²⁶ development agency for the arts and creative industries in Scotland (Creative Scotland)²⁷ as a reflection of the creative economy agenda and of instrumentalism more generally (see Sweeney 2010; Schlesinger 2009a; Roy 2010). However, Creative Scotland (CS) specifically espouses a development-oriented and place-making model of cultural policy, consistent with creative city discourse. This is demonstrated by the presence of ideas of culture as an ‘attraction’ for workers/‘talent’:

Our vision is that Scotland is recognised as a leading creative nation
– one that attracts, develops and retains talent, where the arts and the

creative industries are supported and celebrated and their economic contribution fully captured' (CS vision statement) and later, 'Creativity is the essential ingredient for successful cities, It's what makes them unique and defines them as places. A city that invests in culture and creative individuals has potential and opportunity that reaches beyond the arts, and can inspire a whole community (Creative Scotland 2011: 5 and 2010: n.p.).

However, a more sustained embrace of the creative economy agenda (and terminology) at the cultural policy level is demonstrated in Finland, with more explicit references to the creative city discourse than in Scotland, albeit coupled with a sophisticated awareness of Floridian critique. Key Finnish government documents consistently position creativity, culture and the creative industries as an economic, social and political (and 'civilising') force forming a major part of Finland's international exports (a key thematic in Finnish cultural policy), playing a key role in its diplomatic affairs (see Finland Ministry of Education 2009) and increasing Finland's regional and international competitiveness (Finland Ministry of Education 2010: 4). In fact this entrepreneurial emphasis in Finnish cultural policy (dating from the late 1990s), references Finland's declining social democratic culture and has been called the 'competitiveness society' model of cultural policy (Sokka and Kangas 2007). Finland also repeatedly stresses the links between culture and commercial creativity, emphasising that it is 'no longer a mere attraction factor but directly relates to innovation' and affirms the 'significance of creativity for innovativeness in general' (Finland Ministry of Education 2010: 7). This takes the creative city thematic of 'attraction' further. Similarly to Scotland, there is also evidence of a spike in creative city discourse mid-decade, with citations of Richard Florida's creative class, his '3 Ts' theory, and his competitive creativity indexes (Finland Ministry of Education 2005: 2010). The latter report explicitly and repeatedly refers to the 'development of urban areas into 'creative cities' (Finland Ministry of Education 2010: 10), and invokes

both human capital and creative class concepts through statements such as: 'the real scarce resource in the world is skilled workers and professionals, and creative, well-educated citizens. [...] the most likely locations where they are to be found are creative environments, [and] world-class knowledge clusters' and 'it is these competent professionals and knowledge clusters that companies thirsting after innovations are looking for' [sic] (*ibid.*: 6). Accompanying this are the usual discourses of regional development and innovation (environments) (*ibid.*: 8), but also an awareness of critiques of the creative city discourse, and a cautioning against strict adoption of Florida's thesis (*ibid.*).

In comparing cultural policy discourses of Scotland and Finland, particularly from the mid to late 2000s, we can see the shared thematic of culture as a force of attraction for both workers, visitors and investment, and in Finland, a particular emphasis on linking culture with wider creativity and innovation agendas. Although this indicates the international impact of the creative economy agenda, it also demonstrates the continued presence of specific creative city discourses in cultural policy.

Cultural policy's retention of the development rhetorics of the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s, its focus on the creative industries, and its specific references to the creative city discourse demonstrates continuing policy 'attachment' to economic agendas and as such, attempts to harness the prestige, mandate and political advantage attached to these ideological frameworks. This is perhaps to be expected given the persistent economic rationalism in government policy more generally, and the perennial need for culture ministries to justify themselves. However, we might expect a more nuanced and critical narrative to emerge from a domain synonymous with critique and analysis, particularly in light of a seriously contested model (see Malanga 2004; Glaesar 2005; Daly 2004). A more critical approach might serve cultural (and public) policy better. It seems likely, however, that this disavowal of critique is due not to ignorance, but rather a deliberate obfuscation in order to simplify

the role of the creative city in augmenting cultural advocacy and part of wider legitimising discourses in cultural policy.

In this context, the imposition of non-cultural rationales on the funding of culture, whether it be an economic return on the cultural and creative industries, the development, capital and tourism potential of cultural cities, the harnessing of 'talented' workers in a mobile and globalised world or any of the social impacts of culture, essentially maintains a long tradition of using cultural policies towards non-cultural ends. Sociologist and philosopher Jürgen Habermas has coined the term 'colonisation'²⁸ to describe the economic domination of the 'lifeworld' (or series of communications and meanings which allow us to understand the world), of which culture is a key part. In his view, the colonisation of culture, or the lifeworld, by systems of power and the economy, essentially takes away the necessary preconditions for the operation of a healthy public sphere and hence the context necessary for a functioning democracy. In this way, the reproduction of creative city discourses within cultural policy represents an explicit colonisation of culture and hence is a threat to the basis of civic society's productive relationship with the state.

While it is true that this colonisation and instrumentalism are not new to cultural policy, the creative city can be said to exacerbate an already economics dominated discourse. However, this colonisation has other significant implications for culture and cultural policy. It has been argued that excessive economic rationalisation leads to market-driven rationales for cultural production and funding based on what is perceived as 'popular' or 'useful' culture, providing a 'return' on investment (McGuigan 2004); an over-promising of what is deliverable through culture (leading to disappointment and loss of trust); an overemphasis on quantitative data and that which can be quantified; a negation of the capacity for culture to be disruptive (predicated as cultural policy is on culture as a force for social and economic 'good') but perhaps most critically, an exposition of the presence of private

discourses (i.e. property development) in public policies, which ultimately impacts on representative democracy and results in a loss of 'legitimacy' within cultural policy (Holden 2006).²⁹

The idea of legitimacy loss in relation to cultural policy can be considered not only in relation to colonisation, the dominance of economic rationales, private benefit discourses and an over-reliance on instrumentalist advocacy (as Holden would argue), but also as an ingrained suspiciousness and historic lack of engagement with technology and the creative industries (n.b. Adorno and Horkheimer 1998), a perceived elitism deriving from 'high' or arts-based definitions of culture, and the continued failure of cultural policy to deal with the broader political issues of cultural production, such as the precariousness of creative labour (McRobbie 2004; Lorey 2006).

With this in mind, it is impossible to ignore the proposition that creative city discourse, albeit within a creative economy framework, is in the process of displacing (an already problematic) explicit cultural policy, or at least challenging its legitimacy, resulting in the loss of understandings of cultural value as well as democratic participation in public policies. The challenges to cultural policy posed by the creative city certainly allow for new points of unflattering comparison, but equally do not obfuscate the many cultural problems engendered within the creative city itself.³⁰ In addition, these challenges do not ignore the impact of the broader creative economy on cultural policy. Finally, to consider the creative city alongside, and as, a cultural policy, does not disavow the different ends to which both discourses may be working, though this is not always clear. In short, though the creative city and cultural policy are both flawed cultural frameworks, this does not negate the challenge the former poses to the latter.³¹

Some of the questions remaining to be asked include: What is at stake if creative city discourse is 'colonising' cultural policy and exposing private benefit value systems? If cultural policy, and hence state support, is displaced or delegitimised, would culture be 'better

off' and what would an 'ideal' cultural policy look like? This is a more complex question than can be answered in this article. However, it is worth considering whether the creative city might be thought of as a conceptual starting point for a re-thinking of cultural policy, as part of a general overhaul of means-end rationalist public policies. Could the paradigm's arguably holistic view of the city and its development, its emphasis on both 'high' and popular culture (despite some misunderstandings concerning 'high' cultural infrastructures) as well as its remarkable branding, communication and persuasive abilities, be used to better serve culture more generally? Could a re-configured model of the creative city which promotes the different but potentially compatible agendas of culture, society and economy, work with existing cultural policy to jointly benefit culture? And how ought we define 'benefit' in the first place? Nevertheless, perhaps the greatest value in considering the creative city as an embedded discourse within cultural policy is how it demonstrates the hidden presence of knowledge discourses in public policies, working towards private rather than public benefit and what that indicates about public policy and representative democracies.

CONCLUSION

This article has demonstrated similarities between the creative city and cultural policy discourses and genealogies, positing the creative city as an implicit cultural policy, but also evidencing the influence of the former discourse on the latter, as part of wider creative economy influence. The article has shown that this influence illustrates a recent and specific variety of 'colonisations' of cultural policy by economic rationales, revealing the hidden dominance of elite networks of power beyond democratic control and the continued instrumentalisation of culture through policy, which together are represented as a crisis or a displacement of explicit cultural policy. References to cultural

policies in Scotland and Finland have demonstrated creative city discourse transfer, indicating the continued presence of the discourse in the European context. Finally, this article has posited that a critical interpretation of the creative city paradigm in the context of cultural policy, together with a consideration of its positive attributes, can provide the platform from which to question the ethical basis of cultural and public policy more generally.

NOTES

1. The 'creative class' is a concept devised by political economist and creative city author Richard Florida. His book, *The Rise of the Creative Class: And How it's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life* (2002), has been highly influential in urban and metropolitan areas.
2. As demonstrated through creative city branding evident in cities (e.g. Creative Cincinnati, Creative Birmingham, Creative London, Creative Berlin), nations (e.g. Creative Britain) and networks (e.g. UNESCO Creative Cities and the British Council's Creative Cities).
3. The academic community – particularly the social and political sciences – has robustly and repeatedly critiqued the creative city concept, in relation to exclusivity (excluding the 'non-creatives' and service classes from its focus) and the resulting social inequities; a lack of originality (being based on other economic and cultural development theories of the 1970s and 1980s); excessive investment in economic values as the sole driver of urban development (Scott 2006); and what is claimed to be dubious evidence of its success.
4. The Creative Economy is defined variously, but specifically by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development as 'creative assets potentially generating economic growth and development; It can foster income generation, job creation and export earnings while promoting social inclusion, cultural diversity and human development; It embraces economic, cultural and social aspects interacting with technology, intellectual property and tourism objective; It is a set of knowledge-based economic activities with a development dimension and cross-cutting linkages at macro and micro levels to the overall economy; It is a feasible development option calling for innovative,

multi-disciplinary policy responses and interministerial action; At the heart of the creative economy are the creative industries' (UNCTAD 2008: 15).

5. Existing analyses of the creative city (and indeed the creative economy) discourse in relation to cultural policy are limited to the creative industries and citations of the putative 'creative class'. See McGuigan (2009); Oakley (2009); Hesmondhalgh (2007).
6. Examples of thematics related to the creative city discourse regularly appearing in journals such as the *International Journal of Cultural Policy* and *Cultural Trends* would be the creative industries, discourses of 'creativity', regeneration, instrumentalism and the creative economy.
7. The 'creative city' concept represents both a discourse in terms of having a significant body of 'text and talk' (Van Dijk 2001: 356) and a paradigm (or prevailing model) of urban, regional and national development.
8. See Foucault (1978) for a discussion of the construction of subjects by governments.
9. The use of the term 'instrumental' logically suggests that there are other primary, 'cultural' or 'intrinsic' reasons for supporting culture, characterised as the 'subjective experience of culture intellectually, emotionally and spiritually'.
10. Although many think of cultural policy as a post-war concept linked to the building of nation states and new political and social identities (as exemplified in the founding of Northern European Arts Councils in the 1940s and 1950s and France's Ministry of Culture in 1959), the state and 'ruling classes' (both secular and religious) have long been involved in supporting, regulating and intervening in relation to culture, with specific political, social and economic ends in mind, amounting effectively to early cultural policies.
11. A key and early work in the discussion of the arts in regeneration is given in Wynne (1992); see also a fuller description of the historical continuum in Bianchini and Parkinson (1993).
12. The *knowledge economy* (and hence 'knowledge workers') was coined by management consultant Peter Drucker in the 1960s to describe the post-industrial trading of ideas rather than manual labour.

13. In Florida's thesis, cultural practitioners are also described as 'bohemians' who create an alternative and tolerant atmosphere attractive to the creative classes, and thus need to be nurtured, despite the contradictions inherent in being both the subject and object of the attraction (Florida 2002: 200–211).
14. See Government of Ireland (2008), section 2.12: 'Estimates value the sector at 7% of the world's GDP and forecast 10% growth per year'.
15. This romanticism is also demonstrated by Florida's (2002: 201) suggestion that artists are disinterested in money, exemplified by his assertion that 'if they [artists] can make money in the process (i.e. of working), that's wonderful'.
16. As both a symptom and expression of wider economic imperatives, the parallels between the knowledge economy, creativity discourses, the creative city paradigm and cultural policy are striking. With its emphasis on information exchange, intellectual property, idea generation, technology, creativity and innovation, the knowledge economy has championed and become the 'posterchild' for the creative industries, leading critics to note their transformation into 'just one more 'knowledge economy asset'' (Galloway and Dunlop 2007). A description of the knowledge economy as 'cosmopolitan and open', with the imperative of rewarding and investing in 'talent and creativity', 'people and education' and its need for cultures that are 'democratic and dissenting' and 'open to new ideas from unusual sources', (Leadbetter 1999: ix), suggest both a strong belief in its possibilities, as well resonances with culture, and creativity and creative city discourses (in particular, Florida's creative city '3 Ts' acronym). As such, the knowledge economy offers a framework for the creative city paradigm as well as being itself implicated in cultural policy.
17. The creative city discourse is often positively referenced in the media simply by referring to vibrant or 'up and coming' cities as 'creative cities', rather than any explicit reference to a set of distinct ideas. The following is a quote from the travel section of an Irish newspaper: 'Toronto is stepping into the limelight as a vibrant and *creative city*' and 'behind the generic exterior lies a vibrant, creative, multicultural population which makes Toronto far more attractive than its appearance might suggest. In this regard it is not dissimilar to Berlin, another city that makes up for its rather humdrum looks by virtue of the *creative energy of its inhabitants*. And, as in Berlin, Toronto's creative community is successfully raising and *changing the profile* of the city. The city's legion of musicians have made it a North

American alternative rock capital, and its artists are *rejuvenating entire neighbourhoods*' (O'Dwyer 2010, emphasis added). See also Starr (2008) and Connolly (2010).

18. See Harvey (2005) for more on neoliberalism.
19. According to Ahearne, you can 'call *explicit* or *nominal* cultural policy any cultural policy that a government labels as such' and '*implicit* or *effective* cultural policy any political strategy that looks to work on the culture of the territory over which it presides (or on that of its adversary)' (2009: 143, emphasis original).
20. Although the creative industries are discussed within a cultural policy framework, they are often situated (policy-wise) in an economic context or portfolio.
21. For more on this and the 'copyright industries', see Howkins (2001).
22. See Mundy (2009) for an explicit example of this kind of argumentation, positing confidence boosting, rebranding, mobility, revenue, transforming spaces, social support, employment flexibility, community expression, personal empowerment and (the key policy requirement), value for money.
23. *Monopoly rent* (and all rent) 'is based on the monopoly power of private owners of certain portions of the globe. Monopoly rent arises because social actors can realize an enhanced income stream over an extended time by virtue of their exclusive control over some directly or indirectly tradable item which is in some crucial respects unique and non-replicable' (Harvey 2006: n.p.).
24. In analysing a number of key cultural policy documents such as 'Scotland's National Cultural Strategy' (1999/2000), 'A Literature Review of the Evidence Base for Culture, the Arts and Sport policy' (2004), 'Cultural Policy Statement' (2004), 'Our Next Major Enterprise' (2005) and the 'Scottish Arts Council Review of Strategies 2002-2006', it is possible to see not only spirited references to the uniqueness of Scottish creativity and the creative economy (e.g. regeneration, talent, innovation, creativity, creative industries and competition), but also detect a specific creative city discourse. All available online at www.scotland.gov.uk.
25. This is the final report of the Cultural Commission's reviews of cultural policy in Scotland, available online at www.scotland.gov.uk.

26. These criticisms relate to a lack of clarity over its enterprise versus subsidy model, its role vis-à-vis other enterprise bodies charged with the creative industries, a general scepticism over the prioritisation of the industrial model of culture, and a lack of clarity over the application of the 'arms length principle'. See Hibberd (2008) for a discussion of the development of Creative Scotland and Chávez-Aguayo (2010) for a discussion of 'the arms length principle' in relation to Creative Scotland.
27. Creative Scotland replaced Scottish Screen and the Scottish Arts Council, and has been in development for a number of years throughout the 2000s. See www.creativescotland.com.
28. 'Colonisation' is a Habermasian (1973) concept linked to notions of crisis.
29. Holden (2006) specifically refers to the lack of shared expectation and values between the government (funding cultural policy and looking for measurement, accountability and delivery of other policy areas), cultural practitioners (institutions and individuals making culture who require freedom from prescription) and the public (who want to engage).
30. Issues with the creative city include: the lack of understanding of how and why culture is made (and Florida's creative class grouping); the platitudes of the ubiquitous 'creative' brand (so that anything and everything uses the creativity prefix like a magic mantle) and the inflated economic arguments for culture promoted by creative city advocates.
31. Peck (2005) argues that creative city strategies are significantly cheaper than long-term urban development strategies, and that this relative cheapness increases their popularity among city officials.

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