Cultural Value and Inequality: A Critical Literature Review
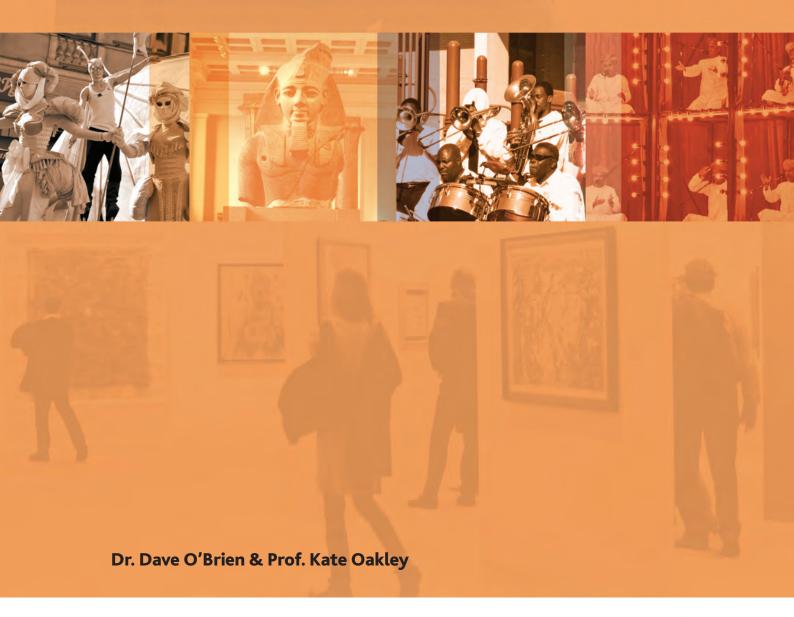
A Report commissioned by the Arts and Humanities Research Council's Cultural Value Project

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Executive Summary

Inequality has become essential to understanding contemporary British society and is at the forefront of media, political and practice discussions of the future of the arts in the UK. Whilst there is a wealth of work on traditional areas of inequality, such as those associated with income or gender, the relationship between culture, specifically cultural value, and inequality is comparatively under-researched.

The literature review considers inequality and cultural value from two points of view: how cultural value is consumed and how it is produced. The review argues that these two activities are absolutely essential to understanding the relationship between culture and social inequality, but that the two activities have traditionally been considered separately in both academic research and public policy. The review concentrates on the 'big three' issues of inequality – race, class and gender, where most of the literature is to be found, but also touches on disability, sexuality and spatial inequality. All of the research reviewed suggests an undeniable connection between cultural value and inequality. Understanding that connection is currently impeded by problems with data. The report suggests the political saliency of this topic means that public policy must do more to provide robust research, particularly about cultural production.

Key words

Inequality, social stratification, exclusion, access, gender, race, class.

Introduction

Inequality and cultural value is at the forefront of media, political and practice discussion of the future of the arts in the UK (Warwick Commission 2014). This literature review responds to those discussions by exploring the specific relationship between cultural value, a key topic of academic and practitioner interest over the last 5 years, and inequality.

Inequality has become essential to understanding contemporary British and global society (Wilkinson and Pickett 2009, Dorling, 2014). Whilst there is a wealth of work on traditional areas of inequality, such as those associated with income or gender roles (CSI 2015a, 2015b), the relationship between culture, specifically cultural value, and inequality is comparatively under-researched.

Lamont *et al* (2014), writing for an American audience, have stressed the need to take cultural aspects of inequality more seriously. Their agenda is part of an ongoing struggle over the role of culture in explaining how society is organised, for example whether culture is a resource used by those from different status groups (Goldthorpe 2007), whether culture is a type of capital related to class positions (Bennett *et al* 2009, Savage *et al* 2005), or whether culture is better understood as more directly constitutive of social positions such as class (e.g. Savage *et al* 2013, 2014).

Those debates point to a fundamental relationship between cultural value and inequality. The literature review considers inequality and cultural value from two points of view: how cultural value is consumed and how it is produced. The review argues that these two activities are absolutely essential to understanding the relationship between the value associated with culture and social inequality, but that the two activities have traditionally been considered separately in both academic research and public policy (O'Brien 2014a).

One area of work has focused on questions of representation in production and more recently on critical studies of cultural labour conditions (Gill, 2007; Gollmitzer & Murray, 2007; Christopherson and Storper 1989; Blair 2001; Banks, 2007; Randle, forthcoming) and the other looked at social stratification and inequalities in consumption, or as it sometimes referred to in policy circles, in access (Chan and Goldthorpe 2007, Bennett *et al* 2009, Miles and Sullivan 2012, Friedman 2012). This is the rationale for structuring this critical review around ideas of consumption and production of culture. The relationship between who gets to 'consume' and who gets to 'make' and what is at any time considered legitimate culture is at the heart of this review.

The review connects inequality to the consumption and production of culture for two additional reasons. The first is the tradition, from cultural studies, of attempting to understand the 'circuits of culture' in which understandings of value are attached to objects and practices; or are enabled and constrained by objects and practices. The landmark work in this case is DuGay *et al*'s (1996) study of the Sony Walkman. In this text a team of scholars working in the cultural studies tradition attempted to chart the impact of the Walkman in changing not only how music is consumed, but also the meanings of that consumption, along with how it was produced and regulated. However the fundamental insight into studying questions of regulation, production, and consumption, whilst still relating the answers to discussions of identities, has not properly transformed the division between studies of production and consumption. This review aims to reassert the importance of a perspective highlighting that these two strands intertwine in the process of cultural value.

Second, the review develops the need for research on the relationship between contemporary cultural consumption practices and work in cultural and creative industries. Specifically this need is focused on understanding how emerging forms of cultural consumption (Savage *et al* 2013, 2014, Friedman 2013), such as omnivorous attitudes towards cultural forms, are coupled with rejections of snobbery and the embrace of meritocratic approaches to the social world. This relationship, in turn, is characteristic of many in the cultural and creative industries (Banks 2009, O'Brien 2014) whilst at the same time those areas of the labour force are characterised by inequalities grounded in a range of social structures, such as ethnicity, gender or class. Thus specific types of cultural consumption are intertwined with who is able to succeed in cultural production.

This insight is at the core of many studies of social inequality (for example Rivera's 2012 study of the role of shared cultures in hiring decisions or Boliver's 2014 work on Oxford admissions or Zimdar's *et al* 2009 on university admissions) and is best outlined in recent work by Skeggs (2011) on how persons are, or are not, designated as having value. However, how this relationship *functions* and its exact bearing on the process of cultural value, for example understanding the links between who produces, what is represented and thus what is consumed, is still yet to find its definitive research project.

The review that follows is in four sections. First the review defines inequality, then considers a working definition of cultural value. Section three discusses inequality and consumption, with section four considering production. The review's conclusion presents areas for further research, based on four key ideas:

1. All of the research reviewed suggests an undeniable connection between cultural value and inequality.

2. Understanding that connection is impeded by problems with data.

3. Public policy must do more to provide robust data, particularly about cultural production.

4. Research has shown the relationship between cultural value and inequality. As a result, future research, funded by RCUK, must focus on understanding how the relationship between inequality and cultural value functions, in the context of consumption and production.

What is Inequality?

Whilst it is not possible to point to a single moment for the reassertion of the importance of inequality, the work of Wilkinson and Pickett (2009) Stiglitz *et al* (2009), Dorling (2010) and, most notably Piketty (2014) have all been influential. It is notable that these authors all occupy differing disciplinary positions, indicating the general, rather than subject specific, discussion of inequality.

Piketty has generated the most media interest, by attempting to demonstrate not only that wealth inequalities are becoming greater but that the ability of those with financial resources to make profit from those resources are outstripping economic growth. This is creating a gulf between those gaining from their accumulated wealth and those gaining from their income (Savage 2014).

Piketty's work has drawn attention to the rise of a very wealthy group at the top of British (and, indeed, global) society. By identifying this, Piketty's work also opens a dialogue between a focus on the economic dimensions of inequality and other types of inequality.

For example, Perrons (2014) points out how Piketty pays insufficient attention to the role of gender in inequality; Bear, in a (2014) discussion of the experience and meaning of time foregrounds the need for understanding the lived reality of inequality, as well as its manifestation within economic history; and Jones (2014) notes the need for a more spatially and thus geographically grounded understanding of capital and thus the inequalities generated by it. Piachaud (2014:699), perhaps most importantly, notes: *'In considering the history and the future of inequality it is a start, but not enough, to consider inequality between rich and poor, as Piketty does. In addition, inequality related to age, sex, disability, ethnicity and sexual orientation are all important; they cannot be assumed to be covered by differences related to income and wealth, crucial though these are.'*

Inequality is bound up with how society is stratified and structured. In understanding how society is divided up we can understand the ways that *'define certain types of goods as valuable and desirable'* (Grusky and Weisharr 2004:2), how those goods are distributed across society and how individuals or communities may have access to those goods. The very act of living in a society is bound up with a division between that which has value and that which does not. In other areas of social life, such as economic activity, we can see how this manifests itself in the way that some forms of labour, such as domestic work, are valued poorly as compared with other forms of labour, such as senior management positions. This is a distinction between paid and unpaid labour, as well as a gendered distinction.

The rewards given to different forms of labour suggest the central role for income in explaining inequality, whether as income inequalities, asset or wealth inequalities and then more cultural or social forms of assets and their relationship with inequalities. On the latter point a range of work, including the highly influential (if critiqued e.g. Goldthorpe 2007) work of Pierre Bourdieu, suggests there are a range of ways inequality manifests itself beyond income. Thus inequality can be grounded in an individual's access to certain resources, such as family or friendship connections (Granovetter 1995), or it can be embodied in an individual's ethnicity or their gender. These social categories intersect, with related levels of resources, such as the difference between a wealthy, well connected, well educated male in British society and someone of similar social class, status and income levels who is female, or the differential economic or educational experiences of those from different ethnicities.

This debate highlights the fact that inequality should not be conceived merely as an issue of income or even wealth, but rather in a multidimensional fashion and this latter point ushers in the importance of cultural value.

What is Cultural Value?

Cultural value is a problematic concept, with no clear consensus as to its meaning (O'Brien and Lockley, 2015). This lack of clarity reflects the legacy of how cultural value has been used in the UK (O'Brien 2014). Although it is impossible to summarise the understanding of cultural value within the 80+ pieces of research funded under the *Cultural Value Project*, it is instructive to note how Crossick and Kaszynska assign an active element to cultural value. Cultural value is grounded in art and culture's capacity to 'effect change', meaning it is '*used to refer to the effects that culture has on those who experience it and the difference it makes to individuals and society'* (Crossick and Kaszynska 2014:124).

In this understanding cultural value, because it is an active process of effecting change, requires the act of valu*ing*. This act is one of recognising the capacity of art and culture to have the effects, positive or negative, that AHRC's project is aims to understand. If cultural value is to be understood as an activity of effect or impact, then there must be a relationship between cultural value and those being affected. As a result we can think of cultural value as being part of the process of *valuing* culture. This then gives cultural value an important relationship to inequality.

The idea that culture can have particular effects (and thus demonstrate its value) has a long history and has been part of British cultural policy since the Victorian era (O'Brien 2014, Lee 2008).This idea was explicit under the Labour government of 1997-2010, which tied culture *directly* to the ability to produce a range of social goods. This was notable in the idea that culture could lessen the effects of social exclusion, an umbrella term for the intersection of poverty with other elements of social disadvantage, such as lower levels of educational attainment or long term exclusions from the labour market.

There have been ample criticisms of this supposedly 'instrumental' use of culture for a variety of social and economic reasons. However, most interesting for the present purpose, is the way explicit governmental use of culture in a variety of settings revealed the function of culture in replicating and reinforcing inequality. This idea also means that the state, by virtue of its claim that culture can solve social problems, explicitly *defines* culture as a mechanism for the replication of inequality. Ironically this point was peripheral to most of the objections to the 'instrumentalizing' of culture.

We therefore have two moments underpinning the relationship between culture and inequality. In the first instance the contested definition of culture is connected to hierarchies of what is, and what is not, of value or worth. This raises the question of the relationship between one form of hierarchy, which suggests some cultural forms have more value than others, and other forms of social hierarchy, such as those of ethnicity, class and gender.

Second, related but distinct, is the governmental moment in culture. The use of culture for a variety of social and economic purposes suggests culture, in the eyes of the policy maker and the organizations and practitioners carrying out cultural activities, is able to have an impact on issues of governmental concern. The value of culture, in these projects, lies in its economy, efficiency and effectiveness at curing social or economic ills. The fact culture has been used in this way suggests the state recognises culture has some relationship to those social issues. Culture, for government, is thus bound up with inequality, even if the state mistakenly hopes culture can provide equitable outcomes. How these two moments function is the substantive task of the following discussion on cultural consumption. That discussion is then related, as a result of the framework described in the introduction, to cultural production.

Cultural Consumption, Cultural Value and Inequality

There are several sources of data on cultural consumption, ranging from government sponsored general surveys *(Taking Part* in England, *Wales Omnibus Survey, General Population Survey for Northern Ireland and Scottish Household Survey, Sports and Culture Module for Scotland), through* market research data (Arts Audiences Insight), to much more specific community or art form research. In addition this data, along with specially commissioned data sets, has been the basis for a range of governmental (CASE 2010, Bunting *et al* 2008, Keaney 2008, UKFC 2009) and academic analysis (e.g. Taylor 2013, Chan and Goldthorpe 2007a, 2007b Bennett *et al* 2009).

Cultural consumption is socially differentiated. Virtually every study, whether seeking to divide a potential audience for marketing or funding purposes (Arts Audiences Insight 2011), or to answer more academic questions (e.g. Taylor 2013), supports this finding. These social differences are along lines of class and social status, educational level, age, gender, ethnicity and disability.

Even taking into account methodological concerns about the assumptions underpinning social categories and thus data (Miles and Sullivan's 2013; Law *et al* 2011), as the Warwick Commission makes clear (2015:33),

> *'The wealthiest, better educated and least ethnically diverse 8% of the population forms the most culturally active segment of all: between 2012 and 2015 they accounted (in the most conservative estimate possible) for at least 28% of live attendance to theatre, thus benefiting directly from an estimated £85 per head of Arts Council England funding to theatre. The same 8% of the population also accounted for 44% of attendances to live music, benefiting from £94 per head of Arts Council music funding. For the visual arts, this highly engaged minority accounted for 28% of visits and £37 per head of public funding'*

The most recent gray literature is clear: Cultural consumption is marked by inequalities. On this point research clusters around one inescapable conclusion, which is that cultural value, in consumption, is highly unequal, with different forms of culture being consumed differently by different social groups. From this starting point it is uncontroversial to suggest that who consumes culture may give an insight into its value. This idea is articulated in range of different approaches to understanding the process of giving, or withholding, value, whether from economics (Grisolia *et al* 2010), geography (Brook 2013), sociology (Bennett *et al* 2009) or within arts and humanities more generally (Connor 1992, Kieran 2010). This is not to say cultural value is entirely socially grounded (indeed there is a tradition within British aesthetics that strongly resists the social basis for cultural value e.g. Zangwill 2002). It is rather to suggest the need to understand that *who* consumes matters and how we explain that consumption may be the basis for an account of cultural value's relationship to inequality.

Geography

Who consumes needs to be based on a sense of where consumption occurs. It is clear there are inequalities of engagement and funding for culture that have a geographic character. Whilst there has been recent work on Scotland considering some of these questions (see Stevenson's 2014 introduction to a recent *Cultural Trends* special issue), much of the research concentrates on England (e.g. Bunting 2005). The politics of funding inequalities are well known from both the ROCC (Gordon *et al* 2013) and PLACE (Gordon *et al* 2014) reports, along with the subsequent political responses (CMS Select Committee 2014).

There are also academic inquires about funding that raise a more complex picture of regional and local inequalities, showing how the marginality of a Local Authority's politics, along with the perception of those Authorities as well managed, may have affected Grants for the Arts funding levels (Bertelli *et al* 2014). Likewise, questions of sponsorship and philanthropy is examined by Stanziola (2011) and Méndez-Carbajo and Stanziola (2008), who question the assumption that private funding is restricted to London, raising questions of organizational capacity, specific local circumstances and drawing attention to funding inequalities *within* regions.

Inequalities of funding are not the only spatial aspects of consumption. Gilmore (2013) notes the lack of research on understanding the relationship between place and cultural consumption. The importance of place is shown by the work of Widdop and Cutts (2012:59) and Brook (2013). In the former, writing on museums, a clear pattern of engagement is shown:

> *"Those who live in deprived areas are more likely not to visit museums than their counterparts living in less deprived areas. Living in deprived areas has a significant impact on museum participation, not only because of the presence of other non-museum participants, but also because living in such undesirable environments results in fewer opportunities to enhance cultural lifestyles."*

A pattern supported the discussion by Hooper-Greenhill *et al* (2009). Brook's (2013) work was focused on distance to venue, rather than the socio-economic status of attendees. Analysis of statistics for opera audiences suggests distance is a vitally important factor in determining engagement, leading Brook to ask what the effect of distance might be on other art forms, particularly given the elite social basis of the opera audience (Bereson 2002).

These issues are known to policymakers, for example ACE began the *Creative People and Places* programme to deal with some of the inequalities of geography. However this does not address all critiques of geographical inequality, nor can it address the intersection of geography with other types of inequality. Edensor and Millington (2013) illustrate how places themselves, and their cultures, can be bound up with legitimate and illegitimate tastes. In this instance, fieldwork on Blackpool's Illuminations is used to question the marginalization of values associated with family and tradition in favour of the urban design aesthetics favoured in gentrification. This idea returns to both Wood and Skegg's (2011) consideration of what is respectable in reality television and Miles and Sullivan's (2013) reminder of the various and varied cultural practices associated with the family, rather than the state.

Identities and Cultural Value

Cultural consumption and inequality has a range of other social bases including gender, ethnicity, disability, age and sexuality. The levels of research are uneven for each topic and as a result this section will concentrate on gender and ethnicity, with comments on disability and age. We note the difficulty of finding *extensive* literature on sexuality, inequality and cultural value (e.g. Allington 2011).

The issue of data collection is especially complex with regard to ethnicity. One major work on cultural consumption, Bennett *et al* (2009), employing Bourdieu's idea of cultural capital, is clear that there are interactions between class-based aspects of cultural value and those associated with gender, ethnicity and age divisions. These elements interact with each other and with class. However understanding these interactions is complicated because of data issues. ACE (2014) identify the problems of making robust statements based on *Taking Part* data, particularly as the aggregated data from the survey brings a range of diverse and different communities together under the Black Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME) category. Academic research has attempted to counter this issue by boosting samples of BAME respondents (Bennett *et al* 2009), but it is clear that the fine grained understandings of minority ethnic cultural consumption and its relationship to cultural value requires a research approach that is not possible with the current survey data. This is also important for issues around sexuality, which is under-represented as an area of study in the bulk of the literature surveyed in the present discussion and in the literature on cultural production (although there is, of course, a tradition of queer theory applied to specific humanities and social sciences) and for studies of disability (although work such as Morris 2013 has engaged with using social media methods).

One way of thinking through those issues is by considering how consumption underpins individual and community sense of identity. For theorists such as Appadurai (1998) and Miller (2010), consumption is a relational social and active process. As a result consumption is part of the making and unmaking of the social categories, such as gender or ethnicity, around which inequality is organised. For example, in the work of Pitcher (2014:2), thinking about categories of race depends on *'the books we read, the food we eat, the TV we watch, the toys we play with, the clothes we wear'*.

The literature that addresses how we live is potentially vast, with no single field or discipline addressing everything. Moreover the types of inequalities identified in section 2 add further confusion to attempts to pin down key texts or research programmes.

Gender is an excellent illustration of this issue. There are a range of ways to approach gender, consumption and inequality. For example, a recent edited collection (Casey and Martens 2007) places the focus on domestic forms of consumption, such as bedroom décor or wedding practices. Within quantitative studies of consumption, both Bennett *et al* (2009), Taylor (2013), (2014b) and CASE (2010) found different levels of engagement and interest in cultural forms for men and women.

These differences can be given detail by thinking about one cultural practice: reading for pleasure. There are both qualitative and quantitative approaches to reading, all of which highlight the importance of gender. Driscoll (2014), studying reading and literary festivals discusses how supposedly 'middlebrow' literary work is given a subordinate and feminised position within the literary field. Similarly Cann (2013) demonstrates how young people found gendered values in cultural texts, values that determined what was, and what was not, gender appropriate taste. Taylor (2013) shows how women and girls read more than men and boys and how reading is expected of girls. Those women and girls who read less than once a week may be seen as failing to perform the 'normal' or standard type of cultural consumption. Reading is useful here as its value is so heavily marked by gender and the consumption practice itself is linked not only to class or status differences but reflects the broader inequalities associated with gender in British society.

Just as there is clear gender inequality in the UK (CSI 2015a), Britain is a society marked by racial and ethnic inequalities (CSI 2015c). In this context what is deemed to be culturally valuable carries elements of these types of inequality. Writing in the mid 1990s, Alexander's (1996) study of Black British youth cultures identified the lineage of opposition these individuals, communities and cultural practices faced from those who sought to define them as alien to English- or Britishness.

Culture here is clearly hierarchical and exclusionary, with the non-white needing to be subsumed and assimilated into correct and proper forms of British cultural identity. Whilst the language may have shifted to 'values', Gilroy (2012) identifies the same forms of hierarchy at work in present day politics (also Lewis 2007). Indeed as Gilroy reminds us, recourse to discussions of values is to position not only the artefacts of cultures as ways of life in a hierarchy, but also to positions those ways of life themselves as more or less valuable. James (2012) illuminates this point by identifying how expressions of youth and black British music have been marginalised by relating them to violence or anti-social behaviour whilst at the same time castigating them for being overly commercialised, inauthentic and thus having 'sold out'.

There are a wealth of histories of representation and cultural production within specific art forms, including film (Bourne 2001), theatre (Chambers 2011) and television (Malik 2002). However, specific works on cultural consumption present a much more complicated picture. Recent research (e.g. Rollock 2014, Rollock *et al* 2015, Saha 2015, Warikoo and Furh 2013, Kim 2014) indicates what is culturally valuable for one ethnic or racial group maybe rejected or marginalised by another. This is most notable in the way ethnically dominant British culture, with its focus on whiteness, is represented by what the state funds, often at the price of leaving BAME individuals and communities to feel that it has little relevance or connection to them.

Museum studies is a useful entry into this discussion. In a comment on the difficulties of recruiting BAME participants to a study, Newman *et al* (2013:478) perfectly capture the distance between what is displayed and what is consumed:

> *'When asked they declined to become involved in the research. When asked why, a group of women of Pakistani origin from Gateshead replied that the exhibitions were of no cultural relevance to them. However, if crafts from their home country were being shown they would have attended'*

This, of course, is not a new issue (indeed ACE commissioned at 2014 review on the topic). Moreover Dawson (2012), discussing minority ethnic individuals from lower socio-economic status backgrounds, demonstrates how the intersections of economic, social and cultural exclusion are not just explanatory factors for non-participation; here participants recited the well-known idea that the science museums Dawson was studying had little or no relevance to their lives. Non-participation in turn contributed to the inequalities experienced by the individuals in this research, marking them out as excluded from broader British society.

Jermyn and Desai (2000) found evidence that the arts had an off-putting and elitist image for BAME communities. Most interesting, again echoing the struggles over cultural value, older BAME people and BAME women in this study located images of culture in relation to the heritage of the individual's community and many were actively involved in arts and cultural practices around that heritage.

However Widdop and Cutts (2012) note how BME (the category used in their research) groups' participation in museums does not follow the standard pattern which suggests that higher levels of education indicate higher levels of engagement. Rather BME individuals with degrees, in Widdop and Cutts' analysis, are *less* likely to visit museums than BME individuals without degrees. More research is obviously needed to explain this finding and to understand if it holds for other cultural forms

There is the dual moment in this construction of cultural value, of the under consumption of the culture offered by the state and the reduction of BAME culture *to niche interests, further confirming their marginalisation and the potential distance between state culture and BAME lives (Saha 2015, Appignanesi 2010, Malik 2013). These issues are not, unfortunately, new (Kahn 1976).*

*Scholars in education studies have tried to understand how some of the debates over representation and consumption intersect with other social inequalities. R*ollock (2014:448), is clear about how class intersects with Black British identity to form a powerful element of contemporary inequality, even for her research participants possessing the 'right' social position:

> *'Her constant surprise and dismay when her 'closest [white] friends', whom she has known for over 30 years, speak of black people and their ghetto blasters, 'and I say, "Well what are you talking about? Do I have a ghetto blaster?"'. In short, the fact of blackness remains. Skin colour acts as a form of embodied capital that disrupts and lessens the worth of the cultural capital held by black middle classes. They are perpetual outsiders because of their race, irrespective of class status, and this contributes to their hesitation about comfortably self-identifying as middle class.'*

Class is also present in the reinforcement of the unequal value accorded to non-white cultures. In research on elite students' perceptions of meritocracy in university admissions, Warikoo and Furh (2014:708) report a clear and stark hierarchy of the value of different cultures:

> *'Some believed that black students' family cultures were not conducive to academic success and interest in elite education. These students specifically identified black applicants, and argued that their lack of cultural focus on educational achievement prevents them from applying to and enrolling in elite universities like Oxford'.*

The research goes on to suggest that lack of engagement beyond elite white cultures allowed the privileged students interviewed for this research to be comfortable citing 'culture' as an explanation for the lack of Black British individuals' entrance into elite educational organisations.

The unequal value afforded to BAME cultures is also seen in parents' attempt to support children's' extra-curricular actives in school (Rollock *et al* 2015) and mould them into 'cultural omnivores' (Vincent and Ball 2007). The importance of this last point will be made clear in the following section.

Cultural hierarchies and boundaries are not just a matter of the division between popular and elite cultural forms. These boundaries manifest themselves in the status of genres such as folk or metal (Spraklen 2014) that are associated or co-opted with specific political projects on both the far right and far left (Lucas 2013). Again the point here is not about inequality of access to a genre. It is about the role of a particular cultural form in the production and reproduction of social inequalities, in the case of folk music inequalities associated with race and ethnicity. This is, of course, not to suggest there is an inherent link between folk music and inequalities. Nor is there an inherent quality of Opera that implicates it in the class system of the UK (for example Bereson's (2002) comparative work on Opera in Europe or Benzecry's 2011 study in Argentina). Rather the way that these genres are valued and used is bound up with social inequality.

One way of concluding this set of themes is by returning it the idea of cultural hierarchy raised, most obviously, in the relationship between cultural value and race or ethnicity. These discussions of gender and race all contest the idea of the 'normal' or ideal cultural consumer. Indeed, Hylton (2007:23) notes notions of cultural diversity can themselves 'presuppose or imply normality to be white and everything else to be diverse'. These ideas of the 'normal' cultural consumer are also critiqued from the point of view of disability (e.g. McKay 2013, Shakespeare 1994, Briant *et al* 2013), whereby there is an absence of questions of disability, of representation, activity, impact and meaning. In McKay's argument, focused on popular narratives of music there is an absence of the recognition that disability is crucial to understanding contemporary pop. This is against the backdrop of governmental concern with the disabled as an audience or as participants in culture (ACE 2014), but also against the backdrop of disabled individuals and communities being hit especially hard by reductions in government funding and services (Kaye *et al* 2012).

Similar intersections occur with regard to age. Cultural consumption differs at different stages of the life course (Bennett *et al* 2009, Reeves 2014, Chan and Goldthrope 2005, Savage *et al* 2013, CASE 2010, Legunia 2015, Durrer 2011). Age also connects to other types of social stratification. This can be seen in Newman *et al* (2013), who considered the response of older people to contemporary visual art and found life course experiences to be an important influence, most specifically around class and mobility. When taken into the gallery setting contemporary visual art had value for all of the participants in the study. However the responses were clearly stratified around lines of class and mobility. For working class participants the benefits were in the context of relating the experiences to their own lives, whilst questioning the artistic status of the exhibitions. Middle class participants were much less likely to reject the exhibitions as 'art', narrating value through the rules of the artistic field. These findings were echoed by economists studying theatre (Grisolia *et al* 2012). They identified distinct stratifications when considering pricing strategies necessary to mitigate the ageing basis for arts such as theatre, an ageing segment of the population they describe as closely resembling an 'intellectual' or 'cultural' class.

Class, Status and Cultural Value

In Bennett *et al*'s (2009) major survey of British cultural consumption engagement or disengagement is related very strongly to social class:

> *'Class remains a central factor in the structuring of contemporary cultural practice in Britain: class matters. Whatever social advantage might arise from heavy engagement in cultural activities will accrue to those who are highly educated, who occupy higher occupational class positions, and who have backgrounds within higher social classes. Higher social class is associated with regular attendance at the theatre, museums, art galleries, stately homes, opera, cinema, musicals and rock concerts. It is also strongly associated with owning paintings and reading books. Belonging to the lowest social classes tends to be associated with never doing these things.' (Bennett et al 2009:52)*

There are, however, major nuances in the debate around this type of inequality and cultural consumption. Partially this is to do with a technical debate between Weberian sociologists interested in social status (Chan and Goldthorpe 2007a, Reeves 2014) and Bourdieusian sociologists interested in social class. Bennett *et al* (2009) are part of this latter group. This debate has been well rehearsed (e.g. Goldthorpe 2007, Reeves 2014, Savage *et al* 2005 and the overview in O'Brien 2014). Rather than describe the debate, the remainder of this section will attempt to understand how work highlighting social stratification, for example around levels of education, individuals' social standing, or individual's social class, relates to cultural value.

There are two ideas that need to be examined, first the concept of a 'deficit' model in cultural consumption, second the idea of omnivorous cultural consumption. The relationship between these developments in the study of cultural consumption is that one underpins the other, whereby those who do not consume a breadth of cultural forms are positioned as lacking or having a deficit in their consumption. This is related, in turn, to social stratification, as the groups most usually thought of as having this deficit are those from less affluent backgrounds (Miles and Sullivan 2013) whilst those from more affluent, but less well educated social positions are not constructed as problems in need of state intervention (Chan and Goldthorpe 2007b).

Jancovich (2011) and Stevenson (2013) provide the most recent engagement with Miles and Sullivan's (2012) concern that official measures and official provision of culture both excludes everyday forms of cultural activity, such as volunteer or amateur arts, and relegates those to a status associated with lower positions in the social structure and in terms of cultural value. Stevenson (2013) summarises the main thrust of the argument for policy:

> 'It is argued that although the "problem" is represented in policy documents as the existence of barriers that create unequal access to culture, nested within this is a further, but less explicit difficulty, namely that the "problem" is the failure to engage with those cultural activities that receive state support. If the "problem" was understood as a need to provide equality of access to culture rather than state funded culture, then those who implement policy would be free to focus less on maximising access to those organisations and activities which, for other valid reasons, the Government funds, but that the majority of the public are not interested in attending.'

On the same topic, Bull (2015), writing on classical music, notes how the concern with getting excluded groups to attend or participate in elite cultural forms of interest to elite social groups (Savage and Gayo-Cal 2007, Warde and Bennett 2008) affirms the lesser worth of the cultures with which those groups are already engaged (see Dawson 2012 on museums for similar concerns).

When thinking about the insights from this research for understanding cultural value it is clear that cultural consumption has a relationship with social position and it acts to reinforce those positions. However the conclusion that non-participation contributes to the reproduction of social inequality is insufficient .We have suggested a link between cultural value and inequality that was not only founded in terms of social exclusion as an aspect of non-participation, but could also be seen in the cultural hierarchy interrelated with the idea of an individual or a community 'failing' to participate.

The idea that not engaging in state funded cultural activity (with that non-engagement revealed by state administered surveys) is a problem, relates to the change in British society that has seen cultural engagement become a marker of a particular kind of normality. An illustration of this new 'normal', comes in the figure of the omnivore.

Warde et al (2007) outline how the idea of there bring a single, unified, 'legitimate' culture is no longer an acceptable element of the way contemporary British society perceives itself. The decline (or indeed elimination) of snobbery suggested by Bennett et al (2009) and Kieran (2008) is at the heart of the new norm for cultural consumption. However this decline of snobbery is contested in a range of work closely engaged with more popular cultural forms. The essays collected in Wood and Skeggs (2011) on reality television are good examples of this, as both tastes for this type of entertainment and the representations of the individuals and communities on screen are grounded in clearly hierarchical class boundaries. Similar issues are found in Friedman's (2014) work on comedy. The younger participants in the research saw comedy as a legitimate cultural form, in contrast to its status as a popular or lowbrow cultural activity for older generations. This seems to reflect the decline of the snob. However, although the cultural form had been accepted, there were clear displays of taste hierarchies used to make judgements about individuals' worth in the eyes of those higher up the social ladder. Snobbery, therefore, may need to be considered within cultural activities, not just for cultural activities themselves (Friedman 2014).

Miles and Sullivan (2012) argue consumption of the old Bourdieusian 'legitimate' cultural forms is still a minority pursuit. Rather upper and middle class groups have, as in Bennett et al (2009) and Savage and Gayo-Cal's (2009) analysis, accepted pop culture rather than consuming everything. Even within social elites extensive or voracious consumption of traditionally 'high' cultural forms are a minority pursuit. Those with higher social status consuming across the cultural hierarchy can be described as being omnivores in cultural consumption, as opposed to having narrow, or univourous, tastes. This idea has been the subject of vigorous debate in studies of cultural consumption (e.g. Chan and Goldthorpe 2007a) but it underpins some recent work (e.g. Friedman 2014, Savage et al 2013, Prieur and Savage 2013). British society is not solely characterised by an omnivorous approach to culture. Rather there is a new type of cultural consumption that has tried to position itself as 'normal', based on a set of attitudes that are open and seemingly anti-hierarchical.

Sociological considerations of class boundaries (McKenzie 2015) illustrate how this new normal operates. As Skeggs (2004: 148) has noted, a shift has occurred from 'middle class formation reliant on achieving status through hiding and restricting knowledge to one in which status is achieved through the display of this knowledge and practice: exclusivity to transparency'. It is here that ideas about breadth and depth of cultural knowledge, crossing boundaries of previous era's cultural hierarchies is important. This has major implications for the process of assigning cultural value, particularly in the context of those shaping what sort of cultural value is produced (which is discussed in the following section). However these attitudes are themselves socially stratified, as well as underpinning much of the world of cultural production.

Savage and Gayo-Cal, writing in 2009, detailed how an open approach to cultural consumption represented a new way of drawing hierarchies in cultural consumption, it is was '*the new embodiment of contemporary middle class domination, through their capacity to absorb previously opposed elements of cultural taste*' (2009:3)'. Tampubolon (2010:22) supports these findings and crucially describes the legacy of cultural hierarchies within these attitudes: *'the omnivores perceive cultures to be hierarchical and this is especially evident among the avid omnivores. And so, it is worth asserting, if somewhat ironic, that the omnivores consume cultures across different ranks while being aware that cultures have a hierarchy; and the more avid these omnivores are the more acutely aware they are'*.

Chan (2013) disputes the idea that the omnivore is a marker of distinction and represents an aspect of social inequality. His work suggests only about a quarter of university graduates maybe said to be omnivores. However this does not tell us about the role and importance of those individuals in shaping what is, and what is not, given cultural value. For example Savage *et al* (2013) found evidence that form of omnivorousness they call emerging cultural capital (opposed to more traditional forms of cultural capital associated with elite arts consumption and the restrictions of knowledge discussed by Skeggs (2004)) is a crucial aspect of the social stratification of younger parts of British society. This finding was against the backdrop of a study suggesting culture was an essential part of understanding contemporary social inequality. Future research, therefore, needs to further clarify what, if any, relationship omnivorous attitudes, emerging cultural capital, the idea of a cultural 'deficit' and the intersections of class and status with other forms of social identity have to cultural value.

The statistics mentioned in the earlier part of this section suggest cultural consumption is stratified around education, social class and status, gender and ethnicity. As the following section shows there is a similar stratification in cultural production. The connection between having the right sort of cultural interests to be able to produce culture, particularly in an era of abundance of cultural forms and productive technologies (Wright 2011, Beer and Taylor 2013), is highly important. This begins before formal engagement with cultural production, for example, cultural value has a role in determining who gains entrance into elite universities, advantaging those able to display the 'right' cultural knowledge (Zimdars *et al* 2009, Sullivan, 2001, 2007) that is linked to positions within the broader social structure (Boliver 2013). What is worrying is how the idea of cultural tastes being important to production produces a closure of cultural value. That is to say if tastes are characterised by their whiteness, maleness and middle class-ness (Pitcher 2014, Snee 2014, Spracklen 2014), then so will cultural production.

Cultural Production, Cultural Value and Inequality

The time of writing this report coincided with an unprecedented media interest in questions of representation and inequality in cultural production. What has long been apparent to scholars in the field – that the cultural industries are less ethnically diverse, more male and skewed towards those of a higher socio-economic background than most other parts of the economy – seemed to have become, at least briefly, 'news.' In the UK, the prominence of public school actors and singers in particular, caused something of a furore, particularly during the film and TV 'awards season,' in the early part of 2015 (e.g.. BBC News, 2015; New Statesman, 2015), while the announcement of the Oscars shortlist again raised questions about gender and ethnicity exclusion. David Oyelowo's non-appearance on the best actor shortlist for his performance as Martin Luther King in the film *Selma,* was seen as one part of a bigger problem, as all 20 acting nominees were white, all fifteen writers nominated in the screen categories were men and as Time magazine rather archly noted, "seven of the eight Best Picture nominees are about a white man dealing with internal conflict" (D'Addario, 2015).

The issue has been bubbling for some time in the UK media, often raised by an older generation of artists, such as the actor Julie Walters, opining that, 'the way things are now there aren't going to be any working class actors' (Hough, 2012).While the artist Gary Hume, feared that art had become just, "another professional option for the young and affluent" (O'Hagan, 2014). And Stuart Maconie mourned the 'creeping blandness,' of much indie music, as (white) popular music also featured a large influx of the privately educated from Chris Martin to Florence Welch, Mumford and Sons to Lily Allen (Maconie, 2015). Actor David Morrissey accurately identified 'intern culture,' as part of the problem which he described as, 'economic excision of working class people' (Plunkett, 2014), though as we shall discuss, exclusion is more than economic in origin. In many cases these artists were reflecting on their own youth and their perception that the cultural industries were then more inclusive, particularly in terms of class (interestingly, gender rarely appears in these reminiscences), producing a richer, more diverse cultural landscape. In this case it could be described as a debate about values and the value of a more diverse range of cultural offerings.

There are of course, problems with such discourse. The focus on individuals obscures the larger picture and nostalgia for more 'gritty' popular music or TV drama conceals a sort of class essentialism, as limiting in some cases as that which it seeks to challenge. Individuals understandably resent the suspicion that they 'made it' via social connections rather than 'talent;' but social networks *are* a major feature of cultural industries labour markets. Such concerns, however problematically voiced, are reflective of a genuine problem of inequality in the cultural industries – which covers class, gender, ethnicity, disability and geography in ways that intersect and reinforce one another. In some cases the problem appears to be getting worse (DCMS, 2015), as the Warwick Commission notes (2014), the representation of people with a disability, women and ethnic minorities in the cultural workforce has got worse over the last five years. There is no evidence that, as Sir Nicholas Hyntner argues, the problem is 'less acute' than in other professions (Ellis Petersen, 2015). Indeed the structure of these industries (particularly project work and large amounts of self-employment) makes tackling such problems more difficult than in other professions, such as the law or medicine.

This section focuses on cultural inequality in production and for the most part in what one might call 'professional' production, that is people making or attempting to make a living from cultural production. Data on employment and self-employment in the cultural industries is weak as we shall discuss, and the definition of 'professional' cultural work is highly problematic, given the amount of unpaid work of one sort of another (running the gamut from volunteering to unpaid internships) that takes place. But the focus on professional labour markets in this section can be justified not only in terms of data availability but also of influence; we want to understand or at least interrogate how inequalities in labour markets play out in the culture we consume – via TV, films, games, music and so on, and how that culture in turn helps to shape our society. Alongside the question of social justice, inequality in and exclusion from, cultural labour markets is particularly problematic because of the way in which the cultural industries – particularly the mass media – helps to construct our understanding of society.

This part of the report will look at questions of inequality particularly in terms of class, gender and ethnicity (the so-called 'big three') as these are the issues where most of the literature is concentrated; and will also touch on disability and place as sources of inequality. The paper will also look at work that has been done on intersectionality and at critiques of the policy response to inequality, particularly under the discourse of 'diversity.' This is a huge area, with a burgeoning literature and a paper of this length can only hope to sketch the primary issues of inequality in cultural production and indicate the literature that supports it.

Data issues

The last 20 years or so has seen an improvement in the sort of labour market data we have on the cultural industries, at least in the UK. But in the last five years, the abolition of regional bodies such as RDAs, smaller research budgets for cultural agencies and a weakening of policy commitment to questions of labour market diversity (hence less perceived need to collect the supporting data) have meant that many of the pressing debates are carried out against a background of inadequate or missing data. As Conor *et al* (2015) argue, "*If what governments choose to measure and audit is a reflection of their concerns and priorities, then inequalities in the CCI seems to be low on the list.*"

The major source for labour market data in the UK cultural industries is the DCMS Creative Industry Economic Estimates, first published at the end of 2010. Given the unreliability of statistics in this area (small sample sizes, high levels of part-time and project work and so on), the data was always referred to as 'estimates' rather than official Government statistics. The first publication (DCMS, 2010) described the statistics as 'experimental,' and drew on a variety of sources including the Annual Business Survey (ABS), Inter-Departmental Business Register (IDBR) and the Labour Force Survey (LFS), supplemented by other data sources, particularly on specific sectors such as the British Fashion Council's report, *The Value of the UK Fashion Industry* and specific reports on both design and the antiques trade (DCMS, 2001).

It was to avoid such problems that, in collaboration with Nesta, and based on the so-called 'creative trident' model of cultural work, the DCMS revised its approach to gathering this data (Bakhshi *et al*, 2013). From 2014 onwards, the now renamed 'Creative Economy' statistics sought to capture jobs in the Creative Industries (both those deemed 'creative' and those not) and those in other sectors in what they called 'embedded' creative jobs, such as designers who work for manufacturing companies. The debate about 'creative intensity' need not detain us here (though see Oakley & O'Connor, 2015); more of a problem for those of us who are interested in the peculiarities of cultural work and in how questions of production link to questions of representation, was the re-inclusion of 'software and services' as a sub-sector into the data, thus introducing a lot of non-cultural work into the picture and complicating conversations about the demographic make-up of the cultural industries.

Further problems have been caused by the abolition of Regional Development Agencies and wider public spending cuts, both of which have resulted in a loss of useful data collection on these topics. The London Development Agency in particular (GLA Economics, 2009, 2010) had developed a series of reports on London's creative workforce, which provided useful demographic information about both employment and self-employment – looking in particular at gender and ethnicity. These reports ceased publication in 2011, after the LDA was abolished.

DCMS's most recent publication, Creative Industries: Focus on Employment (DCMS, 2014), does include some demographic information, though only on gender and ethnicity, it does not for example provide information on disability. Again the inclusion of software and services rather distorts the picture. The overall figures for ethnic minority employment, for example, is given as 10 per cent for the UK as a whole, though it is below 10 per cent in most sub-sectors of the cultural industries[1], with the exception of publishing (11.4%). In software and services however (which accounts for around a third of jobs), 15 per cent of the employed workforce is from an ethnic minority background, which raise the overall total. Of more concern is the somewhat complacent tone of the report, which comments that, at around 10 per cent, BAME employment is 'about average' for the UK, though this ignores the fact that the concentration of these sectors is in London and the South East – where the ethnic minority working age population is larger than in the UK as a whole (Nesta, 2015).

Creative Skillset's work on the media sectors (Creative Skillset, 2012) suggests that BAME representation is less than 'average,' in the media sectors, in fact it has declined from 7.4 per cent in 2006 to 5.4 per cent in 2012. Unlike the DCMS, Creative Skillset does collect data on the percentage of the workforce with a disability, in the media sectors as a whole in 2012 it was around 1 per cent, unchanged since 2006, though in both cases significantly lower than the proportion of the workforce who report themselves as disabled, which in the 2010 workforce survey was 5.6 per cent. In the film industry that number falls to just 0.3%.

In terms of gender, women are under-represented, just under 36 per cent of jobs in the creative economy are filled by women compared to nearly 47 per cent in the economy as a whole (the Creative Skillset figure for the media industries is the same – 36 per cent), but the sub-sectoral breakdown is somewhat different. Software and services has the lowest percentage of women working in it at 18.4 per cent. The group with the highest proportion of jobs for women was 'Museums, galleries and libraries', at 69.5 per cent – a reflection of the fact that, among others things, female labour is often concentrated in lower-paid employment.

In addition to the DCMS's numbers, other public agencies, more directly concerned with lack of diversity in the cultural workforce have in recent years conducted more qualitative studies – though these too have been reduced by recent budget cuts[2]. The Sector Skills Council for the media industries, now known as Creative Skillset, has been relatively active in this field in terms of gender, (Skillset 2008, 2010, 2011) in part because of the perceived gender problem in the media industries – highlighted among other things by concern over the absence of older women on screen[3]. Skillset research over several years has consistently shown that women aged 35 or over are under-represented in the media workforce, compared with both men of the same age and women aged less than 35. A notable drop in the participation of women between 2006 and 2009, from 46 per cent to 38 per cent in independent TV production, from 34 per cent to 20 per cent in animation and from 32 percent to 5 per cent in interactive content design raised particular alarm.

Another area where publicly available data sets are useful is in exposing spatial inequality. Recent data from Nesta (Nesta, 2015) confirms a longstanding pattern of spatial inequality – with concentrations of cultural industry employment becoming more pronounced. London and the South East of England account for 43 per cent of employment in the UK's creative economy, whereas regions like the West Midland account for only 6 per cent, and 15 per cent of London's workforce is classified as working in the creative economy – double that of any other region. This is particularly the case for more specialist creative occupations (those deemed to be doing 'creative' jobs within the cultural industries such as musicians, rather than as say IP lawyers or accountants).

....
[1]   These include advertising, architecture, crafts, design
[2]   Samuel Mitchell, CCSKillls, pers comm.
[3]   This was brought to popular attention when broadcaster Miriam O'Reilly successfully sued the BBC for age discrimination when she was sacked from the programme Countryfile

Protected characteristics and the Equalities Act 2010

The biggest gap in publicly available data of course relates to social class and given its intersection with questions of ethnicity and spatial inequality in particular, and its obvious link to the problem of unpaid work in the cultural industries, this is highly problematic. The 2010 Equality Act defines nine 'protected' characteristics[4] (age, race, gender reassignment, disability, marital status, pregnancy and maternity, religious belief, gender and sexual orientation), but despite some suggestions at the time it was drafted that it might, does not include social class. A consequence of its exclusion is that there is no requirement on public agencies to collect data in terms of social class and thus the debate about class discrimination in particular has to be carried out against a background of absent or less than comprehensive data.

A variety of proxies – private school education is a currently popular one – can be used, but as this only covers 7 per cent of the UK population – exclusive concentration on this factor rather ignores other social class issues. Other organisations use higher education qualifications as a proxy, particularly where individuals are the first generation of their family to attend University, which seems a more robust indicator or postcode data (correlated with other statistics on poverty) though this is less reliable in cities like London where wealth and poverty can exist quite close to one another. We know from DCMS statistics (DCMS, 2014) that more than half (57.7 per cent) of jobs in the Creative Economy were filled by people who have a degree or equivalent qualification in 2013, compared to 31.1 per cent of all jobs in the UK, so this provides us with some indication of the class profile of the creative workforce, but more robust data is clearly needed.

The Arts Council (ACE) provides an example, both of the problems of data collection in this field and some possible ways forward. The Council has traditionally focussed its attention on two areas of inequality – ethnicity and disability – with specific funds, officers and programmes in both cases. Though far from suggesting that this is adequate – the last investment round for National Portfolio Organisations saw a drop in the number of applicants from both BAME and disability-led organisations, following the launch of its 'Creative Case for Diversity,' in December 2014, ACE is now looking both at new ways of promoting a more diverse portfolio and at collecting data on their attempt.

Like other public organisations, they are only required to monitor 'protected' categories, but its own definition of diversity includes 'class and economic disadvantage.' ACE's approach, while being couched in the language of diversity, rather than inequality (Malik, 2013) will at least attempt to reflect the intersections between arts consumption, production, commissioning and leadership – by measuring diversity across the workforce of organisations who apply for funds, the Boards which govern them, and the leadership of such organisations, as well as – particularly given recent criticism – the location of arts organisations. ACE has committed to including social class in its definition of diversity despite its absence from the Act, but is yet to decide on how class will be measured. From 2015 it will be publishing workforce diversity data for individual national portfolio organisations and major partner museums.

Gender discrimination and inequality

Like ethnicity, gender inequality characterises almost all sections of the labour market, but it takes different forms and may result from different pressures in specific contexts. There are, as Acker (2006) has argued, different 'inequality regimes.' Creative Skillset's work on gender (2008, 2010, 2011) draws attention to the fact that – among the cultural sectors – the media industries in particular are a site of gender inequality and some of the reasons advanced for this hold true, in different ways, across other labour markets and other manifestations of inequality. They can be summarised as: industrial and organisational structure; patterns of work; hiring practices, and bias and discrimination.

As earlier research on labour markets had indicated it might (Christopherson & Storper, 1989; Ursell, 2000), the liberalisation of film and TV markets, the virtual disintegration of the larger public service broadcasters and the growth of the independent TV production sectors saw the growth of more project based work, increasing competition among suppliers and increasing casualisation in the workforce – with concomitant loss of rights such as sick pay, pensions, maternity pay and even holiday pay. Unsurprisingly, representation of women remains higher in parts of the industry which still have vestiges of larger employers and traditional employment models are more common, such as terrestrial television (48 per cent) or broadcast radio (40 per cent).

Other Skillset work (2008) argues that pattern of working as much as loss of benefits acts a barrier to women's employment. The requirements to work long hours, through to the early hours of the morning, at weekends and away from home for

....
[4]   Protected in the sense of protected against discrimination in the workplace, education, public services etc

substantial periods of time is commonplace in some sectors, for example on film production. Thus, the research suggests many women who are entitled to maternity benefits do not feel able to take full advantage of them because of a combination of pressure from their employer, fear of being marginalised during absence, and a fear of losing touch in a fast-moving industry. As a result many had worked more or less right up to the birth of their child and returned to work before they would have liked. It was also common for women to report working during their maternity leave, even when not being paid, either because of pressure from their employer or because they wanted to 'keep their hand in'.

As Conor *et al* argue (2015), the numbers of women employed in the creative and cultural industries gives a stark enough picture of inequality, but the picture becomes even bleaker when one looks at the relative status and power of women in these sectors. The Fawcett Society's annual audit Sex and Power (2013) reported that there is not a single female Chair or Chief Executive of a Television company, only 5 per cent of national newspaper editors are women, less than 10 per cent of chairs of national arts organisations are women and even in the museums and gallery sector, where nearly 70 per cent of the workforce is female, only 28 per cent of directors of major galleries or museums are women. A survey of the radio workforce by grade shows a clear decline in the number of women at higher levels of the industry, 42 per cent of managers were female, but only 34 per cent of senior managers and 17 per cent of Board members (BETR, 2011). Overall, public sector organisations do better in this respect, 50 per cent of BBC Trustees are women, 60 per cent of the Heritage Lottery Fund Board and just under 44 percent of the Arts Council Board were women, while the print media are particularly unrepresentative, at the beginning of 2013 no national dailies had female political editors, and 90 per cent of current affairs and political magazines were edited by men.

Given the importance of intersectionality as an idea within feminist literature (Lorde, 1984; Brah & Phoenix, 2004; Acker, 2006), these figures shed some light on how this intersectionality may be operating. Age and parental status in particular seem to interact with gender issues, as the loss of women from these industries after the age of 35 is particularly noticeable. In addition, the absence of workplace benefits such as maternity and sick pay, are clearly harder for working class women to bear than for women who may be more affluent. Parental status is clearly an issue for women who remain the primary carers in society (DWP, 2009), but Gill (2014) rightly warns against a simple focus on maternity as a reason for women's under-representation, as it may close down other area of investigation and critique. As with the problem of unpaid internships, the tendency for policymakers in particular is to focus on technocratic solutions to specific manifestations of inequalities, rather than the considerably more difficult work of addressing such inequalities.

In addition to these structural factors therefore Gill (2014) argues that other factors – sexism in the workplace, "the power of the dominant post-feminist sensibility which, in suggesting that "all the battles have been won," renders inequality increasingly difficult to voice or speak about," (2014: 509) and the way in which individuals needs to present themselves as workers, all have an important bearing on gender (in)equality. The culture of 'network sociality,' (Wittel, 2001) within the culture and creative industries is a well-known example of this latter phenomenon. When work, particularly project-based work is often won through a combination of reputation and membership of social networks, participation in such networks – in themselves the product of structural social inequalities, often based on education – becomes vital.

In another sense of the term, 'network' of course refers to the social activity of networking, associated at least in Anglo Saxon cultures with after-work drinking and the process of 'selling oneself' as well as the affective labour of updating profiles, tweeting, blogging and engaging in similar self-promotional activities. Participation in such activities can of course be circumscribed by a variety of circumstances, ranging from personal characteristics such as shyness, to more structural factors such as caring responsibilities, living far from city centres where such socialising takes place, or being from a cultural background where alcohol is prohibited. Some of these are likely to have gendered implications, others less so and interestingly, Nelligan's recent research on the topic (Nelligan, 2015) that working class men find it more difficult than women (of any class) to 'perform' the presentation of self that such workplaces require. Just as with studies of consumption, we see the intersections of gender and class. The extent to which contemporary creative work requires a particular sort of presentation of the self and the ways in which this self is gendered, race and classed are considered by a variety of writers (e.g. Nixon, 2003; Gill, 2011 & 2014, Taylor & Littleton, 2012, Conor *et al*, 2015, Proctor-Thomson, 2013) in what is becoming a very fruitful area of work on non-economic barriers to equality.

Ethnicity

While the marginalisation of black 'above the line' talent from film, TV and radio occupied several column inches in newspapers in 2015 (e.g. Barkare, 2015), the question of ethnic minority exclusion from cultural participation has received less sustained attention in the academic literature. As Hesmondhalgh and Saha comment, "in the burgeoning field of research on cultural production, race and ethnicity have occupied an alarmingly marginal place," going on to note that many key texts on media production barely mention race and ethnicity (Hesmondhalgh & Saha, 2013: 181).

Of the academic literature that does consider these questions, the largest amount looks at media representations of race and ethnicity and at questions of stereotyping and racism (Gilroy, 1993; Gray, 2004, 2005; Downing & Husband, 2005; hooks, 2009), as has been discussed in the section on consumption. There is an important intersection between consumption and production that is under researched, particularly with regard to ethnicity.

Other work looks at the various mechanisms by which discrimination and exclusion happens (e.g. Cottle, 1997. 2000; Quinn, 2012; Edwards, 2014). Work on race and ethnicity in the production of news, for example, has revealed newsroom dynamics that constrain and hamper the efforts of journalists from ethnic minorities, resulting in imbalance and prejudice inherent within news reporting (Cottle, 1997, 2000; Newkirk, 2002; Wilson, 2000). Although not solely focused on the UK, Quinn's work on Hollywood looks at the strategies adopted by elite black actors – in this case Will Smith and Tyler Perry – in one of the most racially exclusive of the cultural industries. While other work considers the intersection between race and class which means that many black cultural workers are disadvantaged, both on the grounds of race and of class (e.g. Scharff, 2015) or of race and gender, which means that for example black men do not benefit from what Williams calls the 'glass escalator' that advantages white man in many professions (Williams, 2013).

The work of Sarita Malik (2002, 2008, 2013) has considered the rise of the discourse of 'diversity' within a UK context and particularly when applied to race and argues that this results in a depoliticisation of the struggle for equality, instead presenting a notion of 'diversity,' or more recently 'creative diversity,' simply as aspects of 'difference,' rather than inequality. She has looked at these questions within the setting of public service broadcasting – Channel 4 and the BBC – and has described what she sees as three 'phases' of policy – multiculturalism, cultural diversity and now 'creative' diversity which posits a post-multicultural, falsely 'post racial' understanding of ethnicity (Lentin, 2014) in line with a more conservative, mainstream approach to a range of issues on the part of public service broadcasters. Channel 4 in particular provides a useful case study (Malik, 2008), as its 'duty to be different' from the other terrestrial broadcasters has seen it experiment with a variety of approaches to so-called minority programming over the years, its founding rationale originally inscribed in a Multicultural Programmes Department and a variety of dedicated slots and programmes for ethnic minority audiences. In this way it sought, much more explicitly than UK broadcasters had hitherto, to link questions of production – those involved in the making of programmes and audiences – and through programmes such as Bandung File (1985 – 1991), co-edited by Darcus Howe and Tariq Ali; Eastern Eye (1982 to 85) and Black Bag (1991-97) sought both to develop black talent in production but also to address issues than had been ignored by a white broadcasting establishment. By 2001, when the-then Chief Executive of C4 Michael Jackson argued that ethnic minorities has been 'assimilated into the mainstream of society,' (quoted in Malik, 2008) policymakers were rapidly abandoning multiculturalism as a goal, and in the post 9/11 political settlement the-then Labour government was keen to promote 'social cohesion.'

Malik's recent work (2013) takes account of the Equalities Act 2010 and a decade or more of 'creative industries' discourse, which while celebrating the liberatory potential of creative industries for marginalised groups (Oakley, 2013) has, as we have seen, offered little evidence that such potential is being achieved. Malik argues that not only has 'diversity' served to detract from the politics of inequality, but the term itself is slippery – in Channels 4's case now referring to diversity of supply and regional diversity or in the case of the Arts Council's recent statement (ACE, 2014:16), 'greater diversity of artistic expression,' and a move away from the 'problematizing' approach to diversity.' The difficulty with moving away from a problematizing approach is that it may suggest that problems have been solved, which in some cases have been barely addressed.

Not fitting in- social class and cultural production

Bev Skeggs (2004) has argued that social class virtually disappeared as a central site of analysis, specifically within cultural and media studies in the late 1980s, but more generally from wider social and political discourse. A rapid and profound growth in inequality highlighted in section two of this report has, to some extent, brought discussion of class back into popular discourse and there has been some very good work in this area, not least by Skeggs herself.

Prevailing explanations for the dominance of the middle and upper middle classes in the cultural and creative industries tends to focus on economic factors: unpaid work in particular. This is clearly an issue. The ability of parents to support their children not only through higher education but beyond, the likelihood of having friends or relatives with whom one can stay (in large enough houses) without paying rent, the ability to borrow small amounts of funds (the popular media phrase 'the bank of mum and dad' is full of such class-based assumptions) and so on all have a clear impact on the ability of working class people to enter the cultural professions. Wider social networks matter as well, not simply in terms of nepotism – but in offering everything from advice, to internships and placements, to role models – knowing people who already work in the cultural and creative industries offers a multitude of advantages that help ensure that the narrow class basis of the sectors is replicated inter-generationally (Nelligan, 2015).

Recent research has shed light on the links between social class, education and cultural production (e.g. Banks & Oakley, 2015; Scharff, 2015; Bull, 2014; Ashton & Noonan, 2014; Allen, 2014) both at HE level and at school. Banks & Oakley (2015) look at the changing role of the art school, once widely viewed as the working class alternative to University, now absorbed into Universities and considerably less open to the maverick, less formally-educated population they once welcomed. Allen's work looks specifically at the effect of work placements, often undertaken in HE (Allen *et al*, 2012; Allen, 2014) and reveals that such schemes often founder in their stated attempts to promote diversity of ethnicity, gender, class or disability. She finds, in an echo of Gill's work, a general reluctance to acknowledge problems of inequality, both within host institutions and universities, when it comes to discussing work placements and that such schemes do little to help students identify, or even discuss, issues of inequality. Individuals are encouraged to 'fit in' and not complain when they experience feelings of exclusion. And the rhetoric of openness and meritocracy is stubbornly adhered to; anyone who cannot succeed in such situations is viewed as unfit to enter the industries. Indeed,

> 'the discursive construction of the ideal work placement student and potential creative worker – with a currency on flexibility, enterprise and self-sufficiency – privileges whiteness, middle classness, masculinity and able-bodiedness' (Allen et al, 2012: 6).

Scharff's work on equality and diversity in the classical music profession (Scharff, 2015) also explores the links between education- this time exposure to classical music in particular and instrumental playing in general- and the classical music profession. She suggests that working class children are less likely to have played a musical instrument, either at school or in extra curricula activities. However, again reflecting the importance of cultural and social factors in class exclusion, she draws on Bull's study (Bull, 2014) of classical music education to argue that this is not just a matter of 'access' or expense. Such students were more likely to experience bullying by instrumental teachers than other students and to see this bullying as their own fault because they had somehow failed, and they generally felt less comfortable and confident in the classical music world (Bull, 2014).

Much of this research argues that culture has no less saliency in the production of inequality than economic factors and work on the experience of class inequality such as disgust, stigma, devaluation and disrespect has flourished recently alongside more conventional class analysis of unequal access to power and resources (Lawler 2005; Sayer 2002, Tyler, 2008). Such research provides useful insights into what has been called the 'demonisation' of the working class in the British media and in popular culture in recent years (Jones, 2011). Tyler for example writes about how the portrayal of young working class women in particular on British TV (crystallised by the figure of Vicky Pollard, created, as she notes, by two white, privately-educated men) embodies both historical and contemporary anxieties about female sexuality and so called 'feral' youth, precisely at a moment of deepening inequality and class polarisation. She also argues that whereas outright racism, sexism and homophobia, in least in terms of representation is less common on TV than say, 30 years ago, mockery and resentment based on social class is perhaps more acceptable than in the recent past.

Clearly there is no simple link between representation and portrayal, any more than there is to consumption. Newspapers like the Sun, which feature frequent attacks on 'chavs,' or 'the underclass' have a large working-class readership; while some defence against the tide of anger at the so-called 'feral underclass' that followed the English riots of 2011, came from the bastions of high Toryism in the Daily Telegraph (Oborne, 2011). But the fact that class exclusion and indeed class prejudice in the cultural industries appears to be getting worse is difficult to separate both from an economic settlement which sees widening polarisation, a decline in trade union membership in the cultural industries, and a less sympathetic portrayal of working class life, particularly in the mainstream media.

Conclusion and recommendations for further research

Given the political and cultural saliency of this topic, almost all of it could be garnered under a heading of 'further research needed.' To be clear, the result of the focus on consumption and production does leave gaps in further study. In particular the review's remit means there is an important space to be filled consolidating cultural value explored by individual art form or genre studies (e.g. Hesmondhalgh 2014, Brooker 2012, Toynbee and Dueck 2011, Prior 2013, Wilks 2013, Sanderson 2008), historical approaches to cultural life (e.g. Kynaston, 2009, 2014, Houlbrook 2005, Gilroy 1993, Todd 2014), and the work discussed in this review. Indeed there are genres for which research is still in its infancy, for example Crawford (2012), writing on video games, suggests there is little that has properly understood the relationship between types of social stratification and video games using robust, transparent, data. Moreover the remit of the review has been on the UK, so there is further scope for comparative work.

Although research in this area is growing, there remains an absence of robust data on one hand and more systematic work on how inequality operates on the other. The relationship between these issues and the sort of culture we get – the representation question – remains under-explored. Other sources of inequality, among them disability, age, sexual orientation and place have barely been touched in an empirical way and they have benefited less from the sort of theorising that has taken place on race, class and gender.

Some issues such as disability and to some degree spatial inequalities do have some prominence in popular discourse, however. The activities of the disability arts movement since the 1970s, the growing profile of the Paralympics movement, the existence of a particular strands of public funding and programmes from organisation like the Arts Council and the requirements on public organisations (since the Disability Discrimination Act 2005) to monitor the impacts of public policy on the disabled – all mean that question of inequality in terms of disability and culture may seem relatively well-covered compared to other categories we have been discussing here.

Both Skillset and CCSkills[5] provide data on disability in the sectors they cover (Creative Skillset 2012), as does the Arts Council (ACE, 2010) and the BFI. We know for example that, as for women and ethnic minorities, the professional participation of disabled people in the cultural industries both starts from a lower base than for the population as a whole and gets worse the higher status the jobs in question. In England around 13% of the cultural workforce is classified as disabled, but Arts Council figures for example show that only 1.6 per cent of artistic staff, 2.8 per cent of managers and 3.9 per cent of Board members within larger cultural organisation and major museums consider themselves disabled.

Yet the growing literature on inequalities in cultural production features very little material that looks at the question of disabled cultural workers *as workers*. There is research that looks at the individual experience of being a disabled artist or at issues of representation, often from scholars who work in disability studies (e.g. Millett-Gallant 2012, Straus 2011) and some work on intersectionalities from cultural studies and queer studies (e.g. Barounis 2009). But in this field we are faced with the gap between raw data on one hand and individual and detailed qualitative experience on the others – but little that considers the sort of group dynamics, barriers and blocks that are examined in work on class, race or gender.

In terms of spatial inequalities, the need is perhaps for more theoretical work which can help us understand the relationship between place (of origin or residence) and cultural work. Although there is a large literature on the topic and culture and place (see Oakley, 2014 for a review), much of which argues that culture-led developments are often implicated in the production of further socio-economic inequality (via their links to gentrification effects for example), we do not really understand how place and labour interact in this way.

Beyond the observation that cultural facilities are not evenly spread across the UK this exposure to certain cultural forms at an early age will be differentiated, what role does reputation play for example? Suburbs are often characterised as bland, homogeneous or uncreative for example and implicitly contrasted with the more edgy or more glamorous inner city for example (Gilmore, 2013), while culture produced in rural areas can be stereotyped as backward looking, sentimental or parochial (Luckman, 2012). As Gibson *et al* (2010) point out, while some rural areas are forging' reputations as desirable places for 'creative class' urban relocation, other aspects of rural cultural production, such as country music festivals, have been ignored or patronised by policymakers because they are associated with rural working class culture.

....
5   See http://creative-blueprint.co.uk/statistics/reports/national-statistics

Work on the impact of new technology is also vital, as Beer (2013), Beer and Taylor (2013), Wright (2011) and Savage *et al* (2012) suggest. Understanding how cultural value is produced as much by the algorithmic choices of Netflix, iTunes or Spotify as it is by social stratifications should be high on the research agenda. This agenda, as this review demonstrates, must never shy from admitting the close relationship between what has cultural value and how inequality marks contemporary society.

Of course we have to be cautious about any causal statements between cultural value and inequality. On the one hand there is the problem of assigning social problems to culture in a way that ignores structural inequalities (Alexander 2014). On the other there is the trap of asking culture to do too much explanatory work, whereby *people could change their social class at will simply by turning off the Beatles and turning on to Beethoven'* (Mills 2014:7).

Overall, the review highlights the work needed to better connect discussions of cultural value and inequality. The process of what becomes valued and what is marginalised or ignored is accounted for within specific disciplinary traditions. However work that connects the economic and geographical analysis of how funding is distributed, via the sociological concern with the stratification of production and consumption, to the questions of canon formation (and exclusions therefrom) found in specific aesthetic or cultural studies, has yet to be done. It is here that research funding should focus, with an aim to better deploying interdisciplinary perspectives. In order to do this work good quality data is needed. In particular data is needed on those most marginalised from both the consumption and production of what, by virtue of its funding from the state, from audiences or from advertisers, contemporary British society deems valuable; and at the same time those that are marginalised by the way large scale, nationally representative, data on culture is collected.

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The Cultural Value Project seeks to make a major contribution to how we think about the value of arts and culture to individuals and to society. The project will establish a framework that will advance the way in which we talk about the value of cultural engagement and the methods by which we evaluate it. The framework will, on the one hand, be an examination of the cultural experience itself, its impact on individuals and its benefit to society; and on the other, articulate a set of evaluative approaches and methodologies appropriate to the different ways in which cultural value is manifested. This means that qualitative methodologies and case studies will sit alongside qualitative approaches.