

*Culture and the Quality of Life....reinventing the arts of governance.*  
*Colin Mercer*

- Quality of life research crucial to 'mainstreaming' role of cultural resources in urban and regional governance.
- Importance of reconciling 'objective' and 'perceptual' indicators.
- Strategic importance of quality of life research and indicators for 'soft' and 'creative' infrastructures of cities and regions
- Rediscovery of older senses of 'government', 'policy', and 'police' -physical, moral and spiritual well-being
- 'Folk-Work-Place' (Geddes): civics, citizenship, *urbs et civitas*
- Critical mass, productive diversity and community capacity-building.
- *The problem of GNP/GDP*

# State of Play (1):Objective Indicators

- Population Crisis Committee, *Life in the World's 100 Largest Metropolitan Areas* (1990)
  - Public safety
  - Food costs
  - Living space
  - Housing standards
  - Communications
  - Education
  - Public Health
  - Peace and quiet
  - Traffic flow
  - Clean air

# State of Play (2) Perceptual Indicators: uses and exchanges

- Glasgow Quality of Life Group

- Violent crime
- Non-violent crime
- Health provision
- Pollution levels
- *Cost of living*
- Shopping facilities
- Access to areas of scenic quality
- *Cost of owner occupied housing*
- Education provision
- *Employment prospects*
- *Wage levels*
- *Unemployment levels*
- Climate
- Sports facilities
- Travel to work times
- Leisure facilities
- Quality of council housing
- *Access to council housing*
- *Cost of private rented accommodation*

# *State of Play (3): From Indicators to Policy Benchmarks - roadmaps of progress*

- *The Oregon Benchmarks (1993)*
- *Benchmarks for Exceptional People (73 indicators)*
  - Home life (6 indicators)
  - Social harmony in the community (4 indicators)
  - Start in life by ethnic groups (1 indicator)
  - Civic and occupational participation (3 indicators)
- *Outstanding quality of life (47 indicators)*
  - Outdoor recreation (5 indicators)
  - Access to other communities (3 indicators)
  - Access to cultural enrichment (2 indicators)
  - Political participation and volunteerism (3 indicators)
- *Diverse, robust economy (39 indicators)*

## State of Play (4): Bringing Things Together - viability and vitality

- *Comedia (1993): Measuring the Viability and Vitality of City Centres*
- Competitiveness
- Critical Mass
- Diversity
- Accessibility
- Security
- Identity and Distinctiveness
- Innovativeness
- Organisational capacity, participation, consultation

# Where does culture fit and connect?

- Quality and economics of amenity
- Citizenship and civic participation
- Stewardship and custodianship of resources
- Community asset and resource management
- Soft and creative infrastructure
- Cultural development as 'post-industrial wealth creation'
- Linkages of economic, social, cultural agendas
- 'Only Connect'
- Integrated and strategic cultural planning
- A 'Ministry for the Quality of Life' through C.A.R.E

# Some useful and summative comments

- Hazel Henderson(1991): *'We live in a multidimensional world[...] and quality of life needs to be measured in a multidimensional way...'*
- Rand Corporation (1983): *quality of life, defined as the 'physical and social attractiveness of a place' [a **perceptual indicator**] ranks third overall in plant and infrastructure relocation decisions'.*
- Joint Economic Committee of the US Congress (1980): *A city's quality of life is more important than business related factors...individual programs and policies which respond to a particular business need will probably be of limited success...if they are not part of a comprehensive effort to improve the quality of life in the city.'*

# Towards...

- Broader and more integrated research, policy and planning agendas focussing on
  - What it is that gets 'planned' (Australian ILAP)
  - Differentiated user-oriented research and analysis
  - The multidimensionality of the 'life' that we are measuring the 'quality' of (beyond the 'blood pressure gauge')
  - The strategic centrality of the cultural field in the formation and 'management' of citizens.....full circle to the historical origins of cultural policy

# The Hong Kong Creativity Index

- Structural/Institutional Capital
- Human Capital
- Social Capital
- Cultural Capital

# Structural/Institutional Capital

- Data about HK's protection of intellectual property rights
- Data about access to pirated or counterfeit cultural goods
- Data about freedom of press and publication
- Ratification of international treaties on human and cultural rights
- Internet and PC penetration
- Use of mobile phones
- Public library users, stock and usage
- Cultural and leisure venues and capacity by population
- Radio and TV usage by population

# Human Capital

- **Education expenditure (on arts/culture) as percentage of GDP**
- **R&D expenditure (on arts/ culture) as percentage of GDP**
- **Percentage of population with educational attainment at tertiary level (in arts, culture, communications, media)**

# Social Capital (1)

- **Corporate donations to/sponsorship of arts/cultural activities**
- **Arts/culture related NGOs per capita**
- **Contribution of cultural activities and participation to generalised trust**
- **Contribution of cultural activities and participation to individual trust**
- **Contribution of cultural activities and participation to reciprocity**
- **Contribution of cultural activities and participation to sense of efficacy**
- **Contribution of cultural activities and participation to co-operation**
- **Contribution of cultural activities and participation to acceptance of diversity and inclusiveness**

# Social Capital (2)

- **Contribution of cultural activities and participation to values**
- **Contribution of cultural activities and participation to capacity for self-expression**
- **Participation in cultural activities**
- **Cultural participation rates**
- **Membership of cultural societies and organisations**
- **Frequency/intensity of cultural contacts**
- **Time-use for cultural activities**
- **Relationship between cultural participation and civic and volunteer participation**
- **Volunteers per capita by sub-sector**

# Cultural Capital

- **Expenditure on arts and culture as percentage of total public expenditure**
- **Corporate donations to arts and culture**
- **Individual donations to arts and culture**
- **Household expenditure on arts and culture**
- **Value placed on creative activity**
- **Value placed on relationship between arts and culture and personal and community development**
- **Participation rates in cultural activities and venues by sub sector and by demographics.**