**When Florida Came to Sudbury:
Cultural Policy in the Northern Industrial City**

By

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Abstract

Culture and Creativity have become buzzwords for social and economic urban regeneration, particularly with the popularity of Richard Florida's "Creative Class" argument, linking a vibrant, cosmopolitan cultural scene to a city's ability to attract affluent knowledge workers. Despite accumulating arguments against culture-led revitalization schemes, their popularity has spread from the metropolitan centres which inspired them, to smaller cities with very different challenges. This thesis explores the social implications of this trend for the small, northern, industrial Canadian city by examining Sudbury's 2006 *Arts and Culture Charter and Strategy* and the tensions surrounding the proposed construction of a performing arts centre – a symbol of the city's new Creative brand. By identifying a clear conflict between a perceived "southern" and elite vision for the city and "northern" and working class conceptions of Sudbury, I argue that Sudbury's Creative agenda not only ignores issues of social polarization, but highlights them.

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Introduction

“What’s the difference between Sudbury and yogurt?” “Yogurt has culture,” or so says the old joke. The joke rests on the assumption that for most people, culture and Sudbury are mutually exclusive. Despite this, in October 2006, the City of Greater Sudbury introduced its first official cultural policy, a policy aiming to re-imagine, renew and sell the city as “a leader in cultural planning and development,”¹ a “globally competitive Creative Community,”² and a “region for innovation, learning opportunities and artistic and design excellence.”³ In so doing, Sudbury joined a growing number of Canadian cities participating in the international urban planning trend of using arts and culture as a tool for social and economic development.⁴

Since the early 1990s, culture and creativity have become buzzwords for economic revitalization. Researchers, think-tanks, consultants, international organizations and various levels of government have insisted on the undeniable connection between the arts and participation in the international knowledge-based economy. They argue that as cultural commodities constitute an increasing share of the output of modern capitalism, national, regional and municipal economic success lies in the ability to produce and sell cultural images and products. Cultural investment has been

¹ Tourism, Culture and Marketing Section, City of Greater Sudbury, *Arts and Culture Strategy*, 2006, 1.

² Ibid., 8.

³ Tourism, Culture and Marketing Section, City of Greater Sudbury, *Arts and Culture Charter*, 2006.

⁴ In 2001, many smaller communities and regional amalgamations, including Azilda, Blezzard Valley, Boninville, Capreol, Chelmsford, Coniston, Copper Cliff, Dowling, Falconbridge, Frood Mines, Garson, Hanmer, Levack, Lively, Onaping, Val Caron, Val Thérèse, Valley East, Nickel Centre, Rayside Balfour and Walden were incorporated into the City of Greater Sudbury. Though I recognize the importance of these communities, I will simply refer to the amalgamated city as “Sudbury,” since city and regional boundaries have often shifted over time, and City of Greater Sudbury residents rarely refer to themselves as “Greater Sudburians.”

positioned as a catalyst for not only economic success, but a multitude of other positive side-effects, from social cohesion to civic pride and personal well-being.

Richard Florida's *The Rise of the Creative Class* (2002) has been exceptionally influential in this movement, particularly in North American urban studies. He engages with the discourse by asserting that place matters. Florida's Creative Class is composed of higher-income, well-educated, cultural producers and consumers. According to Florida, the Creative Class is attracted to the "buzz" of areas that offer lifestyle attractions, such as tolerance and diversity, urban infrastructure and entertainment. According to him, the economic performance of a city is directly linked to its ability to attract the Creative Class as residents, tourists and investors. A city must not only focus on promoting an effective business climate, but on fostering an appealing "people climate" through film or publishing institutions, vibrant streetscapes, outdoor recreation activities, concerts, galleries and trendy cafés and restaurants.⁵

While the economic rationale forwarded by Florida and other proponents of culture-led economic revitalization is politically seductive, its application can be problematic in several ways. As many Canadian cities have sought to compete for status as global, national or regional cultural capitals, they have shifted their interests from basic services and citizen welfare to place-marketing. In examining the case of Sudbury, this thesis is concerned with the implications of this trend for small cities, and particularly with the social implications unique to the small industrial cities of Canada's hinterland. To contextualize this focus, I will now briefly consider some of the complex challenges associated with Creative City and Creative Class policies.

⁵ Richard Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class: And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life* (2002; repr., New York: Basic Books, 2004).

First, Florida suggests general support for culture but provides no clear policy examples. Policies aimed at attracting the Creative Class, regardless of their formulations, are aimed at economic, not cultural development. Defining goals or successes in cultural policy is challenging, since “culture” as a term is so complex, defying quantification and even definition. Cultural goals lead to endless debate over values and government prioritization of particular perspectives or interests, while economic rationales can rely on the basis that money-making is a positive. Not surprisingly then, though the Creative City thesis recommends merging cultural, social and economic policies, only the economic elements are clearly defined. Promoting culture as a primarily economic endeavour, with the assumed bi-product of undefined social and cultural benefits, simplifies matters for bureaucrats or business-minded citizens by using a less contestable rationale and definite results. As such, it is easy to sidestep any debate over the developmental needs of local cultural scenes, the intangible value that arts and culture can bring to a community, or the best approaches to genuine social and cultural development. Ultimately, municipal discussion of arts and culture is framed in economic language and policies strive towards branding and human resource development more than the promotion of inclusive arts, or of the arts at all. Florida suggests that the Creative Class is looking for an exciting, experiential lifestyle in a vibrant community,⁶ but this community is still manufactured as a product to be sold.

The danger in this cultural commodification, as pointed out by several observers, including Kevin Robins,⁷ David Harvey⁸ and Saskia Sassen,⁹ is that as cities seek

⁶ Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, 165-189.

⁷ Kevin Robins, “Prisoners of the City: Whatever Could a Postmodern City Be?” *New Formations* 15 (1991).

⁸ David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (1990; repr., Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1996), 295.

creative status, they lose sight of the unique sense of place resultant from their distinctive histories and geographies. Richard Florida himself suggests supporting local, organic culture and warns against the promotion of “world-class” sports stadiums and multinational retail and entertainment franchises. According to him, the Creative Class loathes “generica.”¹⁰ Nevertheless, Florida’s prescription for attracting the Creative Class is still not to nurture the existing sense of place, but to stimulate the proliferation of a particular set of lifestyle attractions. Even if these are not corporate “generica” or are inspired by local culture, they still reflect, and are crafted for the tastes of a globalized urban professional culture.

The open pursuit of the Creative Class also risks alienating local residents by making gentrified claims on civic space. While critics have attacked Florida’s pursuit of “yuppy playgrounds,” he claims that his thesis simply recognizes an inevitable economic reality. Appealing to the American dream ideal and the concept of the self-made man, Florida uses the term ‘creative’ since, according to him, all human beings are endowed with equal amounts of creative potential and any of its associated prosperity.¹¹ For him, it is not the Creative Class thesis which is elitist, but the existing social order which assumes that some people are natural creators, while others exist to serve them.¹² Even so, Florida’s argument entirely ignores the limits imposed by social reproduction and class consciousness. Florida’s Creative Class is a specific type of citizen, with sufficient income for a high-consumption lifestyle and a preference for a particular brand of urban living. As Jim McGuigan argues, policy-makers tend to align themselves uncritically

⁹ Saskia Sassen, “Whose City Is It? Globalization and the Formation of New Claims,” *Public Culture* 8, no. 2 (Winter 1996).

¹⁰ Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, 228.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 318, 322.

¹² *Ibid.*, 323.

with Creative City and Creative Class discourse, ignoring that this necessarily implies aligning with a particular set of class interests.¹³ The invitation to participate in the production and consumption of the Creative City is notionally extended to all, but Creative City policies arguably widen the gap between affluent residents and tourists, and those lacking the means or even the desire to participate. Despite claiming to have a concern for social and cultural goals, this discourse's overwhelming concern with attracting the Creative Class completely eclipses any wider socially-inclusive objectives.

Striving for the attention of the urban professional is especially problematic when it is attempted in the small city. Florida's thesis is heavily metro-centric and proves exclusive in the small city, not only on the level of class, but in its insistence on the cosmopolitan. Paradoxically, to adopt Creative City strategies, small cities seek to replicate the "hip" appeal of large western metropolitan centres, ignoring that this conflicts with traditional small city identity and isolates those residents who value the cultural experiences afforded by smallness.

Florida's work focuses on creativity in global cities and disregards the process of cultural production in the small city context. His notion that "anyone can be creative" is what leads such strategies to be adopted in small cities. Though it is certain that creativity is not an innate attribute of people living in big cities, the competition for creative status clearly favours metropolitan centres with more pre-existing investment in cultural activity and a critical mass of both creative producers and audiences. Moreover, regardless of the creative potential of people residing in small cities, there still exists a perception that small cities are void of creativity. Recognition of this tendency is necessary when

¹³ Jim McGuigan, "Doing a Florida Thing: The Creative Class Thesis and Cultural Policy" (paper presented, Fifth International Conference in Cultural Policy Research, Istanbul, Turkey, August 20-24, 2008), 7.

perception is the basis of Creative City branding. Graeme Evans and Jo Foord explore Florida-inspired projects in small cities and explain that “by thinking big, small cities have been seduced into entering a culture-led city competition in which the stakes are high and the prospects of success are limited.”¹⁴ Rather than aiming to develop sustainable, inclusive, local artistic communities, Creative City “place-marketing” policies instead use the arts to impose unconvincing cosmopolitan ideas on the small city.

Much of the research evaluating the impact of Creative City policies has focused on metropolitan centres and core cities.¹⁵ Nevertheless, the popularity of these policies has spread to small and industrial cities internationally and in Canada alike. They are being hailed as the solution to the current economic and social crises in many of Canada’s smaller mining and resource-dependant cities, like Sudbury. Culture-led revitalization schemes challenge competing visions of urban space, but this challenge is heightened by the attempted imposition of an elite, cosmopolitan culture on a city traditionally identified as working class, northern and small.

Though the context, formulation and implementation of Sudbury’s *Arts and Culture Charter and Strategy* will be examined in depth in later chapters, a brief overview of these is required in order to present some of the main themes that will run throughout this study.

Northern Ontario represents 90% of the province’s surface, but only 6% of its population.¹⁶ With a population of 157,857, Sudbury is the largest city in the region and

¹⁴ Graeme Evans and Jo Foord, “Small Cities for a Small Country: Sustaining the Cultural Renaissance?” in *Small Cities: Urban Experience Beyond the Metropolis*, eds. David Bell and Mark Jayne (New York: Routledge, 2006), 151.

¹⁵ Ibid., 153.

¹⁶ Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, Government of Ontario, *Northern Ontario Overview*, 2009, 1, http://www.mndm.gov.on.ca/nordev/documents/sector_profiles/northern_ontario_e.pdf

is relatively geographically isolated from the larger metropolitan areas of Toronto and Ottawa. As the largest hardrock mining centre in North America and one of the largest in the world, Sudbury's economy has historically depended on primary industry. As globalization, technological development and fluctuating nickel prices have affected its economic stability, Sudbury has sought to diversify and dematerialize its economy, though mining still remains a major influence. One impediment to economic diversification has been Sudbury's traditional association with heavy-industry and "northern lifestyle," both seen as unappealing to skilled workers.¹⁷ Sudbury has been seriously challenged by the emigration of its youth, an aging population and inadequate transport, communication, social and cultural infrastructures.¹⁸ Furthermore, David Leadbeater argues that since the 1970s, globalization has caused an economic and political crisis that has particularly affected Sudbury's working people. The increased power of transnational mining corporations has meant that regardless of its mineral wealth, Sudbury has suffered persistent unemployment, poverty, and declining opportunity, which has in turn spread to the conditions of community living from health, to education, community services, and public space. The resultant social conditions of Sudbury's working population have been, according to Leadbeater, ignored by an undemocratic media, and a subservient political elite.¹⁹ In the globalized, de-materializing Sudbury, the growing disparity between the city's manual and mental labourers has gone largely ignored.

¹⁷ Jonathan Paquette, "Engineering the Northern Bohemian: Cultural Policies and Governance in the Creative City Era," *Space and Polity* 12, no.3 (December 2008), 304.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ David Leadbeater, introduction to *Mining Town Crisis: Globalization, Labour and Resistance in Sudbury*, ed. David Leadbeater (Black Point, NS: Fernwood Publishing, 2008)

In 2004, the arts and culture portfolio was transferred from Sudbury's Leisure Services section to a new Tourism, Culture and Marketing section within the Growth and Development Department. A product of culture's new institutional location, the 2006 *Arts and Culture Charter and Strategy* was intended to coincide with the city's Official Plan, its Economic Development and Tourism Development Strategies and its Downtown Vision Plan for the joint fulfilment of Sudbury's economic, social and cultural goals. One need not look further than page three of the *Strategy* to see evidence of Richard Florida's philosophy manifesting itself:

Florida argues that quality of place is now a key competitive advantage for cities in attracting people, investment and new business. Improving quality of place is directly tied to the success of our economic engines. Council must recognize the importance of recreation, arts and culture and cultural diversity for attracting and retaining the creative talent that will contribute to the economic prosperity of the City and its entrepreneurial spirit.²⁰

In this case, the prospects of success offered by this approach are seen as a means of progressing beyond a boom or bust dependence on nickel, addressing local marginality, and shedding the negative image that deters young talent. However, as will be discussed in later chapters, Sudbury's cultural policy overall favours the economic and innovation rationale, demonstrating little interest in genuine social or cultural development. Instead, the *Arts and Culture Charter and Strategy* focuses on competitive economic assets – cultural symbols like public art, festivals, events and a downtown performance venue. Despite Florida's negative assessment of investment in tangible infrastructure, the policy's proposed Performing Arts Centre (PAC) was meant to form the focal point of a new downtown arts precinct to help brand Sudbury as a place where the Creative Class can thrive.

²⁰ Tourism, Culture and Marketing Section, *Arts and Culture Strategy*, 3.

In February 2007, a Performing Arts Centre Advisory Panel was appointed by City Council to develop plans for the PAC. After countless rounds of public opinion sessions, research reports, surveys, discussions and cost revisions, the proposed PAC became a highly contested local issue. In October 2008, City Council voted on four strategic projects: two road improvement plans, and Mayor John Rodriguez' two "Legacy Projects," the PAC and a Multi-use Recreation Complex. All four projects were bundled into one motion which was defeated 7-6 against.

Research Objectives

In examining the *Arts and Culture Charter and Strategy* and the debates surrounding the proposed PAC, several questions present themselves: How does the dissemination of the Creative City trend affect the northern industrial city? How are the various uses of the term "culture" appropriated in this context and for what purposes? How do the uses of culture for city branding benefit or adversely impact different groups within the city and in what ways? While it may be tempting to adopt a Creative vision for Sudbury, much is implicitly assumed about what general cultural investment can achieve.

Through the lens of cultural policy analysis and a methodology blending historical analysis and discourse/content analysis, I will examine the assumptions implicit in Sudbury's *Arts and Culture Charter and Strategy* and how these play out publicly in the PAC debates. I am not concerned with the policy's potential for success, but rather with how it is formulated and how, in its implementation, the image of Sudbury is negotiated and resisted by municipal authorities and residents. While reports, official plans, websites and image campaigns serve to promote official discourses about the

instrumental value of the arts, stakeholders and the public respond in newspapers and online discussions based on how the Creative agenda corresponds with their priorities or their understandings of the city. In examining these, I identify a clear conflict between the pursuit of an urban professional Creative Class and the defence of a working class northern local culture. I argue that the Creative branding strategy highlights competing visions of Sudbury's (future) cultural character and ultimately, not only fails to address existing social polarization, but brings it to the forefront.

Chapter Overview

Chapter One will address the methodological and theoretical elements that frame my analysis. I will discuss cultural policy studies itself as an approach to examining the relationship between policy and context. I will then turn to the specific methods I use to implement this approach. I will also explore theoretical perspectives on the interplay between policy, culture and society and how the various uses of culture relate to issues of taste, class, identity, power and place. Chapter Two will examine various perspectives on the changing role of cities in relation to the creative economy, while Chapter Three will examine the context in which these perspectives were adopted and implemented in Sudbury. Chapter Four will turn more specifically to Sudbury's *Arts and Culture Charter and Strategy* to assess the ways in which culture is used to challenge imaginings of the city. Chapter Five will examine the social tensions visible in the implementation of a Creative vision for Sudbury, as seen through the public debates surrounding the proposed construction of the PAC. In the concluding chapter, Chapter Six, I will argue that while Sudbury's *Arts and Culture Charter and Strategy* purports to balance economic, social and cultural goals, it ultimately loses sight of local identity and

community needs. It becomes clear, as seen in the PAC debates, that Sudbury's quest to shed its traditional image to attract the urban professional brings social tensions to the forefront by alienating many long-time residents. Finally, I will briefly assess possibilities for resolving the social tensions associated with the application of Creative City branding strategies in the small, industrial northern city, by suggesting place-based and place-building approaches to cultural development.

Chapter One

Approach, Methods and Theory

The nature of my research questions and their emphasis on the incongruence between official, lived and imagined culture in Sudbury are what determined my approach to this study (cultural policy studies) and my chosen methods (historical analysis and discourse/content analysis). Studying cultural policy requires an understanding of the ways in which government has historically understood its role in regulating culture. In developing this understanding, the plasticity of both “culture” and “policy” as concepts becomes very clear. I will explore the ways in which theorists from a myriad of fields have ascribed definitions to these terms, and how cultural policy studies has risen as a field for assessing their uses and the relationship between them. After examining the approach of cultural policy studies, I will explain how it will be used in my study and how it relates to my chosen research methods.

This chapter will also explore theoretical perspectives on the relationship between class, identity, place, culture and power as they relate specifically to the Sudbury context. These theories support my analysis of the conflict between Sudbury’s Creative City branding strategy as a perceived elitist cultural project and divergent understandings of Sudbury based on working class and northern identity.

Culture

Analysing cultural policy depends on how culture is defined. Culture as a term has been complicated by both its extensive history and its current usage. Borrowing from early uses of the term culture, referring to the tending of crops or animals,¹ comes the notion that culture is a process of cultivation. Nineteenth century cultural critic Matthew

¹ Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (London: Croom Helm, 1976), 77.

Arnold defines culture as “a study of perfection...perfection which consists in becoming something rather than in having something, in an inward condition of the mind and spirit, not in an outward set of circumstances.”² For Arnold, culture is a process of self-improvement which involves reading, reflecting and thinking in order to know “the best that can be known.”³ Effectively, becoming “cultured” is developing polished sensibilities through a relationship with culture.

Culture though, is most commonly characterized in its narrowest sense, not as a process, but as a thing, a product or a work of art. This definition reflects the “high culture” tradition, involving consciously intellectual or artistic output, created by artists and judged according to set standards determined by experts in textual studies, cultural history and literary criticism.⁴ While the range of works now deemed valuable has expanded with more recent efforts to democratize the arts and fewer arts advocates would be comfortable openly espousing such an elitist definition of culture, still many funding systems and artistic practices prioritize the authority of cultural elites to choose and define culture for an audience that maintains the requisite cultural knowledge.⁵ Raymond Williams describes culture in this sense as “the independent and abstract noun which describes...the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity.”⁶

Williams offers another less precise meaning for culture: “the independent noun, whether used generally, or specifically, which indicates a particular way of life, whether

² Matthew Arnold, excerpt from *Culture and Anarchy*, in *Cultural Resistance Reader*, ed. Stephen Duncombe (New York: Verso, 2002), 54.

³ John Storey, “The ‘Culture and Civilization’ Tradition” in *An Introduction to Cultural Theory and Popular Culture*, 3rd ed. (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1998), 23.

⁴ “High culture” has been used to distinguish between the artistic preferences of ruling political, social and economic elite and non-elite, low, popular or mass culture. High culture is often equated with traditional arts, such as classical music, dance or literature.

⁵ Justin Lewis and Toby Miller, introduction to *Critical Cultural Policy Studies: A Reader*, eds. Justin Lewis and Toby Miller (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 3.

⁶ Raymond Williams, *Keywords*, 80.

of a people, a period, a group, or humanity in general.”⁷ This definition takes culture beyond aesthetic discrimination, viewing it instead as an all-encompassing concept involving a pattern of living and a way of understanding. Like this, culture covers almost everything related to human existence from language and religion to food and politics.

Policy

These two definitions are broadly understood by authors writing on cultural policy as the “humanities” and “anthropological” meanings of culture. While previously, many of the activities that now compose cultural policy were governed as “arts policy,” the broadened understanding of culture has allowed the scope of cultural policy to be extended. Whereas cultural policy was essentially limited to supporting aesthetic concerns, it now demonstrates interest in a more extensive range of human experiences, expanding to new areas such as multiculturalism, sports, leisure, scholarship, broadcasting and urban planning. The anthropological definition has transformed the ways in which culture is understood, but it is arguably too expansive to be useful for many analytical or practical purposes. This problem is well elucidated by Jim McGuigan:

It is a truism that use of the term culture has proliferated to such an extent that it has become virtually meaningless. Everything is culture, so we are told. Here, we are not just talking about the arts and leisure but, literally, everything... There are cultures of everything: body culture, consumer culture, work culture, dependency culture, Black culture, White culture, Western culture, and so forth.⁸

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Jim McGuigan, “Problems of Cultural Analysis and Policy in the Information Age,” *Cultural Studies Critical Methodologies* 1, no. 2 (2001), 192.

Williams offers a suggestion for overcoming the issue of scope by conceptualizing culture as a “realized signifying system,”⁹ reducing culture to the specific practices and institutions that make meaning or communicate symbolically.

Cultural policies are meant to produce and animate these meaning-creating institutions and practices, but the very notion of cultural policy is complicated by the ambiguous, indefinite nature of culture. Regulating a concept so elusive as a “realized signifying system” necessarily involves complex considerations. While cultural policy can be viewed simply as the administration of the arts, Jim McGuigan argues that “cultural policy is about the politics of culture in the most general sense. It is about the clash of ideas, institutional struggles and power relations in the production and circulation of symbolic meanings.”¹⁰ For him, culture is inherently political, showing “no sign of escaping the ruses of power and public controversy.”¹¹ Cultural policy is not only about policing the way we live, but about how different ways of living are included or excluded from government attention. As a result, governments have had to justify their cultural interventions in a number of ways.

The rationales for cultural policy at national, regional and municipal levels have multiplied with time to reflect the expanded definition of culture and a growing openness to more populist approaches. The increasing number of overlapping uses for culture is now what is most often cited as justification for state intervention in the cultural sphere.¹² In practice, cultural policies are complex and varied and they are not always promoted self-consciously to target certain outcomes. However, when theorized, most policies tend

⁹ Raymond Williams, *Culture* (London : Fontana, 1981), 207.

¹⁰ Jim McGuigan, introduction to *Culture and the Public Sphere* (London: Routledge, 1996), 1.

¹¹ Ibid., 1.

¹² Tony Bennett, *Culture: A Reformer's Science* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications Limited, 1998), 107.

to be based on one or a combination of three main positions. I will now briefly review these positions, not to simplify or reduce cultural policy, but to show how its common models are based on the different ways in which culture is understood and given value by dominant ideologies. The three positions reflect a range of understandings of culture representing both the humanities and anthropological definitions, though, as will become clear throughout this thesis, even culture discussed in the more limited sense of artistic production, heritage or cultural industries is expected to have broader implications for general “ways of living.”¹³

The first position suggests that certain cultural products are inalienably, transcendently imbued with intrinsic value, but are vulnerable to the public’s inability to recognize them. This position values culture for more than its potential utilitarian functions, viewing it as a central force worthy of independent attention. The case is often made that culture is a crucial feature of modern liberal democracy and should be included as a service of the welfare state, addressing a genuine human need for meaning and motivation in life.¹⁴ Culture has even been regarded as an essential service, comparable to police or ambulance services.¹⁵ Unable to be sustained by market demands alone, culture requires government support for its survival. As David Mitchell explains, a claim made for state resources on the basis of culture’s intrinsic worth allows cultural

¹³ Claire Dimond-Gibson, “The Centre of the Universe? Globalization and Cultural Policy in Toronto,” (MA diss., Simon Fraser University, 2004), 27.

¹⁴ Jim McGuigan, “Cultural Policy Studies” in *Culture and the Public Sphere* (London: Routledge, 2006), 20.

¹⁵ Bennett, *Culture: A Reformer’s Science*, 110.

organizations or institutions to define their needs and objectives as they deem appropriate, without having to mould their discourse to satisfy other political priorities.¹⁶

Nevertheless, the “endangered species”¹⁷ approach has its critics. Some argue that it is difficult to justify supporting culture, when it competes directly with other “essential services” for government resources. Others have suggested that this position is simply taken up as a means of protecting the forms of culture given value by elite preferences.¹⁸ As a result, many cultural lobbies have sought rationales with more rhetorical and political weight.

Rather than regarding culture as the object of government, the second position uses it as the instrument of government for developing cultural citizenship, a “cultural lineage” maintained and developed through education, cultural mores, language, religion, and the acknowledgement of a unity within the mainstream.¹⁹

The origins of this cultural agenda can be traced to nineteenth century England, with Matthew Arnold’s view of culture as a higher emotional state to be achieved. In *Culture and Anarchy* (1883), Arnold sees culture as the antithesis to a Hobbesian “state of nature.” In his view, culture is the key to “civilizing” the masses, thereby instilling the values of what he deems to be appropriate citizenship. This would at once encourage harmonious living and lessen the need for the state to maintain order. In claiming that “by our best self we are united, impersonal at harmony,”²⁰ Arnold invokes the use of high

¹⁶ David Mitchell, “Culture as Political Discourse in Canada,” in *Communication Canada: Issues in Broadcasting and New Technologies*, eds. Rowland M. Lorimer and Donald C. Wilson (Toronto: Kagan and Woo, 1988), 162.

¹⁷ Lewis and Miller, introduction to *Critical Cultural Policy Studies*, 4.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid., 1.

²⁰ Arnold, *Culture and Anarchy*, 57.

culture (though he never uses the term himself) as a means of converging the classes into one improved, united cultured class and maintaining social control.

Williams' social definition of culture and a growing interest in critically examining the politics of culture have eroded the view that elite culture is required to "control the masses." Now, if not about uniting the classes into an elitist culture, policy often seeks to unite social, ethnic, linguistic or religious differences, using culture to create social cohesion and stability.

In the Canadian context, the country's size and historically tense relations between French, English, Aboriginal and immigrant populations has meant that forging some sense of shared cultural identity has been perceived as a matter of national survival. The Massey Commission, for example, invoked a cultural citizenship position in suggesting that patriotic Canadians should recognize the value of state support for national culture since it distinguished Canada from other nations and even legitimized the country's very existence.²¹ As Tony Bennett maintains, the development of national cultural institutions can be seen as an appeal to a certain form of citizenship that respects the authority and the narratives that uphold it.²² In the case of the Massey Commission, culture was used to create Canadian cultural citizens who shared cultural identities and values as the basis for a united, stable country.

At the municipal level, culture has been used to develop cultural citizens through investment in the overall cultural development of a situated place. Rather than promoting cultural narratives as the basis for social cohesion, a city's cultural scene is meant as a

²¹ Paul Litt, *The Muses, the Masses and the Massey Commission* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992).

²² Lewis and Miller, introduction to *Critical Cultural Policy Studies*, 2.

site for building a socially engaged citizen. The scene is used to develop a participatory culture, wherein citizens forge a sense of community, belonging and civic pride.

While cultural citizenship as a policy goal began as an elitist project of “civilizing,” it now uses the rhetoric of diversity, openness, inclusion, belonging and community to, through culture, unite social differences into a nation, region or city. However, without offering set prescriptions for obtaining these ideals, an assumption is still being made that investing in culture naturally leads to these. Arguably, despite the language of inclusion, policy tends to overlook social issues, still assuming that elite cultural preferences will create a harmonized citizenship.

Whereas the first and second positions can be critiqued for elitism, the third attempts to remove class distinctions from cultural policy by supporting a broader concept of culture and offering the market as a means of identifying which culture receives public support. This more recent position views cultural funding as an investment more than a subsidy based on the economic impact of the arts and of cultural images.

This approach will be addressed in much greater detail in Chapter Two, as it is the basis for the Creative Class approach and the one most reflected in the *Arts and Culture and Strategy*. As will be discussed, unlike the intrinsic and cultural citizenship rationales, the economic approach can justify cultural spending on a more pragmatic level. Nevertheless, using culture for economic development still entails favouring a culture preferred by those with the income to support it.²³

²³ Justin Lewis, *Art, Culture and Enterprise: The Politics of Art and the Cultural Industries* (London: Routledge, 1990), 138.

All three policy agendas require critical examination when used as the basis for cultural policy-making, but the danger in the economic rationale is that underlying issues are more easily masked by its practical justification. Unsurprisingly, and as I argue in this thesis, the result in the Sudbury case is a policy claiming to have cultural (intrinsic), social (cultural citizenship) and economic aims, which focuses on the economic alone without questioning the validity of social or cultural goals, assuming that these social or cultural goals will be naturally achieved by economically-motivated measures.

Cultural Policy Studies

The various positions used to rationalize government intervention in culture form an important discourse for analysis, as this discourse can reveal context-based ideologies that shape which culture is delivered in policy. Sudbury's *Arts and Culture Charter and Strategy* outwardly focuses specifically on the administration of arts and heritage within Sudbury, suggesting that it is reflective of a humanities definition of culture. It does, however, purport to be motivated by intrinsic, social and economic rationales for cultural development, which indicates that it hopes to impact culture in the broader, anthropological sense. Despite its claim of broad objectives, its principle strategies are aimed at economic development specifically. Though this thesis is concerned with a municipal arts policy, my discussion will take into the account the way it stems from and contributes to culture, more broadly. As advocated by practitioners of cultural policy studies, even a cultural policy limited by a narrow aim and a narrow definition of culture cannot be isolated from its broader cultural, social, political or economic context, as these directly relate to its formulation, implementation, and effects.

Cultural policy studies, as the name implies, seeks to unite policy-oriented and critical cultural analysis, borrowing heavily from cultural studies. Cultural studies incorporates a wide range of academic practices without any unifying theory or methodology to characterize it. Colin Sparks highlights the difficulty in defining cultural studies, describing it as a “veritable rag-bag of ideas, methods and concerns from literary criticism, sociology, history, media studies, etc... lumped together under one convenient label.”²⁴ Though it almost actively avoids definition, cultural studies can be characterized as a radical project seeking to deconstruct the production of meaning in cultural texts and to uncover their underlying issues of power and resistance.²⁵ While the strength of cultural studies lies in its critical examination of “cultural politics,” several authors have taken issue with its neglect for the “politics of culture,” including policy analysis and policy formulation.²⁶ Cultural policy studies uses the social and cultural theories of cultural studies to assess cultural experiences, but it is also interested in the potential and actual meanings in the governmental systems through which these experiences are delivered.

There are a number of different positions on the relationship between cultural and policy-oriented analysis that McGuigan locates on a Left-Right continuum.²⁷ Tony Bennett takes a “rightist” approach inspired by Foucault’s concept of “governmentality.” For Bennett, cultural studies’ excessive preoccupation with issues of culture and power has encouraged a critically disengaged battle against a hegemonic state without prescribing policy measures to encourage any real change in the conditions of culture. In

²⁴ Colin Sparks “The Evolution of Cultural Studies...” in *What Is Cultural Studies?: A Reader*, ed. John Storey, (London: Arnold, 1996), 14.

²⁵ John Storey “Cultural Studies: an Introduction” in John Storey, *What Is Cultural Studies?*, 1-2.

²⁶ McGuigan, “Cultural Policy Studies,” 5.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 13.

his seminal article, “Putting policy into cultural studies,” Bennett contends that Raymond Williams’ conception of culture, which has been the basis for cultural studies, ignores the increasing governmentalization of social life, a process initiated, according to Foucault, in the beginning of the early modern period. For Bennett, because of culture’s rising association with governmentality, culture must now be regarded as:

...a historically specific set of institutionally embedded relations of government in which forms of thought and conduct of extended populations are targeted for transformations – partly via the extension through the social body of forms, techniques, and regimens of aesthetic and intellectual culture.²⁸

Hence, any discussion of culture requires policy considerations since the two have become inextricably tied. To be useful at all, cultural studies must not only examine the relationships between powerful and disenfranchised groups, but the role these relationships play in the formation of policy measures. This desire to diminish the gulf between academic cultural critique and practical political importance is what led to the Australian development of the field of “cultural policy studies” at the Key Centre for Cultural and Media Policy, directed by Bennett himself.²⁹

Bennett argues that “culture has been, in Foucault’s sense, so governmentalised that it now makes no sense – if it ever did – to think of culture as a ground situated outside the domain of the government and providing the resources through which that domain might be resisted.”³⁰ According to this view, cultural critique may continue, but only accepting that “all such work is indirectly affected by policy issues and horizons.”³¹ Bennett is unambiguous about his reasons for putting cultural studies into the realm of policy analysis:

²⁸ Tony Bennett, “Putting Policy into Cultural Studies” in John Storey, *What is Cultural Studies?*, 313.

²⁹ McGuigan, “Cultural Policy Studies,” 12.

³⁰ Bennett, *Culture: A Reformer’s Science*, 30

³¹ Tony Bennett, “Useful Culture,” *Cultural Studies* 6, no. 3 (October 1992), 395.

Cultural studies might envisage its role as consisting in the training of cultural technicians: that is, intellectual workers less committed to cultural critique as an instrument for changing consciousness than to modifying the functioning of culture by means of technical adjustments to its governmental deployment.³²

Bennett's "rightist" approach wishes to dispose of detached criticism, thereby giving cultural studies a practical governmental usefulness.

Many have critiqued Bennett's applied formulation of cultural policy studies, suggesting that authentic criticism gets lost within pre-existing agendas.³³ Tom O'Reagan offers a "leftist" critique of Bennett's pragmatic approach. He suggests that seeking to move cultural studies from its position as a critical project to a purely bureaucratic one ignores that cultural studies is multi-dimensional and need not be located exclusively in a policy framework. The result of this move, for O'Reagan, is the complete subordination of cultural studies' critical capacities to administrative and bureaucratic power.³⁴

McGuigan offers a counter-position to the Foucauldian perspective, instead engaging in cultural policy studies using a Habermasian framework that views the relationship between government and culture as being more democratic. This framework places the development of the public sphere as the normative application of cultural policy, and prioritizes an examination of the conditions under which this development occurs. Where Bennett sees the cultural activities of citizens as structured by governmentality, McGuigan contends that they are not so instrumentally determined, and that "the 'public will,' however that is understood and constructed, should influence the

³² Ibid., 406.

³³ McGuigan, "Cultural Policy Studies," 19.

³⁴ Tom O'Reagan, "(Mis)taking Policy: Notes on the Cultural Policy Debate," *Cultural Studies* 6, no. 3 (October 1992), 412.

conditions of culture, their persistence, and their potential for change.”³⁵ The Habermasian approach to cultural policy studies does not focus solely on the discursive aspects of culture, but engages with them to examine the conditions for developing the public sphere to which policy responds, thereby avoiding much of the criticism directed at Bennett’s approach.

Bennett and McGuigan disagree on where policy fits within the production of the conditions of culture; however, both stress the importance of bridging the theoretical/practical divide of cultural studies, using cultural policy studies to understand and democratize these conditions. Both formulations seek to engage critically and pragmatically with culture to recognize its symbolic and material consequences and how these impact its relationship with government. When Williams conceptualized culture as a “realized signifying system,” he distinguished between culture as a meaning and symbol-producing system and other systems grounded in materiality, not to disjoin them, “but to make room for analysis of their interrelations.”³⁶ Following this, McGuigan writes:

It makes sense to focus on those practices, forms, and products that are primarily about symbolic communication, dialogic relations, pleasurable experience, and meaningful social identity as the special objects of cultural analysis, yet it would be mistaken to isolate them from their actual and material conditions of social production and circulation...Cultural analysis should draw on a range of perspectives to open up the multidimensionality and sociality of culture.³⁷

By pointing out that culture has an impact on both symbolic and material levels, McGuigan makes a case for blending the pragmatic and the critical to capture the

³⁵ McGuigan, “Cultural Policy Studies,” 22.

³⁶ Williams quoted in McGuigan, “Problems of Cultural Analysis,” 196.

³⁷ McGuigan, “Problems of Cultural Analysis,” 197.

interrelations between culture and its broader social, political and ideological context, thereby extending the possibilities of cultural policy for bringing about social change.

This approach to cultural policy studies framed my analysis of the Sudbury case. I took a critical approach to the *Arts and Culture Charter and Strategy* and PAC debates as texts of culture, relating them to Sudbury's historical context. Significantly, while I examined Sudbury's policy, my goal was not to assess it for success or failure, neither did I seek to interrogate policy discourses for critique alone. Rather, I critically assessed the policy and the tensions in its implementation as a situated example for examining issues of power in Creative City strategies, as a particular and popular type of governance with symbolic and material consequences.

Method

My cultural policy analysis involved an interpretive framework blending historical analysis and discourse/content analysis which allowed me to assess the ideologies and context shaping Sudbury's cultural policy and responses to it.

Drawing from a variety of secondary sources, I reviewed Sudbury's social, economic, political and artistic history as a basis for better understanding which issues the Sudbury government sought to address and how Creative City branding came to be accepted as a solution. This also provided me with a historic basis for opposition to the policy, based on both real and imagined Sudbury.

Qualitative content and discourse analysis was used to examine official and non-official engagement with the term culture in the *Arts and Culture Charter and Strategy* itself and in discussions of the PAC. Critical Discourse Analysis Theory maintains that relations of power, dominance and inequality are enacted, reproduced and resisted in text

and talk, and therefore, only critical analysis of this discourse allows social inequalities to be understood, exposed and questioned.³⁸ Accepting this, I sought an inductive and interpretive analysis of primary source texts to extract their deeper significations. Therefore, I looked at not only prevalent themes in the texts, but how specific language use could reveal meaningful ways that the topic of culture is understood or used and how power is embedded in this process.

The *Arts and Culture Charter and Strategy* itself was the first text analysed. I looked at its rationale, inherent ideologies and its positioning of the Creative City as a natural solution to various local issues. Following this, I tracked the first major public attempt at the policy's implementation, the proposed construction of the PAC. My analysis of the PAC debates was inter-textual, representing the official perspective of government and involved artists, arts organizations and community leaders via planning reports, city council meeting transcripts and newspaper publications, and resident feedback seen in Facebook and newspaper discussions. Content and discourse analyses of these sources provided insight into the ways in which constructions of identity and place generate support or contempt for a Florida-inspired branding of Sudbury.

Theory

Three theoretical arguments guide my analysis of the Sudbury case. The first argument is that working class and northern cultural identities are constructed in opposition to the perceived elite and southern identities represented in the Creative Class agenda. The second is that the construction of place is intimately linked to issues of power and that because of this, Sudbury's branding strategy acts as a site for the

³⁸Teun A. Van Dijk, "Principles of Critical Discourse Analysis," *Discourse and Society* 4, no.2 (1993), 249-283.

negotiation and contestation of who maintains the power to define the city. Finally, I argue that despite its mass economic appeal, the Creative City reclaiming of Sudbury can be best understood as an attempt to create social “distinction” not simply by aligning with “southern” elite tastes, but by recognizing them as objectively beneficial for the city as a whole.

Working Class Culture

E.P. Thompson suggests that class is not an entity in itself, but a historical relationship of unity and difference, uniting one class in opposition to another. For him, class results from the feeling and articulation of shared or inherited common experiences between people, as against the experiences of other people whose interests are different and often opposed to theirs.³⁹ United by shared experience, according to Paul Willis, the working class seeks to counter its subordinate position by finding the value in its experience:

Though it is usually misrecognized, one of the things which keeps the capitalist system stable, and is one of its complex wonders, is that an important section of the subordinate class do not accept the proffered reality of the steady diminution of their own capacities. Instead they reverse the valuation of the mental/manual gradient by which they are measured.⁴⁰

Ironically, the reaction of the working class to social inequality causes the valuation of the very traits that reproduce that inequality and maintain the status quo.

Richard Hoggart, in his famous work *The Uses of Literacy* (1957), writes: “If we want to capture something of the essence of working-class life...we must say it is ‘the dense and concrete life,’ a life whose main stress is on the intimate, the sensory, the

³⁹ Thomas W. Dunk, *It's a Working Man's Town: Male Working-Class Culture*, 2nd ed. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003), 27-8.

⁴⁰ Paul E. Willis, *Learning to Labour: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs* (Farnborough, Eng.: Saxon House, 1977), 148.

detailed and the personal.”⁴¹ In his study of working class male culture in 1990s Northwestern Ontario, Thomas W. Dunk explains that emphasizing the concrete is a part of the process by which working class individuals constitute their identities, as they consider themselves to be the purveyors of “common sense” and “doers” instead of “thinkers.” Among “the Boys” Dunk describes, common sense is conceived as “down-to-earth” thinking which connotes practical, clear-headed thoughts, not distracted by “fancy quibbles, and pseudo-profound, pseudo-scientific metaphysical mumbo-jumbo.”⁴² The Boys feel that anyone unwilling to recognize “obvious” or “simple” explanations for given situations is emotionally weak and out of touch or lacking in intelligence.⁴³ Common sense thinking is understood in opposition to other forms of thought acquired through formal education or training. These “restricted” forms of thinking are aligned with elite interests and the fabrication of esoteric concepts with no practical application. For that reason, as Dunk explains, the preference for common sense is associated with anti-intellectualism.

By anti-intellectualism, Dunk refers to a form of thought rooted in the cultural practices and beliefs of the working class. It is a form of thought shaped in opposition to the perceived characteristics of other classes praised by dominant culture for their intellectual skills. Faced with the negative stigma of being working class, working class individuals seek to invert the assignment of value in the manual-mental labour divide, by celebrating the practical knowledge and skills of the manual side. The negative appraisal of those holding specialized knowledge is reinforced by old suspicions and stereotypes of those who enjoy high status and high incomes based on their supposed intellectual

⁴¹ Richard Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1957), 88.

⁴² Gramsci quoted in Dunk, *It's a Working Man's Town*, 134.

⁴³ Dunk, *It's a Working Man's Town*, 135.

abilities. This suspicion is often framed according to the use of language. The “regular guy” is constructed in opposition to the “fast-talker” or the “big shot.” A politician, lawyer, teacher, bureaucrat or writer does not produce anything useful in the physical sense, but is conferred status based on the use of a specialized academic language, a language designed to exclude outsiders. In contrast, the tradespeople and workers in manufacturing or transportation produce material objects or physical effects, rather than “just talking.” Knowledge that does not produce any immediate concrete effects has no obvious applicability and is considered suspect.⁴⁴

As Dunk further explains, the importance of the immediate and ordinary over the poetic is manifested not only in values but in leisure. Mass culture is considered democratic and populist, while anything perceived as at all esoteric is viewed as elitist and exclusive. According to Dunk, the Boys prefer to engage in physical activities (sports in particular). They “do not read literature; they do not listen to classical music; they do not go to the theatre; ballet is boring in their opinion, and the masculinity or sexual orientation of men who are involved or interested in it is a frequent subject of gossip.”⁴⁵

The anti-intellectual and common sense values Dunk identifies in Thunder Bay’s working class figure prominently in views opposing the construction of the Performing Arts Centre (PAC) in Sudbury. As Dunk explains, the working class have cultural values defined in opposition to the elitism associated with the arts. Thus, regardless of the actual income of Sudbury’s manual labourers or the costs of participating in cultural events, the prominence of a working class ethos, with its accompanying leisure interests and priorities, can explain much opposition to the PAC proposal.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 150

⁴⁵ Ibid., 91.

Northernness

Just as working class culture is constructed in opposition to perceptions of elite intellectual culture, northern Ontario identity is constructed in opposition to perceived southern Ontario identity. Dunk's analysis of working class culture extends to the ways in which working class consciousness impacts regional identity. According to Dunk, regional and class consciousness mutually reinforce one another.⁴⁶ Regional occupational differences in the North, compared to the southern metropolitan region, are roughly divided between mental and manual labour. There are fewer jobs in northwestern Ontario in management, administration, social, scientific, religious and artistic fields than in the province as a whole and in the city of Toronto. Conversely, northwestern Ontario employs more people in construction, transportation and the primary industries.⁴⁷ Based on this division, mental labour has come to be associated with the South while manual labour is associated with the North. As Dunk explains:

Statistics cannot convey the cultural significance of the regional division of labour. Smoke stacks of the paper mills and the smoke which emanates from them, with its powerful and distinctive odour dominate the skyline of Thunder Bay...On the major roads, trucks loaded with logs are the bane of regular commuters...These 'facts of life' in the region are also important signifiers of the cultural difference between what the locals refer to as the North and the South.⁴⁸

Though Dunk focuses on northwestern Ontario, the same North-South distinctions are made in northeastern Ontario, with a similar workforce and where Sudbury's smokestack stands prominently. Mining permeated Sudbury's landscape with sulphur smoke, slag heaps and stark black rocks. The environmental and social effects of this will be discussed in much more detail in Chapter Three, but suffice it to say here, despite the

⁴⁶ Dunk, *It's a Working Man's Town*, 54.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 55.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

city's very successful re-greening program, still now the industrial landscape remains significant to the development of regional identity. While statistically, the service sector employs the greatest number of people in Sudbury, the remnants of a ravaged landscape, the continued economic reliance on mining and the prominence of working class culture and industrial heritage serve as a basis for distinguishing regional identity in the North in opposition to the South.

The North-South distinction is further strengthened by the hinterland-metropolis relationship. With its traditionally narrow economic base, Sudbury has had difficulty resisting the influence of big business and government located in New York, Montreal, Toronto and Ottawa. G.R. Weller examines the political effects of the hinterland-metropolis relationship on northwestern Ontario, suggesting that a common response by local inhabitants is to accept and internalize the inferior status of the region. According to him, "northwestern Ontario failed to develop self-assurance...on the worth of many aspects of its own endeavours – until, of course, received favourably elsewhere."⁴⁹ The same can be said of Sudbury, which, as will be discussed more deeply in chapter three, continues to rely on powers in the southern metropolis, producing a dependence mentality.

Based on the prominence of the mining industry and the hinterland-metropolis relationship, the North commonly comes to represent a small, dependent, geographically-isolated wilderness hinterland of workers, while the South represents the big, wealthy, powerful, cosmopolitan metropolis of the intellectual elite, government and big business. C.M. Wallace argues that academic assessments of northern Ontario mentality are in need

⁴⁹ G. R. Weller, "Hinterland Politics: The Case of Northwestern Ontario," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 10, no. 3 (December 1977), 753.

of revision. In his estimation, the common terms that have been used to describe the northern experience, such as “cabin fever,” “northern alienation” and “the manly north,” only serve to perpetuate the culture of inferiority and dependency through the image of the northern Ontario city as the fragile resource-dependant community of the “stereotypical hunter or fisherman sporting a baseball cap and driving a half-ton truck.”⁵⁰ Although Sudbury’s northernness is, as Wallace suggests, often equated with inferiority to the southern metropolis, it is also embraced and even celebrated by many Sudburians for the simplicity, calmness and lack of pretension offered by the city’s landscape, relative isolation and smallness. Laurie McGauley demonstrates this contradiction quite well in describing her childhood experience in 1960s Sudbury:

Others escaped to their camps, usually a shack on the shores of one of the many beautiful lakes that surround the city. There was fishing, swimming, and of course, partying, as far away as possible from the slag heaps, surrounded by water and dancing birch trees, under a clear sky that inevitably featured a grey plume of smoke. The landscape was both curse and redemption.⁵¹

As Sudbury has diversified its economy and developed, it has also become far more dynamic. Certainly, the northern image regularly misrepresents reality, but it cannot and should not be ignored that the connotations of northernness, whether positive or negative, have an inevitable impact on the ways in which Sudburian identities are constructed by residents themselves and by outsiders.

Recognizing prevalent identifications of Sudburians and Sudbury as “northern” serves as a basis for understanding conflict between the image Sudbury policy-makers

⁵⁰ C.M. Wallace, “Communities in the Northern Ontario Frontier” in *At the End of the Shift: Mines and Single Industry Towns in Northern Ontario*, eds. Matt Bray and Ashley Thomson (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1992), 15.

⁵¹ Laurie McGauley, “Dispatches of Longing: Progressive Art and Culture in Sudbury” in Leadbeater, *Mining Town Crisis*, 218.

seek to shed and the promotion of their seemingly elitist, cosmopolitan and “southern” policy agenda.

Culture and Place

As Dunk and Weller explain, geographical factors, such as the industrial landscape or isolation from the southern metropolis, are tied to the construction of working class and northern identities. These identities shape and are shaped by understandings of Sudbury as a place.

Tim Cresswell explains that identity is fundamentally rooted in place since places themselves have no inherent identities or natural meanings but are produced by people, things and practices. Understandings of place are based on the experiences of those who engage with them. Looking at, for example, graffiti in New York City or new age travellers in the British countryside, Cresswell suggests that when dominant linkages between meaning and place are broken, people are said to have acted “out of place.” Cresswell argues that places are created by those with the power to determine what is or is not appropriate while others challenge constructions of place by using the established meanings in subversive ways.⁵²

The creation of “nice places to live” is one of the ways in which those with power produce place. Examining New York’s lower east side, Laura Reid and Neil Smith argue that city government and property entrepreneurs used the language of improvement to create a new place by promoting the refurbishing of historic buildings, the opening of nice restaurants and the return of suburbanites to the city core. What produced a nice place to live for the middle class simultaneously displaced the poor. In response, the

⁵² Tim Cresswell, *Place: A Short Introduction* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 27.

gentrification process was described by protestors as “genocide” or “class war” rather than as progress.⁵³

Following Cresswell, I suggest that the construction of city spaces, both in the traditional physical sense, as exemplified by the New York case, involving institutions and the built environment, and in the ideological sense, through imagination and representation, is fundamentally tied to issues of power. The construction of place, as attempted by Sudbury’s *Arts and Culture Charter and Strategy* and the proposed Performing Arts Centre, challenges existing understandings of place and belonging within that place. While Sudbury has historically been understood in relation to northern and working class conceptions, it is indeed in transition. I contend that re-branding Sudbury creates tension with residents who feel their identities are made “out of place” and excluded from new conceptualizations of the city.

Culture and Taste

The use of culture to make a spatial claim is intimately tied to the complex relationship between culture and issues of power. The politically-powerful minority have always thought it necessary to police the culture of the less powerful majority, reading it as a symptom of unrest. With the industrial revolution, the working class was given a new space to develop its own culture, removed from the direct intercession of the dominant class; however, the growth of a popular culture posed a challenge to traditional structures of authority and grew as a subject of concern to the elite.

For centuries, the association between culture and civilization was the dominant paradigm for cultural analysis⁵⁴ and as Williams lamented in 1958, culture came to be

⁵³ Reid and Smith in Tim Cresswell, *Place: A Short Introduction* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 94-5.

equated with the hypocrisy and pretentiousness of high art's claims of superior knowledge, refinement and distinction.⁵⁵ However, the tradition's work laid the foundations for a new line of academic inquiry, critically examining and re-evaluating conceptions of popular culture and re-defining notions of taste as not fundamentally good or bad, but shaped by different experiences and desires.⁵⁶

In *Popular Culture and High Culture* (1974), Herbert Gans seeks to break the distinction between the “serious” and the “popular,” and between the “culture of morality” and the “culture of entertainment.” He re-evaluates popular culture and challenges the supposed dire effects of massification through his concepts of “taste publics” and “taste cultures.” Gans develops a typology of five “taste publics” that consume “taste cultures” based on their class and education. He explains:

Taste publics and cultures are not official bodies or organized groups, but aggregates of similar people making similar choices, and aggregates of similar content chosen by the same people can be identified through sociological research.⁵⁷

Rather than being passively persuaded into a meaningless, commercialized popular culture, Gans' audiences actively choose the culture they consume based on aesthetic standards they share with other members of their taste public. Inserting choice into the process by which publics consume culture presents the process as more enlightened and democratic, allowing the public some agency in determining its own cultural fate. Gans presents a cultural system in which “creators are free to do what they want and to create for the publics they wish to reach, and consumers are free to choose from the available

⁵⁴ Storey, “The ‘Culture and Civilization’ Tradition,” 42.

⁵⁵ Raymond Williams, “Culture is Ordinary” in *The Politics of Culture: Policy Perspectives for Individuals, Institutions and Communities*, eds. Gigi Bradford, Gary Michael and Glenn Wallach (New York: The New Press, 2000), 19.

⁵⁶ Storey, “The ‘Culture and Civilization’ Tradition,” 42.

⁵⁷ Herbert J. Gans, *Popular Culture and High Culture: An Analysis and Evaluation of Taste* (New York: Basic Books, 1966), 582.

content.”⁵⁸ Constructing the system this way, Gans argues that no taste culture is superior to another because each serves the needs and wants of a particular taste public. Gans contends that certain publics do not maintain the requisite education and social status to appreciate certain taste cultures, but does not explain how these limits reflect and reinforce social processes of domination and exclusion.

Like Gans, Pierre Bourdieu also sees taste as patterned, though he refuses to separate the relationship between taste and these larger social processes. In *Distinction* (1984), Bourdieu describes the stratification of French society as determined by judgements over taste. His study identifies naturalized class-based differences in cultural consumption and associated attitudes and behaviours. According to him, status is not only conferred by wealth, but by the natural occurrence of cultural choices resulting from what he calls “habitus,” “a generative principle of objectively classifiable judgments and the system of classification of these practices.”⁵⁹ Habitus, thus, serves as system for generating certain cultural judgements and for classifying the cultural judgements of others. Bourdieu identifies socialization and exposure to educational institutions as the informants of habitus, thus explaining any coherence in the cultural judgements of members of a given social class. Cultural judgements involve the use of “cultural capital” and are clustered as a basis for identifying and making distinctions between classes.

Bourdieu describes cultural capital as a non-economic means of gaining status or power, formed by sets of knowledge, skills, education or advantages. It can be embodied in the individual’s character or way of thinking, through socialization, or it can be

⁵⁸ Gans, *Popular Culture and High Culture*, 609.

⁵⁹ Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984).170.

acquired through institutional recognition or the ownership of cultural goods (works of art, dictionaries, machines).⁶⁰ Cultural capital, like “symbolic capital” and economic capital, is involved in social domination. Recognizing the value of certain cultural products requires a degree of cultural capital not available to all. In its possession of higher levels of cultural capital, the dominant class shows evidence of a “superior” habitus. Bourdieu explains that though “good” taste is defined by the arbitrary classifications of habitus, it is through its claim of superior judgement that the elite supports its position of dominance. He observes that though the subordinate classes may have their own separate valuations for taste, it “must never be forgotten that the working-class ‘aesthetic’ is a dominated ‘aesthetic’ which is constantly obliged to define itself in terms of the dominant aesthetics.”⁶¹ Bourdieu makes it clear that whether dealing with elite or mass culture, in terms of social relations, “taste” is a dictate of power.

I want to suggest that Bourdieu’s “distinction” and “cultural capital” are useful conceptual tools for characterizing the relationship between culture, taste and power in the Sudbury case. However, I propose that the divisions between Bourdieu’s class-based categorizations should be understood more fluidly. In this context, his distinct categories are complicated by northerness as a taste-informing factor outside of class. Because working class consciousness has such an impact on the formation of northerness, identifications with working class ideals and preferences are prevalent in Sudbury. Defined in opposition to the South, northerness shares the working class value for the concrete, the simple or the ordinary. For example, in terms of taste in cultural consumption, while high culture is equated with a powerful elite in Sudbury, leisure

⁶⁰ Pierre Bourdieu, “The Forms of Capital,” trans. Richard Nice, in *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, ed. John G. Richardson (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 47-50.

⁶¹ Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 41.

pursuits typically associated with the working class, such as fishing, RVing, ski-dooing or hunting, are popular at all class levels, thus blurring the boundaries between class affiliations with high or low culture. Because of the widespread identification with northern identity, using class alone as the dictate of conflicting cultural tastes in Sudbury would be a simplification. Nevertheless, because both working class and northern perspectives are based on a reaction to either a real or perceived power of the elite or the South, Bourdieu's conceptions of power, culture and taste remain useful.

My qualitative research gathers a mass of conflicting opinions on the issue of Sudbury culture which consistently represent two distinct strains, one supporting the official cultural agenda based on the rhetoric of culture's social and economic benefits and another opposing the agenda based on a working class or northern ethos. I argue that supporters of the cultural plan construct a "distinction" through their alignment with "elite" and "southern" policy goals based on their possession of significant "cultural capital" to appreciate the dominant discourse on culture and to recognize culture as an objective good for the city as a whole.

As will be seen in Chapter Five, which examines the PAC debates, based on Dunk, Weller, Cresswell and Bourdieu, I have shaped a theoretical framework for assessing the relationship between working class and northern identities, Sudbury, culture and power. This framework informed my cultural policy studies analysis of Sudbury's historical context and cultural texts, helping me to identify the nature of tensions in the implementation of a Creative branding strategy. Before moving on to the Sudbury case itself, the following chapter will consider the cultural and economic questions that shape

contemporary municipal cultural planning trends and how various critics have responded to them.

Chapter Two

Urban Cultural Policy in the Post-Industrial Age

Before Sudbury's adoption of a Creative branding strategy can be examined, it must be situated within a broader context of global economic and cultural forces. Cities have always been fundamental to larger economies, acting as centres of community, manufacturing, trade, services and finance, but whereas they used to relate more to regional or national economies, the concrete, localized processes of urban economies are now central to many of the circuits constituting economic globalization.¹

With the transition from a national industrial economy to a global knowledge-based economy, the production of information, ideas and cultural goods within the city became increasingly important. The globalization of news, images and entertainment significantly impacted not only urban economies, but civic culture. In the context of economic restructuring and globalization, cities have had to redefine themselves, their business specialities and their images.

This chapter will review the ways in which theorists and policy-makers have conceived the information and cultural economies and the role of urban culture within them. A complete account of this relationship is beyond the scope of my discussion, but a brief overview allows me to examine how these conceptions shaped economic rationales for cultural support and gave rise to the Creative City trend as a means of addressing the main issues related to urban governance. This chapter will also consider several critiques of economistic cultural policy and of its application in the small or industrial city.

¹ Sassen, "Whose City Is It?," 205-06.

The Information Economy

David Harvey locates the origins of the “information,” “knowledge,” or “post-industrial” economy in the 1970s, with the growth of innovative industrial technologies and mass communications, the decline the Fordist system of production, and the shift of large-scale factory production from the high-pay West to lower wage and lower cost jurisdictions.² Notably, the “post-industrial” economy does not mean the end of industrial production; it simply refers to the increasing proportion of global, and especially western, wealth associated with information-based services rather than, for example, subsistence agriculture or industrial manufacturing.³ The West has now staked its future less on heavy industry and more on the development of information economies, basing its economic edge on deal-making, investments and the creation of products that could not easily be produced elsewhere. As a result, older industrial cities have slipped into decline, while others have adapted to new economic and cultural conditions.

The information economy is achieved when the majority of economic growth comes from the production, distribution and processing of information-based goods and services such as, education, science, finance, media, law or computer technology.⁴ A range of writers have suggested that today’s economy is led by designers, image-creators, musicians, biotechnologists, or genetic engineers, in other words, people whose major characteristic is the ability to develop and exploit the information economy by applying

² Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity*, 141-172.

³ Frank Webster, *Theories of the Information Society*, 3rd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2006), 12.

⁴ It is important to note that quantifying the role of information in the economy is difficult and not without value judgements regarding which specific industries or occupations make up the information sector. More encompassing categorizations of this sector risk exaggerating its economic worth. Webster exemplifies the complexity of defining an information worker by contrasting the technician repairing a photocopier, characterized as a manipulator of information technologies, and the railway signal worker, who deals with symbols, roles, routines, and communication, but represents industrial-age manual labour. Florida seeks to expand definitions of “creative” professions to include, for example, landscapers and aestheticians, which would invariably affect the economic weight accorded to the knowledge economy.

their “innovation,” “ideas,” “talent,” “creativity” and “skills” (all of which have become buzzwords for the regeneration of declining western industrial regions).⁵

The Cultural Economy and Cities

While the effects of globalization on the economic conditions of the post-industrial city are well acknowledged, the ways in which this shift reflects and impacts urban culture is less clear. Many argue that globalization and technological advances have caused virtual networks to transcend and supplant the culture of any situated place, although the opposite argument can be made that with these changes, place not only matters, but matters increasingly. Place and culture are heavily intertwined since creativity is stimulated by localized, concentrated systems of production. While individual creative endowments cannot be discounted, the agglomeration of creative networks within large, post-industrial cities stimulates the production of cultural exports. As such, even over-arching globalized culture is defined by the local processes of the global cities where masses of cultural production occur.⁶ Thus, cities are the central places where the work of cultural globalization gets done.⁷

An easy assumption is that globalization and culture go hand in hand – the more a city participates in the global information economy, the more expansive will be its range of cultural products and experiences. This is based both on discourse supporting the economic value of culture and, as an extension of this, the role of culture in raising a

⁵ Some examples include: Charles Leadbetter (1999), Robert Reich (1991), Peter Drucker (1993), Manuel Castells (1996-1998) and Richard Florida (2002)

⁶ Allen J. Scott, *The Cultural Economy of Cities: Essays on the Geography of Image-Producing Industries* (London: Sage, 2000), 205.

⁷ Sassen, “Who’s City Is It?,” 207.

city's status in the hierarchy of global cities, a symbolic status which itself translates into commercial value.

The question of the economic value of culture is not new. "Cultural economics" rose as a field in the United States and Europe in the 1960s when a growing number of economists began to argue that culture influences and is influenced by economic factors. They examined the effects of arts on urban economies, the effects of public funding for the arts, the functioning of art markets, the behaviours of cultural producers and consumers and the role of cultural industries in the marketplace.⁸ They contended that the market for those forms of art with popular appeal, such as publishing, film, television and popular music, was quickly expanding and that these cultural industries stood to become increasingly economically valuable.

The cultural industries have also been linked to the economic gains associated with production and job creation. The same supposed "trickle-down" or "multiplier" effect is said to result from investment in the typically less lucrative arts sectors, whereby money spent is returned through job creation, audience spending in restaurants, hotels and shops, and attracting other similar cultural organizations, tourists, investors and residents to the city.⁹ There has come to be a consensus among urban policy-makers that the arts have an economic impact far beyond the budgets of individual artists or arts organizations, though it is nearly impossible to measure this impact with any precision, to determine where specifically the effects are felt or to compare the arts trickle-down to

⁸ Rosanne Martorella, "Cultural Policy as Marketing Strategy: The Economic Consequences of Cultural Tourism in New York City" in *Global Culture: Media, Arts, Policy and Globalization*, eds. Diana Crane, Nobuko Kawashima, and Ken'ichi Kawasaki (New York: Routledge, 2002), 119.

⁹ J. Pedro Lorente, "Urban Cultural Policy and Urban Regeneration: The Special Case of Declining Port Cities – Liverpool, Marseilles, Bilbao" in *Global Culture: Media, Arts, Policy and Globalization*, eds. Diana Crane, Nobuko Kawashima, and Ken'ichi Kawasaki (New York: Routledge, 2002), 95.

that of other activities. The argument remains that for the arts to contribute to the city's economy, they must be well-funded.

The arguments for culture's economic role have been significantly strengthened by conceptions of the changing interests of a globalized citizenry and of the information economy (given that cultural products and services are information-based). The decline of Fordist mass production has given rise to a more flexible regime of consumption, rejecting standardization in favour of the stylistic differentiation of commodities. Today's consumers have more time and disposable income to put towards the accumulation of specialized cultural products, from theatre and music, to theme parks, fashion, food, cars or kitchen gadgets.¹⁰ For that reason, entertainment, the arts, tourism and consumerism have been targeted as the engines of urban economic growth.

It has been suggested further that the cultural economy is not only based on cultural products and services, but on cultural images, symbols and messages. Traditional cultural institutions, based on class or political affiliation, have become less relevant to the creation of identity as both people and information have become more mobile and diverse. The consumption of varied cultural images has, thus, become the new dictate of identity.¹¹ Commodities are said to be sought for their sign value more than for their use value and as a result, images gain significant commercial worth.

Sharon Zukin explains that with growing cultural consumption, culture now forms the basis of the city's symbolic economy, its visible ability to produce the symbols and space which provide its economic edge. According to her, the development of a city is based on the traditional economic factors of land, labour and capital, but also on its

¹⁰ Harvey in Jim McGuigan, "Urban Regeneration" in *Culture and the Public Sphere* (London: Routledge, 1996), 98.

¹¹ Sharon Zukin, "Whose Culture? Whose City?" in *The Cultures of Cities* (Cambridge, MA: 1995), 3.

manipulation of symbolic language. The look and feel of cities is (and always has been) based on the social and aesthetic preferences of those with the power to distinguish between what (or who) is visibly included or excluded from public space. It is also based on the work of officials and investors who build the tangible symbols of growth, real estate, new businesses and jobs. Finally, it is based on the entrepreneurial activities of city advocates and elites who, through philanthropy, civic pride and a desire to reinforce their class identities, develop grandiose urban architecture, parks or museums, features which are meant to represent a superior city. Since the 1970s, the relevance of the symbolic economy has increased considerably with the “symbiosis of image and product, the scope and scale of selling image on a national and even a global level, and the role of the symbolic economy in speaking for, or representing, the city.”¹² To gain global recognition, post-industrial cities must position themselves within what Lash and Urry call “global economies of signs and space.”¹³ The civic image itself becomes commodity, which like other products and services can be “branded,” given a particular design or symbolism which advertises and distinguishes it.¹⁴

A unique city image or brand representing the possibilities of cultural creation and participation, Harvey suggests, is required for attracting “capital and people ‘of the right sort.’”¹⁵ Tourism depends on the values people associate with participating in a city’s cultural brand and taking home souvenirs from their visits. A tourist watching a Broadway production is attracted not only by the production itself, but by its assumed calibre and the possibility of engaging specifically with New York’s cultural image.

¹² Zukin, “Whose Culture? Whose City?,” 8.

¹³ Scott Lash and John Urry, *Economies of Signs and Space* (London: Sage, 1994), 325-6.

¹⁴ Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary Online, “branding,” 2009, <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/define.asp?key=92317&dict=CALD> (accessed September 12, 2009).

¹⁵ Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity*, 295.

People visit Los Angeles to experience its palm trees and glamour and visit Paris for its luxury and refinement. Local symbolic values thus translate directly into global commercial values. But crafting a city image for attracting mobile capital and new residents is certainly more complex than selling it as a tourist destination. The affluent and “worldly” are drawn to the cultural amenities themselves as well as their representation of a booming city with sufficient people and money to support them.

Urban Cultural Policy and the Cultural Economy

In *The Rise of the Creative Class* and its follow up, *Cities and the Creative Class*, Florida has provided an immensely successful, intuitive (if not simplistic), sort of popular guide to urban planning, borrowing the concept that the movers and shakers of the new economy are young, mobile, knowledge workers and providing statistical support for the argument that these agents of post-industrial growth are drawn to cities recognized for arts, culture and “lifestyle attractions.” His Creative Class has much in common with David Brooks’ earlier characterization of the “Bobo,” the bourgeois-bohemian. In Brooks’ comical treatment of contemporary upper-class culture, he observes: “WASPy upscale suburbs were suddenly dotted with arty coffeehouses where people drank little European coffees and listened to alternative music. Meanwhile, the bohemian downtown neighborhoods were packed with multimillion-dollar lofts and those upscale gardening stores where you can buy a faux-authentic trowel for \$35.99.”¹⁶ According to Brooks, since the 1980s, the divide between mainstream and 60s hippie culture has dissolved, making it “impossible to tell an espresso-sipping artist from a cappuccino-gulping

¹⁶ David Brooks, *Bobos in Paradise: The New Upper Class and How They Got There* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000), 9.

banker.”¹⁷ The Bobos are an “enlightened elite” valuing financial success, but as a means towards experience, rather than as an end in itself. Florida insists that the new Creative Class generation transcends the old categories of bohemian and bourgeois entirely and prefers to see itself simply as “‘creative’ people with creative values, working in increasingly creative workplaces, living essentially creative lifestyles.”¹⁸ However, he also maintains that the Creative Class was born out of a very similar “Big Morph,” uniting two traditionally opposed value systems: the protestant work ethic of the money-making business person and the ethic of the bohemian rebel.¹⁹ Florida’s rising “no collar workforce,” the Creative Class, seeks out diverse, flexible and passionate experiences, but is not opposed to making money while doing it. According to Florida, its creative energy drives the economy, integrating of bohemianism into contemporary capitalism.

The Creative Class is creative in both work and leisure and seeks out the lifestyle specifically offered by urban density in the post-industrial environment. These people, Florida suggests, reject traditional ways of connecting with community (public meetings, softball leagues, political organizations, church groups), instead favouring the variety of individualistic networks available within a large city. They are expressive and they are drawn to “cool,” diverse, tolerant, cosmopolitan scenes. They seek out outdoor adventure, vibrant nightlife, interesting architecture, bike paths, cafe culture, ethnic diversity and arts precincts.

The crux of Florida’s argument stems from the statistical connection he draws between his social characterization of the Creative Class and economically successful cities. Florida shows a strong positive correlation between the “Bohemian Index,” the

¹⁷ Ibid., 10.

¹⁸ Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, 210.

¹⁹ Ibid., 192.

measure of a region's artists and cultural workers, the "High-Tech Index," the measure of its high-tech industrial output, the "Gay Index," the measure of its gay population, the "Melting Pot Index," the measure of its foreign-born population and the "Talent Index," the measure of its population with a bachelor's degree and above. The connection between the indices in Florida's "talent model" gives weight to the suggestion that knowledge-producers are drawn to creative, open-minded and diverse places.²⁰

He explains that adapting to new economic conditions requires policy recognition of the desires of the Creative Class through investment in the "three Ts": Talent, Technology and Tolerance. Florida describes Pittsburgh, for example, as a successful product of the industrial age which is struggling to transition to the Creative Age: "Trapped in the culture of a by-gone era, [Pittsburgh] has great difficulty opening up the social space in which members of the Creative Class can validate their identities."²¹ His policy message is clear: cities suffering from industrial decline should aggressively plan for, and compete to sell themselves to the Creative Class. Florida's thesis is so compelling that it has become almost canonical as the basis for arguments on the role of municipal cultural investment in attracting young, talented, knowledge workers and increasing a city's overall economic advantage.

Charles Taylor's *The Creative City* offers a more policy-specific "mental toolkit" for approaching post-industrial urban economics. He attests that "we cannot solve 21st century problems with 19th century mindsets: the dynamics of cities and the world urban

²⁰ Though *The Rise of the Creative Class* focuses on American cities, in 2002, Florida et al. produced a report suggesting that the relationships found in the American study are found, if not more strongly, in city-regions in Ontario and Canada generally. (Meric S. Gertler, Richard Florida, Gary Gates and Tara Vinodrai, *Competing on Creativity: Placing Ontario's Cities in North American Context*, prepared for the Ontario Ministry of Enterprise, Opportunity and Innovation and the Institute for Competitiveness and Prosperity, 2002.

<http://www.investinginchildren.on.ca/Communications/articles/Competing%20on%20Creativity.pdf>)

²¹ Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, 305.

system have changed too dramatically.”²² Like Florida, Taylor argues that harnessing innovation and creativity within a city is the key to regenerating former industrial regions and uses several examples from European cities to illustrate forward-thinking and new conceptualizations of the city:

Here are innovative ways of creating employment or applying technology and unleashing the skill of the young or the elderly. There is inspiring architecture that speaks to a city’s soul and identity, and there are clever energy-saving devices or public transport that is a joy to use. There are retail environments that merge entertainment and learning, and public spaces that encourage urban buzz and celebrations that capture the unusual, the uplifting and the creative.²³

Taylor suggests that mixing diversity and culture stimulates creative potential. Whereas Florida emphasizes the economic benefits of this creative potential, Taylor maintains that the Creative City is not only a wealth-creator but the source of liveability and quality of life. Jinna Tay’s characterization of the Creative City concept represents it well:

“Creative Cities are spaces you want to be in, places to be seen” and they are “about how local urban spaces can be re-imagined, rejuvenated and re-purposed within a competitive global framework.”²⁴

The early 1990s saw a first in the history of urban planning: people began arguing that returning to city centres, rather than leaving them, would counteract socio-economic deprivation and dependence on cars. City plans commonly championed a physical renaissance of downtown neighbourhoods with coordinated re-population efforts and new economic investment. Physical renaissance strategies were accompanied by the

²² Charles Landry, *The Creative City: A Toolkit for Urban Innovators* (London: Earthscan Publications, 2000), xii.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Jinna Tay, “Creative Cities” in *Creative Industries*, ed. John Hartley (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 220.

promotion of a social and cultural renaissance, where urban design would create spaces to bring strangers together, provide the foundations for creativity and foster social inclusion.

Such thinking has been given steam by the works of Landry and Florida and though neither of them recommend arts or even cultural funding specifically, prominent discourse on the social benefits of the arts combined with their arguments for the economic benefits of “creativity” provide an incredibly seductive, almost utopian vision of the role of the arts in building a modern city where bohemianism and business merge, the public and the private cooperate and economic, cultural and social growth mutually support one another.

This type of planning, which has come to dominate urban cultural policy throughout North America, Europe, Australia, and elsewhere,²⁵ focuses little on the intrinsic values of the arts. It is not aimed at supporting specific cultural amenities or local cultural infrastructures. Instead, it outwardly argues that intervention in culture can produce external benefits. Nevertheless, despite paying lip service to social and cultural development, as McGuigan points out, contemporary cultural policy trends primarily reflect economic rationales and economic success measures all based on “questionable assumptions and conventional wisdoms”²⁶ surrounding the concepts of the cultural or creative economy. McGuigan argues that based on these concepts “cultural policy discourse has, in effect, been infected by economistic reasoning and, indeed, [turned] into a branch – and a weak branch at that – of economic policy.”²⁷ Shifting from an economic, to a social or cultural perspective on the role of culture in urban planning, critics argue that assessing the relative successes of culture-led regeneration strategies by

²⁵ Barnes et al., “Community and Nostalgia in Urban Revitalisation,” 337.

²⁶ McGuigan, “Doing a Florida Thing,” 4.

²⁷ Ibid.

economic criteria alone fundamentally miss the mark. Several issues surface when, rather than emerging naturally from urban life, culture is mobilized as the dominant economic driver of the post-industrial city.

Commodification and Standardization

Kevin Robbins is one of several critics to argue that attempts to rejuvenate cities as global cultural centres are what ironically have caused the streetscapes of major cities to appear remarkably similar.²⁸ As cities seek creative status, their sense of place and their individual histories and geographies are lost in the shaping of urban leisure and consumption districts based on the successful models of other “world-class” cities. According to Michael Sorkin, efforts to secure prominence in the global economy have produced a whole new kind of city, a city without place attached to it. He finds the American “ageographic” city in:

...huge shopping malls, anchored by their national-chain department stores, and surrounded by swarms of cars; in hermetically sealed atrium hotels cloned from coast to coast; in uniform ‘historic’ gentrification and festive markets; in the disaggregated sprawl of endless new suburbs without cities; and in the antenna bristle of a hundred million rooftops from Secaucus to Simi Valley, in the clouds of satellite dishes pointed at the same geosynchronous blip, all sucking Arsenio and the A-Team out of the ether.²⁹

Comparing it to a theme park, Sorkin warns that the new city eradicates particularity with the unimaginable sameness of uniform mass culture. Moreover, the democratic public realm is replaced by imageability and advertising which are completely oblivious to the needs and traditions of city inhabitants.³⁰

²⁸ Robbins, “Prisoners of the City”

²⁹ Michael Sorkin, introduction to *Variations on a Theme Park*, ed. Michael Sorkin (New York: Hill and Wang, 1992), xi.

³⁰ Ibid., xv.

Creative branding is based on the rejection of “corporate generic” in favour of the specialized, the innovative and the expressive, but the result is simply a broader level of standardization. “Unique” cultural products and experiences are commodified according to the “unique” desires of the Creative Class in downtown “glamour zones”³¹ modelled on those of global cities, featuring the same reclaimed historic buildings, boutiques, independent cafes and atrium hotels.

City Competition and Entrepreneurial City Planning

Saskia Sassen argues that globalization has both economic and cultural dimensions, producing a hierarchy of cities where those designated as “world-class” maintain a concentration of wealth and power, while marginal cities lose their economic and cultural importance.³² According to Sassen, global cities are now the spaces of postcolonialism, acting as strategic sites for the formation of transnational identities. They export both corporate culture and the multiplicity of other cultures and identities that they incorporate. These are then imposed in other places, producing a “geography of centrality and marginality.”³³ The result is a city competition for global, national or regional cultural status within the hierarchy of cities.

Though “soft” infrastructure (advisory services, skills development, education, social inclusion strategies) contributes significantly to the development of creativity, “hard” infrastructure (architecture, mega-projects, restaurant, shopping or sports complexes) is generally the focus of urban policy since they provide more tangible

³¹ Sassen, “Whose City Is It?,” 220.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid., 217.

representations of a city's cultural status.³⁴ Harvey suggests that such investments are socially wasteful, doing nothing but contributing to "over-accumulation." He asks: "How many successful convention centres, sports complexes, disney-worlds, and harbour places can there be?"³⁵

The culture-led city competition involves the use of marketing techniques and principles designed specifically to advance the appeal and economic viability of a place to target audiences (tourists, businesses, investors and residents).³⁶ Be it through corporate zones and mega-projects, or "unique" streetscapes of pedestrian walkways, renewed store fronts and heritage plaques, using this "place-marketing" as a the basis for urban planning represents a new form of municipal governance reflecting a shift towards capitalist ideologies, and away from the provision of public services. Governance concerned with competition and entrepreneurialism reconfigures the state's relationship with the private sector and shifts its focus towards maximizing the attractiveness of the city as a site for capitalist development.³⁷ New partnerships are produced between public institutions and private businesses, consultants and paid experts.

Inequality and Gentrification

In attempting to revive declining areas by recasting them to attract capital, the entrepreneurial turn in planning asks private-public partnerships to provide solutions to social problems, assuming that commercial growth solves issues of inequality and poverty. Entrepreneurial planning thus removes government imperatives regarding

³⁴ Tay, "Creative Cities," 228.

³⁵ Harvey quoted in McGuigan "Urban Regeneration," 99.

³⁶ Encyclopaedia Britannica Online, "place marketing," 2009,

<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/462514/place-marketing> (accessed September 12, 2009).

³⁷ Kendall Barnes, Gordon Waitt, Nicholas Gill and Chris Gibson, "Community and Nostalgia in Urban Revitalisation: A Critique of Urban Village and Creative Class Strategies as Remedies for Social 'Problems'," in *Australian Geographer* 37, no. 3 (November 2006), 337.

citizenship and identity, expecting capitalist production to provide for the well-being of residents.³⁸

Such thinking has been criticized for adhering to a simplified view of the relationship between economic growth, the built environment, urban design and community-building.³⁹ While place-marketing strategies may improve the aesthetics of the physical environment and increase its appeal, their level of contribution to social cohesion or tolerance (values which are said to attract the Creative Class) remains unclear.

In fact, many argue that the concern with inter-city competition and place-marketing to investors and high-income populations completely sidelines holistic and socially-inclusive place-making strategies. Furthermore, urban revitalization strategies generate an unsurprising result: as public spending is redirected into capital projects, neighbourhood services generally suffer.⁴⁰ Sassen's treatment of global cities points to the inequality produced both between and within cities. In her estimation, regenerated downtowns not only fail to produce social cohesion, they serve as visual indicators of a sharpened disparity between "the indifference and greed of the new elites [and] the hopelessness and rage of the poor."⁴¹ The regeneration of inner-city neighbourhoods produces what Zukin calls an "urban oasis," where everyone "appears to be middle class."⁴²

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Talen in Barnes et. al., "Community and Nostalgia in Urban Revitalisation," 338.

⁴⁰ David Whitson, "World-Class Leisure and Consumption: Social Polarization and the Politics of Place" in *World Class Cities: Can Canada Play?*, eds. Caroline Andrew, Pat Armstrong and Andre Lapierre (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1999), 314.

⁴¹ Sassen, "Whose City Is It?," 221.

⁴² Zukin, "Whose Culture? Whose City?," 10.

The idea of the post-industrial global city suggests that city inhabitants are all members of an information society of educated, culturally-aware, technologically-advanced knowledge workers. But the idea of this city ignores the lower class or service workers who support such lifestyles. In fact, the revitalization process is mostly led by and aimed at three overlapping dominant social groups: the new group of young and single or older and child-free urban citizens who enjoy the advantages of high-consumption city living; day visitors and tourists drawn to city destinations with vibrant and active cultural scenes; and Florida's Creative Class and the bohemian and entrepreneurial knowledge workers who are transforming city spaces. As Kevin Robbins explains:

With its emphasis on art, culture, consumption and a cappuccino lifestyle, the fashionable new urbanity seems to be shaped in the image of exactly the same social group that stands behind the wider political programme of post-Fordism...[I]t is only about revitalizing fragments of the city. It is about insulating the consumption of living spaces of the postmodern *flâneur* from the 'have-nots' in the abandoned zones of the city.⁴³

Marginalized groups are effectively pushed out of "liveable" and "vibrant" downtown life, participating only as service workers or voyeurs.⁴⁴

The idea that producing zones according to the postmodern imaginary sharpens rather than diminishes social polarization is well-illustrated in Manuel Castells's concept of the "Dual City." For him, downtown renewal projects are based on a mythology framing the existing downtown as a frontier to be conquered and improved, which ultimately produces a social divide between two urban realities, the "cosmopolitanism of the elites" and the "tribalism of local communities." Castells contends that this social

⁴³ Kevin Robbins quoted in McGuigan "Urban Regeneration," 108.

⁴⁴ D. Ley and K. Olds in Whitson, "World-Class Leisure and Consumption," 313.

divide is played out spatially as inner-cities are re-colonized by the middle class and elites, effectively pushing the existing population to the periphery.⁴⁵

This process is generally understood as gentrification. As higher-income populations move into neighbourhoods, higher-priced housing and amenities spring up and lower-income populations are subsequently displaced. Neil Smith contends that gentrification is a new form of class warfare, one which is intimately connected to the flows of capital and people related to globalization. The way a city participates in the global economy is reflected in space as the demand for knowledge workers becomes concentrated in downtown cores and the gentrification process is initiated.

While this chapter has mostly examined the relationship between anthropological culture, the economy and the city, the practice of urban cultural policy in this thesis is focussed more specifically on arts and heritage. It is important to recognize, however, how understandings and uses of arts and heritage reflect anthropological culture. Anthropological culture clearly relates to the processes of globalization and gentrification, but many observers have noted the role that the arts play in these processes as well.

The connection between the arts and gentrification is quite clear when assessing the role of artists in the development of urban neighbourhoods. A simplified version of this process involves artists moving into districts abandoned by a suburbanized middle class based on the availability of inexpensive spaces for working and living. The area soon develops a cultural reputation, stimulating the opening of galleries, boutiques and

⁴⁵ Castells in McGuigan "Urban Regeneration," 109.

restaurants, the subsequent raising of housing prices and the displacement of artists to a new area.⁴⁶

Observing both the physical and cultural marginalization produced by culture-led revitalization schemes, Whitson asks whether a city can truly act as a product to be sold to tourists, global investors and new residents while at the same time existing as a community whose artistic and cultural amenities truly benefit all citizens, including those with less disposable income. In his view, focussing on the economic benefits of cultural branding simply means catering to the desires of a transnational professional class and to the equation of its needs (and even its leisure interests) with the needs of the city as a whole.⁴⁷

Economistic Cultural Policy in the Small City

In spite of accumulating evidence that culture-led revitalization strategies may not be able to satisfy all the objectives they claim to, arguments about the cultural economy and new conceptions of creativity have proven to be very appealing. The popularity and the enthusiasm for such strategies among municipal governments have spread to many smaller cities and towns, which are very different from the metropolitan cases for which the strategies were initially formulated. Though small cities are faced with their own unique social and economic issues, in the context of Sassen's "geography of centrality and marginality," they often seek to increase their relevance and produce creative advantage by replicating the downtown revitalization solutions of big cities, thereby replicating many of their inherent problems. Much of the research evaluating the impact

⁴⁶ Sharon Zukin, *Loft Living: Culture and Capital in Urban Change* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1982), 174-75.

⁴⁷ Whitson, "World-Class Leisure and Consumption"

of cultural regeneration or Creative City schemes has focussed on metropolitan and core cities,⁴⁸ but a number of critical points have been raised regarding their application in the small city.

Graeme Evans and Jo Foord examine the case of Sheffield, England. As Sheffield's steel industry declined in the 1980s, the Cultural Industries Quarter (CIQ) was intended to provide alternate employment and to retain creative talent (especially in popular music, visual arts and crafts). The CIQ was intended to act as a creative cluster for economic growth (using the same cluster theory that drives the more recent Creative development strategies). Sheffield, which was initially hailed as a successful model for small city downtown regeneration, could later be critiqued for the inability to deliver on its economic and social goals.

Fifteen years after its inception, the CIQ remained dominated by small enterprises with limited profitability. The organically developed cafes, small retailers and independent bars which have made other cultural districts attractive to urban dwellers and tourists were absent. Susan Christopherson contends that culture-led regeneration may be appropriate for smaller cities if it draws on the resources of an existing pool of knowledge workers at, for example, a local university or research facility, to provide both creative producers and audiences. She suggests that small cities are more capable of cultural growth if they rely on networks of people, rather than on cultural institutions.⁴⁹ But as Evans and Foord explain, most cultural regeneration strategies are aimed at image-enhancing institutions to compete for external support. As such, the competitive and

⁴⁸ Evans and Foord, "Small Cities for a Small Country," 153.

⁴⁹ Susan Christopherson, "Creative Economy Strategies for Small and Medium Size Cities: Options for New York State" (paper presented at the Quality Communities Marketing and Economics Workshop, Albany, New York, April 20, 2004)
http://www.nycreativeeconomy.cornell.edu/downloads/reports/Creative_Economy_Strategies.pdf

cultural strengths of metropolitan centres put smaller cities at a considerable disadvantage. Small cities simply lack many of the key elements that allow for metropolitan cultural success, such as a critical mass of cultural activity, large enough audiences to sustain cultural projects and perhaps most importantly, the “buzz” which is said to attract creative people.⁵⁰ As a result, small cities that use high-profile cultural initiatives to compete with metropolitan cities enter into a very precarious business.

With the CIQ, Sheffield sought to distance itself from its industrial past, using the positive rhetoric of the “smokeless” economy. Sheffield’s industrial inheritance was only present in the city’s “cultural renaissance” within thematic museums or as the backdrop for heritage tourism. However, interviews with Sheffield’s creative producers revealed that they were more stimulated by the old industrial spaces, where manufacturing still occurs, than by the top-down approach taken to the CIQ.⁵¹ Distanced (both socially and geographically) from industrial Sheffield, the CIQ was disconnected from local history and character, thereby undermining any sustainable regenerative efforts.

John McCarthy locates a similar disconnect from social considerations in Dundee, Scotland’s creation of a central arts district. When its traditional industries (whaling, manufacturing and trade) had trouble adapting to new technologies and markets, Dundee began experiencing population decline, unemployment and social deprivation. Partly inspired by Sheffield, Dundee sought to rehabilitate its image with a central arts district of cultural facilities and knowledge economy clusters. McCarthy argues that the cultural quarter failed to improve the city’s social conditions since, located downtown, it was detached from the socially-deprived population of the outlying city. The resources of the

⁵⁰ Evans and Foord, “Small Cities for a Small Country,” 155.

⁵¹ Drake in Evans and Foord, “Small Cities for a Small Country,” 165.

cultural quarter, he argues, undermined any inclusive cultural activity, being aimed primarily at external audiences, validation and promotion and excluding local and low-income populations.

The rationale used for Dundee's cultural quarter was ready-made, transferred from experiences and applications elsewhere, rather than being home-grown or locally embedded. McCarthy suggests that:

While there are accepted examples of "good practice" in culture-led regeneration, acceptance and application of such good practice would seem to be frequently based not on formal evaluation or analysis but largely on anecdotal grounds. The process of policy transfer may therefore be one of 'serial replication' rather than sensitive adaptations to context that take into account the peculiarities and specificities of local aims and circumstances.⁵²

Gordon Waitt agrees that policy-makers in the small city must distance themselves from the conventions that govern the arts in terms of place promotion. According to him, ideas about creative people and creative cities are imposed by New York, London and Paris, suggesting that reproducing global city processes are the only means of succeeding in the new economy. Because dominant discourses on the economic role of creativity prioritize large cities, policies seeking creative competitiveness for the small city are rendered very unconvincing. For Waitt, the smallness of a city does not inhibit its creativity, but economic policies that fail to recognize the ways in which creativity functions and is understood in the small city do.

Waitt looks at Wollongong, Australia, which, like Dundee and Sheffield, turned to the arts with the decline of its steel industry in the 80s and 90s. Initially, the city sought to diversify its economy by investing in new technologies and tourism. Under the theme of cultural tourism and to counter a local sense of decline and failure, it developed

⁵² McCarthy quoted in Evans and Foord, "Small Cities for a Small Country," 159.

several inward-looking cultural development projects which focussed on promoting tolerance and community, enhancing skills and providing employment. By 1999 though, “creativity” had become the dominant buzzword in Australian policy-making and culture was positioned in terms of its economic benefits. Inspired by other small cities, like Dundee, and by the ideas of Richard Florida, policy-makers proposed a “Creative Energy Centre” as the focal point for a new downtown arts precinct. The Creative Energy Centre was to act as a hub for the Creative Class to start new businesses in the creative industries. Ultimately though, the proposal was never pursued by Wollongong’s City Council.

According to Waitt, the lack of enthusiasm regarding the centre was not reflective of resistance to the arts precinct’s potential for causing gentrification or social fractures. Rather, key decision-makers were reluctant to pursue the project because they remained unconvinced of the economic potential of the arts in Wollongong and were uncomfortable accepting the risks posed by supporting the arts in a small city still producing steel. Wollongong’s sense of civic pride had traditionally been drawn from sports. As a result, local identity was heavily shaped by myths about sport, steel, and by association, heteronormative masculinity. Sustaining this masculine civic pride had always been a City Council priority, which became hard to reconcile with new discourses about the arts, traditionally perceived as “soft” or “feminine.”⁵³ For City Council, accepting notions of the “Creative Class” and of the arts as a powerful economic force within a small industrial city was simply too radical. Identifying Wollongong’s shift from a moderately-successful, internally-focussed and socially-oriented form of cultural

⁵³ Australian Street Company in Gordon Waitt, “Creative Small Cities: Cityscapes, Power and the Arts” in *Small Cities: Urban Experience Beyond the Metropolis*, eds. David Bell and Mark Jayne (New York: Routledge, 2006), 179.

policy to a failed economic model, Waitt argues that folding culture into the economy of the small industrial city not only, as others have suggested, risks social polarization and exclusion, but by imposing unconvincing ideas on the city, removes interest in the arts altogether.⁵⁴

The Wollongong and Sudbury cases have much in common. To limit their reliance on primary industry, both entertained economic rationales for proposed cultural mega-projects which ultimately failed. Sudbury's Performing Arts Centre may not have been supported by City Council because, as Waitt suggests, there was little trust in the small industrial city's potential to produce realistic economic advantage through the arts.

Jonathan Paquette looks at the Sudbury case itself, and like Waitt, he argues that economic cultural policies are detrimental to the development of arts and culture in the small city context, focussing on how they diminish the role of the artist in determining local artistic needs. In his article, "Engineering the Northern Bohemian," Paquette looks at the impacts of Creative policies on municipal governance in three northern Ontario cities: Thunder Bay, Sault-Ste-Marie and Sudbury. He explains that before the emergence of the Creative agenda, local arts policy mostly arose from a three-way negotiation process involving municipal government, artists, and those members of the public taking interest in a richer local arts programme. While Sault Ste-Marie's cultural policy (2003) is reflective of this traditional policy-making dynamic, the policies of Thunder Bay (2005) and Sudbury (2006) demonstrate the diffusion of the Creative Class approach, referring specifically to Richard Florida's ideas as a policy solution to local economic and social issues. By positioning culture as a tool for developing not only

⁵⁴ Gordon Waitt, "Creative Small Cities: Cityscapes, Power and the Arts" in *Small Cities: Urban Experience Beyond the Metropolis*, eds. David Bell and Mark Jayne (New York: Routledge, 2006).

cultural democracy, but the local economy, business and industry leaders become new players at the policy-making table.

Paquette argues that the implementation of the Creative agenda in Northern Ontario shows economic and human resource development being prioritized over cultural development. In an attempt to, as he says, “manage the North,” these policies focus on the desires of skilled workers and southern Ontario urban professionals, rather than on those of the local community. To attract these people, artists are made the implementers, rather than the subjects of policy. Paquette insists that small and northern cities do not have the cultural infrastructures available to artists that big cities do, and therefore, this emphasis away from specific local cultural needs is particularly problematic.⁵⁵

Both Waitt and Paquette are interested in how economistic cultural policies in the small industrial city risk failure and are detrimental to local arts. I have identified numerous treatments of the social issues produced by cultural regeneration schemes in larger cities, but Waitt and Paquette allude to tensions specific to their application in the small industrial city. Waitt points out a conflict between “masculine,” industrial, sporting Wollongong and artistic, “feminine” Wollongong. Paquette identifies the risk of social alienation in Thunder Bay and Sudbury’s attempts to overcome northerness by catering to the southern urban professional. Noting this, what I offer in this thesis is a deeper assessment of the social issues highlighted by the Creative agenda’s application in northern Ontario, through an examination of the conflict between working-class, northern Sudbury and the elitism and southernness represented by the Creative City. Before turning specifically to Sudbury’s policy and its outcomes, in the next chapter, I explore the

⁵⁵ Paquette, “Engineering the Northern Bohemian”

social, cultural and economic context in which Sudbury's Creative branding strategy arose.

Chapter Three

Sudbury: Industry, Governance and Culture

Many cities have pursued culture-led revitalization schemes to address their economic, social and cultural issues, but as seen in Chapter Two, these schemes are often unable to deliver on their goals, particularly when they are not consciously formulated for local circumstances. In this chapter, I will assess the Sudbury context to show how it conforms with or, perhaps more significantly, departs from, the metropolitan cities which inspired Creative City concepts.

Located North of Lake Huron, 403km northwest of Toronto, Sudbury is the largest centre of Northern Ontario. While covering 90% of the province's territory, Northern Ontario contains only 6% of its population, two-thirds of which resides in five major cities: Thunder Bay, Sault Ste Marie, Timmins, Sudbury and North Bay. A city of 157,857, Sudbury contains 23% of Northern Ontario's population.¹ Sudbury is a culturally diverse city with significant francophone (28%), immigrant (7%) and Aboriginal (6%) populations.² Historically, the city developed around the mining industry, but beginning in the 1970s, Sudbury sought to expand its economic base by developing new industries. Most of its challenges today revolve around labour, human resources and the provision of social services – challenges which Creative City rhetoric claims to address.

In this chapter, I will review Sudbury's economic, social and cultural history, and its more recent community development issues. Historical analysis is useful because it

¹ Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, *Northern Ontario Overview*.

² Statistics Canada, *2006 Census of Canada Community Profiles, Sudbury*. Ottawa.

<http://www12.statcan.ca/census-recensement/2006/dp-pd/prof/92-591/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CD&Code1=3552&Geo2=PR&Code2=35&Data=Count&SearchText=Sudbury&SearchType=Begin&SearchPR=01&BI=All&GeoLevel=&GeoCode=3552>

provides insight into what shaped both the adoption of the Creative agenda and responses to it. It not only provides a basis for assessing more qualitative opinions formed about Sudbury's culture, identity and image, but it also provides an understanding of local development and what prompted municipal government to integrate cultural planning into this process. A complete history of Sudbury is obviously beyond the scope of this thesis; however, an overview will provide an understanding of how history has shaped lived, produced and imagined culture within the city.

Nickel City

The city began as a muddy camp for labourers on the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) in 1883, but after a member of the CPR work crew discovered copper, several mining companies sought to lay claim to the region. Sudbury was later found to contain the world's biggest nickel-copper-platinum group elements mineral deposits and one of its largest nickel reserves.³ Sudbury became the base for two leading international nickel-mining corporations, Inco Ltd., established in 1886 as the Canadian Copper Company (CCC), and the smaller Falconbridge Ltd., formed in 1928.

In its early years, Sudbury's downtown developed around the CPR station, but those connected with the mining industry settled around the Copper Cliff mine industrial complex just west of there. The mainly English-speaking CCC elite were housed in a planned settlement north of Copper Cliff, while the ethnically-diverse workforce was housed in a shantytown to the south. The CCC smelter and heaps of industrial waste separated Copper Cliff from Sudbury proper. The segregation both within Copper Cliff and between Copper Cliff and Sudbury represented the CCC's larger disconnect with the

³ Rousell et al. in Leadbeater, introduction to *Mining Town Crisis*, 13.

concerns of its workers and the city.⁴ Sudbury relied heavily on the CCC, but the American company, with absentee ownership and remote executive direction, had a general attitude of detachment and disinterest in the town itself.⁵

Later, Inco and Falconbridge, both headquartered in Toronto, would base their relationships with Sudbury on impersonal corporate and managerial considerations. Legal and contractual violations and general anti-social behaviours by both companies are heavily documented.⁶ Inco, in particular, was well-known for its excessive “arrogance” and “appalling” labour relations.⁷

By the 1950s, Sudbury had become the primary producer for the international nickel market and Inco and Falconbridge increased employment as they expanded their operations. The result was the rapid, haphazard and unplanned development of the city fringes. The regional population doubled, while the population of Sudbury’s core remained stable. As the city expanded, while the nickel companies were willing to offer jobs to Sudburians, they were reluctant to provide for any municipal services.⁸ Municipal expenditures on services were restricted by the city’s limited tax base (though mining was the primary local industry, its underground assets were exempt from taxation). Nevertheless, in this period, Sudbury saw the emergence of new buildings and

⁴ C.M. Wallace, “The 1880s” in *Sudbury: Rail Town to Regional Capital*, eds. C.M. Wallace and Ashley Thomson (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1993), 28.

⁵ Matt Bray, “A Company and a Community: The Canadian Copper Company and Sudbury, 1886-1902” in *At the End of the Shift: Mines and Single-Industry Towns in Northern Ontario*, eds. Matt Bray and Ashley Thomson (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1992), 40.

⁶ Leadbeater, introduction to *Mining Town Crisis*, 20.

⁷ Oiva Saarinen, “Creating a Sustainable Community: The Sudbury Case” in *At the End of the Shift: Mines and Single-Industry Towns in Northern Ontario*, eds. Matt Bray and Ashley Thomson (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1992), 174.

⁸ Oiva Saarinen, “The 1950s” in *Sudbury: Rail Town to Regional Capital*, eds. C.M. Wallace and Ashley Thomson (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1993), 211.

institutions, including three hospitals, a university, sports facilities and a television station, which would cement its position as a the regional hub of northeastern Ontario.

Diversification

After years of almost uninterrupted growth and a constantly expanding industrial workforce, by the 1980s, Sudbury had seen a decade of cutbacks, layoffs and strikes. Employment levels in mining and smelting were tied to the world demand for nickel and Inco began losing its dominant position as the world price leader for nickel when new international suppliers arrived on the scene, forcing nickel prices downward. In addition, the processes of mining and smelting became increasingly mechanized and automated, therefore requiring fewer labourers. *The Edmonton Journal* painted a bleak picture for the city: “In 1980 Sudbury’s gears are in reverse...The city is staggering and being rendered sterile...this is a falling and failing city.”⁹ Mining-based employment in Sudbury dropped from a historic high of 25,700 in 1971, to 17,700 in 1980 and 10,500 in 1988. The drastic changes in the mining economy were paralleled by a decline in population – Sudbury’s 1971 population of 170,000 had dropped to 152,500 by 1986.¹⁰

Recognizing the need to make the region less dependent on mining, in 1974, the municipal government established the Sudbury Regional Development Corporation (SRDC), an autonomous body of representatives from business, industry and government. The SRDC was meant to promote local economic development by encouraging the growth of new small and secondary industries and by weaning other industries, such as lumber and machine works, away from Inco’s control. Recent efforts

⁹ The Edmonton Journal in Dieter K Buse, “The 1970s” in *Sudbury: Rail Town to Regional Capital*, eds. C.M. Wallace and Ashley Thomson (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1993), 242.

¹⁰ Saarinen, “Creating a Sustainable Community,” 172.

to re-brand Sudbury are not the first; the SRDC was also actively involved in image transformation and public relations campaigns.

Throughout the 1970s, civic boosters and local politicians began very successfully lobbying the provincial and federal governments for public funds. Both intervened in Sudbury with short-term job-creation projects and the permanent transfer of several government offices, including, significantly, the entire Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines. By showing their vulnerability to business cycles, Sudburians successfully positioned themselves to receive government support for job creation, pollution reduction and the provision of transport links, housing and cultural amenities. Soon, as Dieter K. Buse explains:

...the expectation grew that, with few exceptions, government could and should supply the funds, rules, direction, and enforcement necessary for diversifying the economy...Regulate, plan, zone, subsidize became the key words during the decade in which the term “Corporate Welfare Bums” was coined.¹¹

In the 1980s and 90s, with funding from the provincial government, the federal government, Inco and Falconbridge, Sudbury gained several mining, health and science research centres: Science North (1984), the Northeastern Ontario Regional Cancer Centre (1991), Laurentian University’s Mining and Minerals Research Centre (1992) and the Sudbury Neutrino Observatory (1998). Science North, an interactive science museum built in the shape of a giant snowflake, fostered the development of the city’s tourism and hospitality sectors and it, in particular, acted as prominent symbol of Sudbury’s diversification and survival.

By the early 90s, Sudbury went from a single-industry to a “two-industry” town, maintained by mining and the public sector. It seemed that the serious layoffs in mining

¹¹ Dieter K. Buse, “The 1970s” in *Sudbury: Rail Town to Regional Capital*, eds. C.M. Wallace and Ashley Thomson (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1993), 268.

had been compensated for in service jobs. The blue collar population was then rivalled by nurses, teachers, clerks, doctors, sales people, business people and most prominently, civil servants. In 1991, *Maclean's* magazine reported on "Sudbury's Sunny Renaissance."¹²

Nevertheless, Buse argues that though public funds supported the city's development, they did not prepare Sudbury for self-sustained growth, nor did they help the city escape its dependence on trends and policies beyond its control. Sudbury simply shifted from a single reliance on the mining industry to a dual reliance on mining and higher levels of government.¹³

The growth in services mitigated but did not eliminate Sudbury's dependence on mining. Although direct employment in mining was down to 6,000 in 2006,¹⁴ the demand for mining products, services and technological advancement had fuelled the development of an important mining services cluster in Sudbury.¹⁵ Recent regional development policies focus on the cluster to promote Sudbury as a centre of research and innovation – the "Silicon Valley" of the mining industry with Laurentian University as the "Harvard" of the mining sector.¹⁶ In 2001, Natural Resources Canada estimated that 44% of local income was based on the mining industry, indicating that Sudbury's economy was still quite vulnerable to boom and bust commodity cycles.¹⁷

¹² Peter C. Newman, "Sudbury's Sunny Renaissance," *Maclean's*, April 1, 1991, 40.

¹³ Buse, "The 1970s," 242.

¹⁴ Community and Strategic Planning Division, City of Greater Sudbury, "Major Public and Private Sector Employers with 200 + Employees," 2009, <http://www.greatersudbury.ca/keyfacts/index.cfm?ct=352&items=&sr=&cntid=1047&app=keyfacts&lang=en> (accessed February 25, 2009).

¹⁵ City of Greater Sudbury, "Keyfacts: Labour and Employment," 2009, <http://www.greatersudbury.ca/keyfacts/index.cfm?app=KEYFACTS&ct=352&lang=en> (accessed February 25, 2009).

¹⁶ Leadbeater, introduction to *Mining Town Crisis*, 34.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 15.

By 2006, when the *Arts and Culture Charter and Strategy* was conceived, Sudbury had just emerged from a 23-year commodity slump. As nickel prices soared, Inco was taken over by Companhia do Vale Rio Doce, a Brazilian mining transnational, and Falconbridge by Xstrata Plc, a Swiss mining transnational.¹⁸ In May 2008, the *Toronto Star* reported: “Greater Sudbury is rocking, awash in money from the biggest boom in its 125-year history. Revellers crowd the nightclubs. Shoppers vie for elbow room in malls on weekends. Builders can't keep up. Life has sped up.”¹⁹ Whereas the price of nickel soared to about \$20 a pound in early 2007, when it was time to vote on the policy’s proposed Performing Arts Centre, along with the plunging stock markets and the overall bleak economic outlook in late 2008, nickel prices had fallen to \$4.30 per pound.²⁰

City of Culture (?)

Nickel, not the arts, has historically underpinned Sudbury’s development and identity. This is well exemplified by the joke that opened this thesis, which snickered at the absurdity of equating Sudbury with culture at all. Nevertheless, though Sudbury has never been known for high culture, Sudbury’s historic relationship with corporate mining power produced a rich labour and union culture, radical political undercurrents and leftist fringe movements. Laurie McGauley maintains that Sudbury has a tradition of progressive leftist art, rooted in the working class and northern experiences. Inspired by 60s counterculture, Sudbury’s working people, women, visible minorities, Aboriginals,

¹⁸ Though the official companies names are now Vale Inco and Xstrata Nickel, the names Inco and Falconbridge will be used throughout this thesis, since they are still the names commonly used in Sudbury.

¹⁹ Tony Van Alphen, “Sudbury Goes Boom, Windsor Goes Bust,” *The Toronto Star*, May 17, 2008, <http://www.thestar.com/Article/426845> (accessed May 19, 2009).

²⁰ *The Toronto Star*, “Vale Inco to Cut 350 Canadian Jobs,” March 3, 2009, <http://www.thestar.com/article/595684> (accessed May 17, 2009).

Francophones, disabled people and gays and lesbians – those excluded from local power and the mainstream cultural ideal – sought to “reclaim the means of cultural production.”²¹

In the 1960s and 70s, Sudbury became a key site for developing the burgeoning Franco-Ontarian nationalist movement, producing poets, musicians, playwrights and visual artists with distinctive working class Franco-Ontarian voices. Notably, the *Theatre du Nouvel-Ontario* evolved in 1971 from an informal association of Laurentian University students who united to write and perform, *Moé, j’viens du nord, s’tie*, (Me, I Come From the North, Damnit). The play centres around Roger, the teenaged son of a miner who fantasizes about leaving the monotony of his life in Sudbury, but ultimately follows in his father’s footsteps when he discovers his girlfriend is pregnant. The production became a rallying cry for the movement. Multiple other leftist cultural institutions grew out of Sudbury’s counterculture movement, namely, the Northern Lights Festival Boreal, designed as a bilingual folk festival celebrating Aboriginal culture, and the Sticks and Stones Feminist Theatre troupe, which epitomized the city’s feminist movement in its irreverence and concern for class issues.²²

Of course, the days of strong informal labour culture in Sudbury have mostly passed with downsizing, re-greening, diversification and the transmission of mass culture. The appeal of the resistance and solidarity which once spurred Sudbury’s radical cultural growth may have lessened, but traces of this heritage remain in Sudbury’s

²¹ Laurie McGauley, “Dispatches of Longing: Progressive Art and Culture in Sudbury” in *Mining Town Crisis: Globalization, Labour and Resistance in Sudbury*, ed. David Leadbeater (Black Point, NS: Fernwood Publishing, 2008), 222.

²² *Ibid.*, 223.

landscape and character. As a result, traditional high culture continues to be met with resistance in Sudbury, mostly for its association with elitism.²³

High culture was able to gain a small foothold in Sudbury in the 60s and 70s as the fear of American cultural imperialism grew and preserving Canadian cultural identity became a national issue. The federal government shifted responsibility for the founding of cultural organizations to provincial and municipal governments and with federal funding, cultural institutions sprung up throughout the country. Sudbury followed suit, founding the Art Gallery of Sudbury (1967), The Sudbury Theatre Centre, The Sudbury Arts Council (1974), The Sudbury Symphony Orchestra (1974) and fine arts programs at Laurentian University and Cambrian College. By the mid-70s, the administration of culture was further municipalized by the provinces. In Ontario, the Ministry of Culture and Leisure was formed in 1974 to provide guidelines and norms to the municipalities for cultural administration, though direction related primarily to heritage preservation. The development of the arts was mostly left to the leadership of local authorities.²⁴

The municipal government's role in Sudbury leisure was historically focussed on providing for the city's interest in sports. Efforts to improve Sudbury's cultural life were often hampered by a "reverse snobbery" which rejected anything but sport.²⁵ Significant investments have been made in "quality of life" amenities which make use of the city's natural environment. Sudbury profited from the 330 lakes within its municipal boundaries to build attractive public beaches, hiking and cycling trails, walkways and parks, but the maintenance and development of any cultural infrastructures in Sudbury

²³ Ibid., 221.

²⁴ Paquette, "Engineering the Northern Bohemian," 299.

²⁵ Gwenda Hallsworth and Peter Hallsworth, "the 1960s" in *Sudbury: Rail Town to Regional Capital*, eds. C.M. Wallace and Ashley Thomson (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1993), 237.

has mostly required the determination and persistence of individuals and small arts groups throughout the city's history.

A 2001 Statistics Canada survey stated that Canadian cities on average allocated \$13.50 per capita to arts and culture, while Sudbury allocated only \$1.50.²⁶ Another Statistics Canada study conducted in 2004 placed Sudbury in the bottom 15% of Census Metropolitan Areas for the importance of the cultural labour force.²⁷ Further confirming this, Richard Florida's Bohemian Index, measuring employment in artistic or creative occupations found Sudbury with an average of 2.4 bohemians per 1000 population, well below the Canadian average of 6.0. While the national average included Canada's largest urban centres, where most bohemians tend to flock, Sudbury still ranked the second-lowest of the seven cities studied with populations under 250,000.^{28,29}

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, another phase in the municipalization of culture occurred with the increased popularity of notions linking culture to local economic development. Based on this, a renewed interest in cultural policy grew among policy experts, civil servants and artists in Canadian cities.³⁰ The Ontario Ministry of Culture's 2005 *Ontario Municipal Cultural Planning Inventory Project* found that 70% of 149 Ontario municipalities surveyed reported having some sort of cultural policy framework. 61% of those reported having cultural elements in larger plans (official plans, tourism or economic development strategies, etc.) while 23% reported having cultural plans or

²⁶ Frick in McGauley, "Dispatches of Longing," 228.

²⁷ Leadbetter, introduction to *Mining Town Crisis*, 13.

²⁸ Gertler et al., "Competing on Creativity"

²⁹ Florida's research focuses on the correlation between a city's artists, diversity, education and innovation, but Sudbury's *Arts and Culture Strategy*, though giving a nod to issues of ethnic diversity, mostly uses Florida's thesis to provide the economic rationale for specific arts funding. Because of that, though I recognize that Sudbury's ethnic and linguistic minority groups have significantly contributed to local heritage and development, I have limited my discussion of Sudbury culture to the arts and to cultural participation, leaving out questions of cultural diversity.

³⁰ Paquette, "Engineering the Northern Bohemian," 300.

policies integrated across municipal responsibilities – these included larger centres, such as Toronto and Ottawa, as well as smaller ones, such as Windsor, St-Catherines, Peterborough and Thunder Bay.³¹ The most overwhelming trend to emerge was the integration of culture into plans for economic development using the concept of “Creativity.” While the Creative City philosophy was adopted in Toronto, which looked for “World-Class” Creative status, it had also clearly transplanted itself into smaller cities and towns with more modest cultural assets.³²

Reflecting this trend, Sudbury took an official interest in culture with its 2003 Economic Development Strategic Plan which quoted Richard Florida’s work and identified culture as one of five key engines of growth, declaring that “the cultural side of a city is an attractor for the cohort that will be next to lead the way in innovation.”³³ In 2004, responsibility for arts and culture was transferred from Sudbury’s Leisure Services section to a new Tourism, Culture and Marketing section within the Growth and Development Department. With this, culture was brought into a broader agenda of local development, wherein it would be integrated into plans addressing a variety of local challenges.

³¹ Carrie Brooks-Joiner & Associates and Victoria Stasiuk Associates, *Ontario Municipal Cultural Planning Inventory Project: Summary of Findings*, prepared for the Ontario Ministry of Culture, 2005, 5-8. <http://www.culture.gov.on.ca/english/about/MCP%20Summary%20Report%20English.pdf>

³² Sharon Jeannotte, “The State of Cultural Infrastructure – Ontario” (paper presented, Centre of Expertise on Culture and Communities Regional Roundtable, Ottawa, November 19, 2007), 17-18. <http://www.cultureandcommunities.ca/downloads/RRT-Ontario-bckgrd.pdf>

³³ The Greater Sudbury Development Corporation and Pickard & Laws Consulting Group Inc., City of Greater Sudbury, *Coming of Age in the 21st Century: An Economic Development Strategic Plan for Greater Sudbury 2015*, 2003, 14.

Local Development Challenges

Sudbury often fares poorly on measures of community well-being. The prominent 2007 Sperling and Sander ranking of the best cities to live looked at the economy and jobs, cost of living, climate, education, health, crime, transportation, leisure, and arts and culture. Sudbury was ranked 26th out of 27 Canadian Census Metropolitan Areas (the Statistics Canada designation for cities with a population over 100,000). This was a slight improvement over its 2004 ranking: 27th. Unsurprisingly, the “pros” indicated for Sudbury were its pleasant summers and outdoor recreation, while the “cons” were its isolation and (lack of) entertainment, two specific attributes Sudbury’s cultural branding strategy seeks to address.³⁴

David Leadbeater argues that while dual reliance on mining and government may have fostered Sudbury’s development as a city, it limited its development as a community, particularly since globalization emerged in the 70s. According to him, with globalization, transnational mining companies gained increasing power relative to labour and communities, aided, in particular, by regressive neo-liberal policies at various levels of government. As a result, the inherent impoverishing tendencies of capitalism were intensified and Sudbury began to suffer from a chronic decline in community standards going far beyond boom and bust cycles.³⁵

Though Sudbury has always been subject to corporate powers in Toronto, New York and Montreal, the recent takeovers of Inco and Falconbridge by Brazilian and Swiss

³⁴ Bert Sperling and Peter Sander, *Cities Ranked and Rated: More than 400 Metropolitan Areas Evaluated in the U.S. & Canada*, 2nd ed. (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Publishing 2007), 839.

³⁵ Leadbeater, introduction to *Mining Town Crisis*

companies suggest a shift towards centres even farther removed and completely dissolve any pretence of corporate loyalty to the community.³⁶

Though it is easy to assume that atop its mineral wealth Sudbury would maintain superior, or at least adequate, cultural, educational, health and social-welfare institutions, Leadbeater contends that this is not the case:

Despite doing a major share of the Canadian economy's heavy lifting for well over a century, the Sudbury area as a community has relatively little to show for it. Nor is this likely to change – at least as long as the forces of and for corporate globalization continue to direct and dominate Sudbury's economic and political development.³⁷

For Leadbeater, the prominence of the corporate agenda in Sudbury has had disastrous effects in terms of not only employment and income, but living conditions from health, to education, community services and public space. He even goes on to suggest that “there is hardly a sphere where the anti-working class, anti-female, and anti-environmental bias of the ruling corporate power and policy outlook does not have an impact.”³⁸ Indeed, there is much evidence to suggest that Sudbury suffers from declining community conditions, including most prominently, the dominance of corporate commercial culture, inadequate living standards and social disparity, declined opportunity and a city image which does nothing but perpetuate many of these problems.

Corporate Commercial Culture

Since the 1950s, consumerism has been the focus of city planning and development schemes for the deteriorating downtown core. After a decade of unregulated

³⁶ Leadbeater's argument about the transnational mining corporation's lack of loyalty to the community would be strengthened a few months after the publication of his work. When Inco and Falconbridge were taken over in 2006, the new companies made an agreement to the Canadian government that there would be no layoffs for three years, but short of the deadline, with declining nickel prices in early 2009, Xstrata Nickel laid off 686 of its Sudbury employees, while Vale Inco laid off 261.

³⁷ David Leadbeater, preface to *Mining Town Crisis: Globalization, Labour and Resistance in Sudbury*, ed. David Leadbeater (Black Point, NS: Fernwood Publishing, 2008), 7.

³⁸ Leadbeater, introduction to *Mining Town Crisis*, 34.

development in the outskirts of the city, the city's first downtown renewal plan was initiated in 1966. It was, at the time, the largest public undertaking in the city's history and was hailed a major success. With provincial and federal funding, \$15 million dollars were spent over nine years on public and private housing, a shopping mall, a department store (Eaton's), a supermarket (Bonimart), a Holiday Inn, office space, and multi-level parking for 750 cars.³⁹ More than 20 buildings were demolished to make room for the new developments. Old city landmarks (including the post-office clocktower building, which had formed the focal point of downtown) were replaced by new structures in a "dynamic" downtown.

Despite a certain economic renewal downtown, city development continued to be centered mainly around the use of cars in the constantly expanding city fringes. Commercial developments in Sudbury were meant to solidify the city's predominant position as the shopping, business, entertainment and cultural centre of Northern Ontario. Northern Ontarians could come to Sudbury to satisfy their commercial needs. As Dieter K. Buse put it, "After you had taken your car to Midas, you could enjoy "international" cuisine at McDonald's and Kentucky Fried Chicken, before you relaxed at the Holiday Inn."⁴⁰ With the franchising of Sudbury, its streets and stores began resembling business strips from across North America.

In 2001, reflecting shifts in urban planning trends, Sudbury initiated a second downtown revitalization plan, this time focussing on vibrancy, unique streetscapes and greenspace. These efforts, however, have been hampered by the municipality's simultaneous support for corporate-developer driven expansion in the peripheral areas of

³⁹ Hallsworth and Hallsworth, "the 1960s," 226.

⁴⁰ Buse, "The 1970s," 261.

the city. Downtown Sudbury has recently seen an increase in its downtown independent cafes, bakeries, boutiques and restaurants, but small local business struggles to compete with major suburban big-box development.⁴¹

Inadequate Living Standards and Social Disparity

Sudbury has seen a long-term decline in its employment rates, first with the mining cuts in the 70s and 80s, then with public sector cuts in the 90s. Whereas Sudbury had a higher employment rate than the Canadian average and one similar to Ontario in 1971, by 2001, Sudbury was five percentage points below the Canadian average and seven below the Ontarian average. In line with this, Sudbury's rates of unemployment were higher than the averages for the country and the province. Bankruptcy rates were also higher than average and business bankruptcies in particular were significantly higher: 0.41 per thousand of population compared to 0.27 for Ontario and 0.33 for Canada (which serves as an interesting indicator of the struggle faced by the small businesses expected to participate in the regeneration of Sudbury's downtown). Dependency on social programs too was above the Canadian and Ontarian averages. Statistics Canada's poverty rates indicated that Sudbury's averages are mostly in line with those of Canada and Ontario; however, this does not take into account that Sudbury has an ageing population sustained by employer and union-negotiated pensions and that poverty rates for young persons tend to be higher. Child poverty rates have been shown to be higher in Sudbury than in Canada and Ontario.⁴² In addition, the 2006 census indicated that one in ten families living Sudbury in 2005 were low-income.⁴³

⁴¹ Leadbeater, introduction to *Mining Town Crisis*, 34.

⁴² Ibid., 29.

⁴³ The Ontario Trillium Foundation, "Your Community Profile: Algoma, Cochrane, Manitoulin, Sudbury," 2008, 8,

Social disparity in Sudbury has also grown. In 1993, the lowest 60% of earners accounted for 29.5% of the city's overall earnings and the highest 20% accounted for 47.8%. By 2003, the lowest 60%'s share had decreased to 21.7%, while the highest 20%'s had increased to 51.7 – over half of the whole community's earnings.⁴⁴ A 2008 survey prepared for the Sudbury Community Foundation indicated that 59.1% of Sudbury respondents felt that the gap between the city's rich and poor was getting larger.⁴⁵

Declined Opportunity

In the last 30 years, Sudbury has been seriously challenged by a decline in population and by the emigration of its youth,⁴⁶ though the 2006 census showed a small respite from both of these trends.⁴⁷ The city has had tremendous difficulty attracting new industries and skilled workers. With its limited economic base and negative employment figures, Sudbury has come to represent economic insecurity and limited prospects. This difficulty is also due in large part to the city's association with heavy industry, environmental degradation, isolation and northern lifestyle.⁴⁸

City Image

As demonstrated, Sudbury faces actual and significant social and economic issues. Nevertheless, many of these are perpetuated by a widespread negative city image, based in large part on former difficulties and stereotypes. Sudbury is no longer a rail

http://www.trilliumfoundation.org/your_community_in_profile/english/reports_pdf/ACMS%20Community%20Profile.pdf (accessed May 23, 2009).

⁴⁴ Leadbeater, introduction to *Mining Town Crisis*, 30.

⁴⁵ Oraclepoll Research Limited, report prepared for the Sudbury Community Foundation, 2008.

http://www.oraclepoll.com/sudbury_community_foundation.htm

⁴⁶ Paquette, "Engineering the Northern Bohemian," 304.

⁴⁷ The Ontario Trillium Foundation, 10, 16.

⁴⁸ This problem is faced throughout Northern Ontario, and in comparison with other regional communities, Sudbury's population and youth population figures are among the highest.

town or a one-dimensional mining town. Nor is it devastated by industrial pollution. Certainly facts and statistics representing Sudbury's decline are important, but what is most relevant to this thesis is perceived decline since Sudbury's cultural policy is primarily aimed at re-branding and re-imagining place.

The early process of smelting ore produced a yellow smoke that drifted over the city, polluting Sudbury soils, killing most vegetation and transforming the rocky landscape from grey to black. When a *London Daily Telegraph* reporter visited Sudbury in 1933, he remarked that it had the "horribly familiar" look of a smelter town:

There were the same forlorn buildings against a background of dung hills, the same baked earth and slag heaps; all vegetation killed by sulphur fumes from the smelter. It was as if these houses knew they would be abandoned should the mines run out.⁴⁹

As mining technology advanced, Sudbury still produced devastating emissions and nothing happened for decades to change the city's image. It was even magnified in 1971 when Apollo astronauts came to Sudbury to study lunar impact sites at its 1.8-billion-year-old meteorite crater (the source of the region's mineral wealth). The visit was and still is commonly described as a trial walk on a moonscape.⁵⁰ Over the years, the city has repeatedly been likened to "death valley" or to the "surface of the moon."

After Ontario passed the Air Pollution Act in 1967, Inco erected the world's largest free standing chimney to dissipate emissions. Despite a reduction in local pollution, Inco and Falconbridge continued to be the largest source of acid rain in North America in 1980.⁵¹ Even in 2001, Inco was the worst mining polluter in Canada.⁵²

⁴⁹ C.M. Wallace, "The 1930s," in *Sudbury: Rail Town to Regional Capital*, eds. C.M. Wallace and Ashley Thomson (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1993), 157.

⁵⁰ Wallace, "The 1980s," 275.

⁵¹ Buse, "The 1970s," 257-8.

⁵² Leadbeater, introduction to *Mining Town Crisis*, 21.

In 1978, Sudbury initiated an extensive land reclamation program (funded by the municipal, provincial and federal governments, not the mining companies). The region's success in re-greening surrounding lands and rehabilitating waters has earned worldwide recognition. With nearly 9 million trees planted, the city is now well-forested.⁵³ The region is recovering, but unfortunately, the view from the Trans-Canada highway still showcases blackened rocks, the smoke stack and the Copper Cliff industrial complex, which doesn't help Sudbury escape the image of a wasteland or shake the spectacle of desolation from the skilled workers' psyche.

Tied to environmental degradation and to a seemingly by-gone era, the visible representations of Sudbury's mining industry are destructive to its image. Mining is, in fact, highly profitable and productive as an industry and Sudbury's mining cluster has produced leading scientific and technological work. But rather than being recognized as innovative or creative, the mining industry has reproduced the notion that Sudbury is decaying, particularly within the "post-industrial" economy.

Sudbury's association with mining, working class and northern cultures, as noted in Chapter One, forms the basis of a certain local pride in the city's simplicity and lack of pretension. Nevertheless, much of this pride is rooted in a sense of defeat and inferiority to larger urban centres that maintain economic and cultural power. Stompin' Tom Connor's representation of Sudbury in his now iconic *Sudbury Saturday Night* is at once celebrated, mocked and contested by Sudburians. The song depicts a town of hard drinking and socializing, referring to hard work at Inco, beer, bingo and nickel. This

⁵³ City of Greater Sudbury, "Keyfacts: Innovation and Research: Environmental Restoration," 2009, <http://www.greatersudbury.ca/keyfacts/index.cfm?ct=357&items=&sr=&cntid=1015&app=KEYFACTS&lang=en> (accessed February 25, 2009).

same Sudbury is represented in Facebook groups like, “I grew up in a hole, aka Sudbury” and “Greater Sudbury has the worst roads ever!!!”

Though Sudbury has serious community development issues, common representations of the city are not always reflective of its current socio-economic or cultural makeup. Impressions of Sudbury’s heavy industry, decline and northern lifestyle are so prominent in the local psyche and in external impressions of the city that they have created a significant barrier to local development.

Given this context, new theories of local development through arts and culture became attractive to policy-makers in Sudbury. Cultural policy was given new political legitimacy once positioned as a much needed “development solution,” which would at once revitalize the downtown core; build social cohesion; attract and retain youth and skilled workers; and counter images of northerness and industrial decline. The role of local government in community-building could be rationalized as the production of competitive advantage. The next chapter will explore how policy-makers employed Creative City rhetoric to position culture as a solution to these problems in the *Arts and Culture Charter and Strategy*.

Chapter Four

Re-imagining Sudbury: The Sudbury *Arts and Culture Charter and Strategy*

Chapters One and Two considered the ambiguity of the term “culture” and the number of overlapping rationales that support policy interventions in the cultural sphere. This chapter looks at Sudbury specifically, exploring one of the questions identified in my introduction: how are the various uses of the term “culture” appropriated in this context and for what purposes?

Some of the main issues identified in the preceding chapter about Sudbury include the dominance of corporate power, inadequate living standards, social disparity, declining opportunity and a city image that deters new investors and young talent. In response to this, Sudbury borrows from prominent discourse on the cultural economy and urban regeneration to link cultural, social and economic development in very specific ways. The *Arts and Culture Charter and Strategy* adopts popular Creative City concepts as a natural solution to Sudbury’s social and economic issues.

Two major themes emerge regarding Sudbury culture: the utility of culture as characterized by its social value (cultural citizenship) and the utility of the culture as characterized by its economic value. The *Arts and Culture Charter* outlines long range guiding principles and goals, while the *Strategy* provides particular action points and tactics to achieve those established goals. In the *Charter*, culture is not positioned as an end in itself, but as a tool towards achieving economic and social objectives, objectives which are presented as interconnected and mutually reinforcing. When goals are converted into action points in the *Strategy*, however, the policy’s social vision is overshadowed by economic imperatives and success measures. An overwhelming

majority of the cultural development tactics specifically pursue economic benefits, either the benefits of the arts investment “multiplier-effect” or more prominently, the indirect benefits of attracting young and educated knowledge workers, tourists and investors through cultural symbolism. The *Strategy* implicitly accepts the connection between city imaging (or branding) and economic development, explicitly affirming the objective of re-casting, re-positioning and selling Sudbury as a cultural centre.

The prioritization of economic goals in the action points implies either that social goals were nothing but lip-service or that, based on the supposed interconnection between social and economic goals, the social benefits of culture were assumed to be natural offshoots of economic-based tactics. While there may be conflicting ideas about Sudbury culture, it is important to note which, or more importantly, whose, cultural ideals are reinforced by Sudbury’s approach to cultural policy. Because economic-based measures specifically and openly target high-education and high-income populations with a particular taste for urban culture, it is hard to imagine that they could also promote inclusion and cohesion or enhance local identity. The *Charter*’s vision presents social and economic goals as mutually reinforcing, but tactics proposed in the *Strategy* beg the question of whether in practice, social and economic goals are not only disconnected but, in fact, contradictory. An examination of the *Arts and Culture Charter and Strategy* provides insight into certain assumptions about what culture can achieve and how these impact local governance.

The Utility of Culture in the *Arts and Culture Charter and Strategy*

Reflecting the Creative City trend, Sudbury's policy instrumentalizes culture for its perceived social and economic benefits. The *Strategy* employs the key conceptions of culture's utility which have fuelled the Creative City movement:

- ...art and culture in all its forms has been and remains today one of the main keys, if not *the* main key, to creating the vibrancy of life that underpins all city growth; whether economic, social or community.
- ...future economic prosperity is based on innovation and fostering the creative spirit... [Art and culture] is the way in which this creativity is unlocked.
- ...art and culture is being seen as a way to energize communities and build a sense of community strength.¹

By emphasizing culture's social and economic roles, Sudbury's policy exceeds the realm of culture alone. As a result, parties from outside the arts sector were implicated in policy-making and implementation, including other government divisions and the private sector.

The idea that culture is an interdepartmental issue is a significant aspect of the Creative City approach.² The *Strategy* recommends including culture in the considerations of other departments and makes explicit connections between cultural development and the stated goals of other city plans, including the Official Plan, the Economic Development and Tourism Development Strategies and the Downtown Vision. Also characteristic of Creative City planning, in its policy consultation process, Sudbury solicited the participation not only of arts leaders, but of a broader base of community representatives including members of the industrial sector and the business community. The *Charter* also proposes a continued engagement with the private sector. This

¹ Tourism, Culture and Marketing Section, *Arts and Culture Strategy*, 3.

² Paquette, "Engineering the Northern Bohemian," 306.

represents a larger shift towards entrepreneurial city planning, whereby business is made an institutionalized governing partner. By including the private sector in policy development and implementation, local government created a development coalition which, predictably, would favour “sellable” culture over one which directly targets social needs. Emphasis on the entrepreneurial can perhaps account for the disconnect between the policy’s stated objectives and its proposed tactics.

The Goals of the *Arts and Culture Charter*

The *Charter* equally emphasizes and intertwines the social and economic benefits of culture. Its starting point assumes culture to be an implicit signifier of “quality of life,” a feature which produces both a healthy community and an economically advantageous city image:

Given that...arts and culture enhances community identity and sense of belonging, And that quality of life has become a key competitive asset in attracting businesses, visitors and skilled workers,...the arts and culture sector together with the City of Greater Sudbury recommends that we, as a whole community...work diligently together to increase arts and culture capacity.³

Accepting that culture automatically produces quality of life, folding social and economic goals together becomes unproblematic and the need to consciously target particular outcomes is dissolved. Conveniently, the culture that enhances community and identity is understood as the same culture that attracts the Creative Class.

Likewise, the 22 stated goals of the *Charter* continue to intermingle community-building and community-imaging in aspiring to, for example:

- Provide a broad balance of arts and culture programs that are accessible and available to all residents of the City of Greater Sudbury.
- ...define and create a special sense of place.

³ Tourism, Culture and Marketing Section, *Arts and Culture Charter*

- Be an advocate for the protection of Sudbury's history and heritage.
- Develop vibrant and diverse cultural identities as defined by the City's cultural assets, people, ethnicity, industry and natural environment.
- ...promote the contribution of arts and culture to both the social and economic well being of Sudbury.
- Position Greater Sudbury as a globally competitive Creative Community and destination for skilled workers, visitors and business.
- Build Greater Sudbury's capacity and reputation as a city and region for innovation, learning opportunities and artistic and design excellence.
- ...develop Greater Sudbury's reputation and status as a Creative Community.
- ...facilitate co-operative partnerships in other sectors...to deliver arts and cultural services.⁴

On the one hand, the goals emphasize community, local identity, access and social services and on the other, they focus on manufacturing status as a centre of (big C) Creativity. The symbiotic relationship between social and economic goals is carried throughout the *Charter*, without any suggestion that these goals could be at odds.

Proposed Tactics in the *Arts and Culture Strategy*

Despite the hopefulness of the *Charter's* goals, the utility of culture for the economic tends to supersede the social in the *Strategy*. Certainly, many of Sudbury's social issues *are* economic issues – a negative city image, low employment figures, an aging population. However, culture aimed specifically at providing jobs or producing an attractive image does not necessarily create belonging or cohesion.

The action points stated in the *Strategy* suggest an awareness that economic measures with quantifiable results give the policy increased legitimacy in its claim over

⁴ Ibid.

government resources, employing the standard economic justification: “support of arts is an investment, not a donation.”⁵ Evidently, economic concerns highly informed the conception of the *Strategy*, which focuses on Creative imaging as a local development tool.

The link between the symbolic and material economy (discussed in Chapter Two) was accepted as real and was stressed above all in the action points. Focussing on image, they include developing an attractive downtown arts district, involving a new performing arts centre and public art; recognizing established artists and arts organizations that “contribute in a major way to the cultural life of Greater Sudbury,”⁶ thereby neglecting young talent or emerging artists; and finally, pursuing tourist marketing through media campaigns, developing signature events, and increasing the online visibility of Sudbury’s arts and culture organizations.

Success measures are dominated by the same concern with selling the arts and an arts image. They seek higher attendance figures for arts events, increased visibility of the arts inside and outside Sudbury, more partnerships with the business community for cultural projects, increased arts and culture business opportunities, the establishment of a recognizable Sudbury cultural “brand,” and a strengthened ability to attract and retain skilled professionals.

Sudbury’s arts-based, place-marketing campaign prioritizes visibility and aesthetics to manufacture Creative advantage rather than building it organically. It seems that support for established arts groups, festivals and public art is based not on their own value as much as their ability to produce a symbolism that, as Harvey explained, attracts

⁵ Tourism, Culture and Marketing Section, *Arts and Culture Strategy*, 6.

⁶ Ibid.

“capital and people (of the right sort).”⁷ The pursuit of this particular symbolism seeks to establish a new cultural image for Sudbury, one which replaces social disparity, industrial pollution or unemployment with middle class cultural “happening.”

Certainly, social considerations are not entirely absent in the *Strategy*:

The value of arts and culture goes beyond economic measures. Arts and culture helps to facilitate social cohesion. Difficult social issues like homelessness, racism, and the treatment of special populations such as persons with disabilities can be addressed through the arts. It is also known that the arts are an effective outreach tool to engage youth. Levels of attendance in arts programs are relatively high and sustained among at-risk youth.⁸

However, despite articulating the social potential of culture, even a proposed increase in arts funding is not aimed at art projects that involve community collaboration or engage youth but ones that attract audiences and “give back” economically. On the topic of funding, it is argued in the *Strategy* that while “arts organizations need to generate their own revenue and undertake self-sustaining strategies, based on their contribution to the local economy, sustained and dependable funding would help them achieve their objectives.”⁹

A downtown arts precinct, the *Strategy* suggests, would provide a culturally-friendly public space; however, this space was not intended for gathering and community engagement as much as for individualistic wandering and spectacle. The *Strategy*’s focus on the visibility of storefronts and expanded hours of operation as the spin-offs of downtown arts implies the pursuit of commercial, not civic, culture.

Similarly, echoing the *Charter*’s goal of supporting local heritage and identity, the *Strategy* mentions Sudbury’s labour history and cultural diversity, but proposes no tactics

⁷ Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity*, 92.

⁸ Tourism, Culture and Marketing Section, *Arts and Culture Strategy*, 8.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 5.

to encourage the production of arts that depict or celebrate local identity (or the progressive leftist art, which Laurie McGauley identified as the backbone of Sudbury's authentic cultural expression).¹⁰ Instead, the proposed "cultural map" seeks to broaden the information base on pre-existing arts and cultural organizations so that tourists may be "familiar with the branding of the City and recognize its uniqueness."¹¹ To further support local identity, the *Strategy* proposes an increased integration of Sudbury history in school curricula. Still, even this tactic is followed by an economically-motivated justification: "if youth are sold on the City, they are more likely to stay/return and use their own ingenuity to create jobs, etc."¹²

Though borrowing heavily from Richard Florida, Sudbury gives only a nod to the ethno-cultural conception of culture. The *Strategy* mentions Sudbury's Aboriginal, Francophone, Italian, Finnish, Polish, Chinese, Ukrainian and Croatian populations and a plan to develop the city's diverse cultural identities through intercultural events, exchanges and networking projects. Nevertheless, recommendations to celebrate and encourage diversity are not extensive enough to move the *Strategy* from an instrument of economic development to an instrument of social development.

The *Charter* views a compatibility and even a complementarity between the development of civic culture and the development of economic culture. If these values reinforce one another, then creating strategies targeting one of the two, it would seem, naturally addresses the other. Based on this, the *Strategy*'s primarily economic measures are represented not only as legitimate and acceptable ways of using culture, but as consistent with its social benefits. What is difficult to determine is whether the

¹⁰ McGauley, "Dispatches of Longing"

¹¹ Tourism, Culture and Marketing Section, *Arts and Culture Strategy*, 8.

¹² *Ibid.*, 7.

expectation that culture naturally provides both social and economic benefits reflects new ways of understanding and governing culture, or whether the goals of the *Charter* are nothing but policy rhetoric, and the applied emphasis on the economic in the *Strategy* reflects the tacit knowledge of policy-makers that the economic is the most assured way of securing government resources. Not only was specific social development perhaps knowingly neglected in the action points, the social risks invited by cultural re-branding were also ignored. In examining the debates surrounding the proposed Performing Arts Centre, the following chapter will shed light on some of these risks when Creative City rhetoric is brought into the public realm and some of its assumptions are challenged.

Chapter Five

Who is Creative Sudbury? The PAC Debates

Whereas the preceding chapter probed understandings and uses of culture within Sudbury's cultural policy, this chapter will question culture's place within the broader public realm by looking at the debates surrounding the city's proposed Performing Arts Centre (PAC). The PAC was first officially incepted in the *Arts and Culture Strategy*. One month after the policy was approved by City Council, mayoral candidate John Rodriguez was elected in November 2006 on a platform including plans to actively pursue the PAC and a Multi-Use Recreation Centre (MURC) as major civic projects. Over the next two years, what came to be known as the "legacy projects" would be highly contested local issues. This chapter will review arguments for and against the PAC coming from planning reports, city council meeting transcripts, newspaper publications, press releases, survey results and online newspaper, Facebook and blog discussions from late 2006 to the aftermath in the two months following the October 2008 City Council Legacy Project vote.¹

Like the *Arts and Culture Charter and Strategy*, arguments in favour of the PAC, official and non-official, frequently echoed Creative City-inspired thinking in invoking the assumed simultaneous social and economic development offered by culture and cultural institutions, but relied mostly on economic reasoning when it came to providing more concrete examples of the PAC's contribution to city growth. Also, like the policy, the most prominent theme to emerge on the "pro" side was advocacy for the PAC's

¹ In these sources, the opinions represented are only of those who felt strongly enough about the issue to publicly voice their views. What emerges from this study is an ardent opposition between the for and against sides of the PAC issue, but the silent majority who may have felt conflicted are not represented.

ability to act as a cultural symbol representing the vision, development and “maturity” required for attracting outside capital.

Unlike the policy, however, the PAC debates also highlight a challenge to the argument that culture should be supported because it attracts wealth. Opponents suggested that local elite and outside professionals were being favoured at the expense of the local taxpayer and commonly dismissed culture-led regeneration arguments as nothing but rhetoric aimed at supporting the predilections and priorities of the powerful. What emerges is a divergent view of culture, not as a beacon of growth and development, but as a symbol of dominance and exclusion. Certainly a whole variety of arguments appeared on both sides of the PAC issue, some more practical and others more ideological, but a remarkable and overwhelming tension was present between two dominant strains: one equating the PAC with growth, capital and city competition and one equating it with governmental support for the exclusive and impractical interests of the powerful.

Undoubtedly, there are power relations in the material world, but noting the different appropriations of culture in the PAC debates demonstrates their manifestation and perpetuation on a symbolic level. Assessing the PAC debates shows that the processes of understanding and using culture are embedded with issues of power and leads to the exploration of another question identified in my Introduction: How do the uses of culture for city branding benefit or adversely impact different groups within the city and in what ways? In Chapter One, I identified three theoretical arguments which informed my understanding of the relationship between culture, class, identity, place and

taste in the Sudbury context. I will examine the conflict between Creative Sudbury and northern industrial Sudbury in light of these.

Much of the PAC debate centred on the costs of both building the arts centre and attending arts events. Regardless of whether the arts are actually affordable, they were often represented as exclusive to the elite, and a common critique was that public funds were being directed towards the interests of a select group. Nevertheless, it becomes clear that using the PAC to re-brand and re-imagine the city involves more than the standard debate over government management of competing interests. It involves the much larger issue of how questions of taste prompt inclusion or exclusion from the city vision, and therefore city space.

The Development of the PAC Proposal

Before getting into the PAC debates themselves, it is important to address the background of the issue and the practical and contextual specificities that surrounded much of the discussion. One month into his mandate as Mayor, John Rodriguez established advisory panels to develop concept and operational plans for the legacy projects. The Steering Committee implicated in the development of the *Arts and Culture Charter and Strategy* had consulted with the business community, but had been composed primarily of members of the local arts community. The Performing Arts Centre Advisory Panel, however, was much broader in its representation. The 14-member Panel was chaired by Diane Salo, a local businesswoman, and included members of the arts and culture scene, city councillors, a lawyer, an architect, a management consultant, and representatives from Xstrata Nickel, Laurentian University, *The Sudbury*

Star (a local newspaper) and FedNor (a federal regional development agency for Northern Ontario).

The panel engaged in key stakeholder and community input sessions and enlisted the services of a performing arts centre consulting firm. In the summer of 2007, initial cost estimates were released at \$40-60 million,² and in November 2007, City Council approved the project in principle and allocated spending for the next stage of the planning process. In July 2008, the panel presented its final report to city council for a \$70 million project, involving an 1800-seat downtown centre and a complimentary arts district. Whereas the combined costs of the PAC and MURC were originally set at \$90 million, the July 2008 pricetag was \$165 million – an 83% increase.³

The public and some city councillors began expressing concern over the increasing cost of the legacy projects, particularly as they were gradually more associated with the Mayor's vanity. From the beginning, Rodriguez pressed the legacy projects firmly, speaking of his vision that Sudbury could be "a city that can embrace arts and sport, hockey and haiku, symphonies and soccer."⁴ Instead of interpreting "legacy" to mean a lasting symbol of municipal success, many equated it with the unrealistic quest for an extravagant personal legacy, forcing excessive tax burdens on Sudburians for years to come.

Enthusiasm for the projects waned as attention turned to other pressing municipal issues. Winter 2008 had intensified the poor condition of city roads, and re-paving became a major priority. Nickel prices also began plummeting and mining layoffs were projected. Despite arguments that the legacy projects were the key to future economic

² *The Sudbury Star*, "City Needs Public to Get Behind Legacy Projects," October 18, 2008.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

stability, in many minds, in a time of economic uncertainty, public monies should not support unnecessary indulgence. If anything, funding should go towards improving existing facilities, not a lavish new centre.

Aside from costs, concern grew over a perceived lack of public consultation. Many argued that the public input sessions had revolved around key stakeholders and supporters, leaving little room for dissent. In addition, while consultation meetings were held at City Hall downtown, there were none in Azilda, Hanmer, Capreol, Chemsford, or other more distant wards, where opposition was particularly strong. Many residents in outlying areas feared that downtown sports and arts facilities, for which they would be taxed, would inevitably cause the closure of their local facilities.

As a result of rising concern, in August 2008, Sudbury's Liberal MPP, Rick Bartolucci, released the results of a research poll he had commissioned two months earlier on support for the legacy projects among 301 of his constituents. According to Bartolucci, the poll was part of his duty since the projects would have financial implications for provincial and municipal taxpayers and there seemed to be a void of public consultation and representation on the issue. Poll results indicated that 52% of citizens found the projects unimportant to the city, 81% feared the projects would lead to future tax increases, 78% feared the projects would not be completed on time and on budget and 52% did not trust what they heard from the City as it related to the projects.⁵ Bartolucci claimed that the priorities of citizens and those of the Mayor and City Council were detached and that as a result, he would withdraw his support for the projects and would not lobby the provincial government to fund them. Within hours, Rodriguez

⁵ Bill Bradley, "Community Against Legacy Projects: Bartolucci," *The Northern Life*, August 25, 2008, <http://www.northernlife.ca/News/LocalNews/2008/08-22-08-legacyTOP.aspx> (accessed July 5, 2009).

announced that city officials would be committed to reducing legacy project costs by 25% before voting on the projects in October.

While prices were cut from \$165 million to \$110 million (\$60 million for the MURC and \$50 million for the PAC) by voting time,⁶ public support was still lacking. Concerns were raised over Rodriguez's perceived mismanagement of the projects and many argued that irresponsible cuts had been made to fundamental and crucial elements of the projects out of desperation to have them passed at all costs. This was more a critique of the new MURC plan, which moved the facility from downtown to a cheaper location in the South end of the city, but the PAC also lost its arts district in the cost-cutting process. The arts district had been intended to provide downtown facilities and spin-off attention to smaller pre-existing arts organizations, so they would benefit from, rather than be drowned out, by the PAC. Instead, the new plan left the district to private sector investment and focussed on the PAC alone.⁷

Support was further eroded when the Legacy projects were merged with two road improvement plans into one omnibus-style motion for the City Council vote. Rodriguez argued that he had simply bundled his government's four key priorities, but combining such dissimilar goals seemed to be another desperate and even deceitful manoeuvre to have the projects passed.⁸

On top of this, costs still continued to be an issue. The final funding plans for the four bundled projects included major contributions from higher levels of government and

⁶ City of Greater Sudbury, *Minutes of the Thirty-Eighth Meeting of the Council of the City of Greater Sudbury*, October 15, 2008.

⁷ Though the development of the arts district was dropped from the final PAC plan, the new plan did still include significant investment in arts grants, to ensure that arts investment through the PAC wouldn't disrupt municipal support to other local artistic endeavours.

⁸ Certainly, the legacy projects and road improvement plans were quite dissimilar, but many also took issue with even the arts and sports centres being combined since Sudbury had historically been more supportive of sports than the arts, and there seemed to be more support for the MURC's economic potential.

smaller ones from expected private donors and the municipality (which corresponded to a 2.3% tax increase). The primary source of funding was to be the federal government's community infrastructure *Building Canada* plan, but an application for funding could not be made without an assured commitment to the project from City Council. With much of the project relying on unsecured funding and hopeful projections, many citizens and councillors remained sceptical as to its economic buoyancy.⁹

Plans were derailed for the road and legacy projects after a close 7-6 City Council vote on October 21, 2008. The six voting in favour of the motion spoke of growth, vision and the future:

- I would rather drive on a bumpy road to somewhere than a smooth road to nowhere.
- My people have vision and are creative.
- If you dream something you can do it.¹⁰

The seven opposed claimed that their constituents had no use for or interest in the projects:

- Not one resident of Ward 3 supports an arts centre.
- We are elected to do what they want, not to persuade them.
- Seniors do not go to the arts.¹¹

⁹ While the legacy projects were positioned as an investment in the growth and maturity of the city, like many of Sudbury's previous major projects, they would still represent a dependence on higher levels of government.

¹⁰ Michelle Fex, "An Historic Opportunity Has Been Lost," *The Sudbury Star*, October 25, 2008, <http://www.thesudburystar.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=1265955> (accessed December 2, 2008; page no longer available).

¹¹ Ibid.

The PAC Debates

The failure of the projects can be associated with a number of problems that all came up in the debates – competing priorities, mismanagement, poor timing, lack of public consultation, or, on the PAC question specifically, what Gordon Waitt attributed to the failure of Wollongong’s arts centre,¹² councillors being unconvinced of the economic potential of the arts in a historically industrial, sporting city. Nevertheless, the contention around the PAC proposal, regardless of it proceeding or not, reveals an ideological conflict that goes beyond logistics and practical specificity. As I mentioned earlier, a remarkable ideological concurrence presented itself in the arguments of supporters or opponents of the PAC. Some supporters, for example, may have presented certain caveats regarding the scale or location of the arts centre, while still articulating the recurrent link between the arts and local development. In this section, my discussion of these divergent ideological strands will provide an understanding of the social tensions inherent in Sudbury’s pursuit of the Creative brand.

Culture and Identity

In Chapter One, I argued that working class and northern cultural identities are constructed in opposition to the perceived elite and southern identities represented in the Creative Class agenda. In Sudbury, because culture has historically been linked to elitism and larger metropolitan centres to the South, if class-based and northern/southern identities are produced by relationships of unity and difference, then cultural debate creates a sphere wherein either cohesive or oppositional relationships are maintained.

¹²Gordon Waitt, “Creative Small Cities.”

Hence, the impressions of cultural value which arise in the PAC debates are undeniably oppositional.

On the one hand, they represent Creative City arguments, linking culture to growth, vision, and (implied social and economic) community development. In a presentation to City Council, the Performing Arts Centre Advisory Panel argued: “the city has come of age, and...the PAC and associated district will help Greater Sudbury become an icon and symbol for the future transformation of the city.”¹³ Mayor Rodriguez promoted the PAC on similar grounds:

- We're here to build a city. We have to make investments in our city. These are investments, they're not tax increases...I ran to be the mayor of the City of Greater Sudbury because I saw what we could become.¹⁴
- I think the next move has to be in culture and we have to place ourselves into the forefront of the creative mode, which according to people like Richard Florida, is the next economic driver for cities.¹⁵

Also referring to Richard Florida, Michelle Fex, Executive Director of the Sudbury Arts Council, used the economic rationale that Sudbury should “not give rise to the flight of the creative class,”¹⁶ then bolstered this with a more general and social argument for growth: “Fixing the roads will not nurture the body or the soul. It may reduce our

¹³ City of Greater Sudbury, *Minutes of the Thirty-Eighth Meeting of the Council of the City of Greater Sudbury*, October 15, 2008.

¹⁴ Denis St. Pierre, “Projects Defeated by Single Vote,” *The Sudbury Star*, October 22, 2008, <http://www.thesudburystar.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=1258716> (accessed December 2, 2008; page no longer available).

¹⁵ Denis St. Pierre, “ACCENT: How Things Are Done In Other Cities; Why North Bay Seems Able to Do Things Sudbury Only Dreams About,” *The Sudbury Star*, November 15, 2008, <http://www.thesudburystar.com/ArticleDisplayGenContent.aspx?e=9281> (accessed December 2, 2008).

¹⁶ Michelle Fex, “Gloomy Days for City’s Arts Community,” *The Sudbury Star*, November 1, 2008, <http://www.sudburystar.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=1277085> (accessed December 2, 2008; page no longer available).

mechanic bill, but that is a short-term fix. Building community projects are long-term visions.”¹⁷

The idea of using culture for vision, growth and development was not limited to official discourse. In a *Northern Life* (a local newspaper) online discussion forum, one respondent voiced support for the legacy projects, declaring: “it takes people with vision to make a community... People of vision, talk about INVESTMENT in Your community.”¹⁸

On the other hand, the idea that culture is an obvious good, linked with growth and development, was challenged by many residents, who instead saw it simply as a non-essential subsidy for the exclusive interests of the powerful. Many arguments against the PAC depicted the common sense and anti-intellectual thinking that Thomas Dunk links to a working class value system:¹⁹

- ...how can anybody justify spending millions on a fluff theatre that only a very few will go to? THIS IDEA IS WRONG !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!²⁰
- Fancy pancy arts and culture projects which would benefit only a small privileged [sic] percentile...of our citizens [are] the least of priorities our tax payers need to be burdened with.²¹
- One would wonder if in fact it is even legal for Council to disregard the Constituents [sic] and vote to forward either of these projects, let alone a PAC that has no practical use and will cater to a select elitist clique.²²

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Comment from “Rural-Guy,” on Bill Bradley, “Legacy Projects Lack Popular Support: Councillors,” *The Sudbury Star*, October 21, 2008, <http://www.northernlife.ca/news/localnews/2008/102108-legacy1.aspx> (accessed December 2, 2008).

¹⁹ Dunk, *It's A Working Man's Town*, 134,135.

²⁰ Comment by “Man About Town,” on Vicky Gilhula, “Greater Sudbury Needs an Arts Centre Now,” *The Northern Life*, June 15, 2007, <http://www.northernlife.ca/News/LocalNews/2007/06-12-07-arts.aspx> (accessed December 2, 2008).

²¹ Comment by “Share The Wealth,” on Vicky Gilhula, “Greater Sudbury Needs an Arts Centre Now,” *The Northern Life*, June 15, 2007, <http://www.northernlife.ca/News/LocalNews/2007/06-12-07-arts.aspx> (accessed December 2, 2008).

²² Comment by “Andy of Mayberry,” on Denis St. Pierre, “Committee Cuts Cost of Arts Centre,” *The Sudbury Star*, October 9, 2008, <http://www.thesudburystar.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=1240241> (accessed December 2, 2008; page no longer available).

Describing the centre as “fancy pancy,” or “fluff” portrays it as impractical, and without concrete material value for the community. As Dunk explains, those who are conferred status based on their supposed intellectual abilities are commonly treated with suspicion by the working class.²³ As culture is tied to the interests of government, policy-makers, and the intellectual elite, much PAC opposition suggested that beyond being of no practical use, the centre was the exclusive priority of a self-serving group, disconnected from the financial and social priorities of the “common” working citizen:

- ...if we are gonna [sic] pay then we have the say...not just the Ivory Tower ones with outlandish attitudes and salaries.²⁴
- the Elitists would have concerts but \$400 bucks a ticket is out of the workin joes [sic] reach.²⁵
- ...it is a simple fact that most of us can't afford to whine [sic] and dine in high fashion while at the same time we need to feed the children, pay mortgages, hydro bills, insurance, gas, water, clothes... Why should our taxes go to expensive art facilities when people are barely getting by and going to food banks, soup kitchens etc. to make ends meet at the end of the month when the low wages the high class shop keepers and sweat shop labor big wig franchises pay their employees who would be lucky to be able to dust the grand piano and sweep the floors of the crystal palace auditorium [sic] for the wealthy and elite..... With all of their corporate money let the elite build their own hosh posh social club and shop for new fancy gowns and suits in each others [sic] high end fashion and furniture stores to pay their contributions to the facility that only they will get to enjoy.²⁶
- Who will they name the legacy project after? Why the King John Rodriguez Arts Centre will do just nicely. We've got an unfinished

²³ Dunk, *It's A Working Man's Town*, 150.

²⁴ Comment by “TheeLobo,” on Michelle Fex, “Great Sudbury Needs Both Legacy Projects,” *The Sudbury Star*, October 4, 2008, <http://www.thesudburystar.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=1233190> (accessed December 2, 2008; page no longer available).

²⁵ Comment by “The Pilgrim,” on *The Sudbury Star*, “Roads Trump Legacy Projects, Poll Finds,” October 27, 2008, <http://www.thesudburystar.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=1267121> (accessed December 2, 2008; page no longer available).

²⁶ Comment by “Reality Check,” on Vicky Gilhula, “Greater Sudbury Needs an Arts Centre Now,” *The Northern Life*, June 15, 2007, <http://www.northernlife.ca/News/LocalNews/2007/06-12-07-arts.aspx> (accessed December 2, 2008).

hospital (that won't be large enough once it's done), roads that are collapsing into honeycombed craters and a one industry town on the brink of a strike and a recession. Forward thinking means hang up the ego and tighten the purse strings.²⁷

- People are making real life choices of whether to eat or put gas in their vehicles to go to work...so they can pay their BILLS! Do you really think they want to drive over roads that break their vehicles so a select few can enjoy these mind nurturing Legacy projects?²⁸
- Politicians live in a world where evrything [*sic*] is rosy - why wouldn't it be – [*sic*] they are living the good life an [*sic*] assume everyone else is too! Whether this fact is valid or not, I don't know; but non [*sic*] one has disputed it with empirical evidence: 70-80% of employees in Sudbury make 10\$-12\$ / hr.²⁹

Such responses represent culture as a symbol of elite power, privilege and detachment. Culture has historically been associated with elitism, but supporting culture as an agent of growth can also be understood as an attempt to join the ranks of large metropolitan cities, thereby becoming more southern:

- Sorry everyone, but this is a pipe dream...Sudbury is not an arts centre. Never has been, never will be. There are far greater issues here that could be addressed that would make for a profitable city. The fact that our town has more people on welfare than any other in Ontario does not bode well for disposable income for a high profile performance. A "Molson Ampitheatre" [*sic*] is not going to help matters here...Yes we are a major metropolis, but our surrounding cities are no different from us. Timmins, North Bay, French River, even the Sault, they're all industrial towns. I really believe this would be a waste of good money in the North.³⁰

²⁷ Comment by "not_necessarily_the_news," on Bill Bradley, "Legacy Project Vote Delayed" *The Northern Life*, Oct. 16, 2008, <http://www.northernlife.ca/News/LocalNews/2008/101608-voteTOP.aspx> (accessed December 2, 2008).

²⁸ Comment by "whateva," on Michelle Fex, "Great Sudbury Needs Both Legacy Projects," *The Sudbury Star*, October 4, 2008, <http://www.thesudburystar.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=1233190> (accessed December 2, 2008; page no longer available).

²⁹ Comment by "state of mind," on Michelle Fex, "Great Sudbury Needs Both Legacy Projects," *The Sudbury Star*, October 4, 2008, <http://www.thesudburystar.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=1233190> (accessed December 2, 2008; page no longer available).

³⁰ Comment by "Justin Woodley," on the Performing Arts Centre for Greater Sudbury – Petition Facebook Group Page, February 7, 2008, <http://www.facebook.com/home.php#/group.php?gid=8230538345> (accessed July 3, 2009).

- One critic who wrote to the paper recently echoed what others have said, that Sudbury is a small-thinking mining town. But that's not necessarily the case. Perhaps we're not big thinkers, but we are pragmatists, as we so often must be in the North. Does pragmatism get in the way of the big vision? Perhaps, but that isn't necessarily a bad thing.³¹
- ...this is a \$150 million dollar gamble...I've talked about Sudbury to some of my colleagues at work in Southern Ontario, I'm sorry to break the bubble but we're only known for nickel, corrupted politics and an area to avoid during wintertime when going out west.³²
- ...Sudbury is a mining community...That's why the young people of Sudbury are leaving. There are almost no good paying jobs that are not mining related. Building the Legacy projects won't fix that.³³

Such views represent the impact of working class values on the northern experience in the clear defence of pragmatic northern culture. They also prominently represent the sense of northern cultural inferiority identified by Weller,³⁴ based on which the assumption is made that any ambitious project will inevitably fail due to northern "facts of life." While PAC support spoke of using culture to progress as a city, opposition saw culture as a fanciful assault on simple, practical, working class and northern values.

Culture and Place

As I argued in Chapter One, because the formation of identity is intimately tied to place, the discussion over culture's role in Sudbury comes down to a struggle over who maintains the power to define the city's cultural image and whose culture is then included or excluded from the new vision. In an effort to promote the benefits of culture, the most prominent argument to arise, in both official and non-official discourses, was that re-

³¹ Editorial, *The Sudbury Star*, "A New Formula for Success," November 19, 2008.

³² Comment by "Dannomatic," on Bill Bradley, "Legacy of Accomplishment of Legacy of Debt," *The Northern Life*, May 23, 2008, <http://www.northernlife.ca/News/LocalNews/2008/05-23-08-Legacy.aspx> (accessed July 3, 2008).

³³ Comment by "rerbetob," on Denis St. Pierre, "Projects Defeated by Single Vote," *The Sudbury Star*, October 22, 2008, <http://www.thesudburystar.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=1258716> (accessed December 2, 2008; page no longer available).

³⁴ G. R. Weller, "Hinterland Politics," 753.

imagining and selling Sudbury as a city of culture would attract outside residents, tourists and investors:

- You can be a mining/industrial town or you can try to be a vibrant city and place to live.³⁵
- Southern Ontario will not attend any of your suggested venues. There is no draw to a venue that lacks distinction. We need an Arts Center that will enable us to get past "the girls are playin', bingo while the guys are getting stinko on a Sudbury Saturday Night." The Greater City of Sudbury will never become a world-class city until the Arts Center has been built. The Arts Center will provide much needed class and dignity to our community.³⁶
- It is very difficult to attract doctors and other professionals from larger communities when they are accustomed to attending various types of cultural and artistic events. I would like to think there is more to our Nickel City then [sic] our hockey and mines.³⁷
- Its [sic] unfortunate we have this phallic stack [the Inco smokestack] dominating the skyline here because that just reinforces the residents [sic] ideas that all Sudbury has is mining. Get rid of the mining mentality which is get lots of toys, (new boat, snow machine each year) live from cheque to cheque...How are we going to attract young professionals when this cities [sic] facilities look like ghettos. Young doctors, engineers, professors, and teachers won't move here if there is nothing for their kids to do. Sorry to you old timers going out to the bush and hunting...³⁸
- ...we are poised to take a significant step forward in building a city that will be a destination of choice in the competitive, knowledge-based economy...It will be more than a building...these proposals will alter the face of Greater Sudbury and make us a more dynamic and attractive city.³⁹

³⁵ Comment by "Ryan Minor," on the Performing Arts Centre for Greater Sudbury – Petition Facebook Group Page, February 7, 2008, <http://www.facebook.com/home.php#/group.php?gid=8230538345> (accessed July 3, 2009).

³⁶ Comment by "Norm McIntosh,"

³⁷ Comment by "Richard P. Migneault," on the Performing Arts Centre for Greater Sudbury – Petition Facebook Group Page, February 7, 2008, <http://www.facebook.com/home.php#/group.php?gid=8230538345> (accessed July 3, 2009).

³⁸ Comment by "Tom," on Bill Bradley, "Legacy Projects Defeated by Narrow Vote," *The Northern Life*, October 22, 2008, <http://www.northernlife.ca/News/LocalNews/2008/102208-legacyTOP.aspx> (accessed December 2, 2008).

³⁹ John Rodriguez, "Building Our City for the Future," *The Northern Life*, October 10, 2008.

- An attractive and active performing arts centre is a vital part of every Canadian city that aspires to be considered a civilized place to live and an attractive place to visit.⁴⁰
- Unless you want Sudbury to continue to be treated like the backwater, have some vision and try to improve the cultural and entertainment amenities in the city.⁴¹
- The successful cities of the future will be those that attract and hold extremely innovative people and industries. Our city has been presented with a unique opportunity to take control of our future and build the kind of community of which citizens can take pride and which will be a destination of choice for new residents and potential investors.⁴²

Many of these arguments are reminiscent of Matthew Arnold's view that (high) culture is tied to civilization. Culture as progression and improvement necessarily involves shedding those elements of the industrial past which inhibit the process. Re-branding the city as a competitive, Creative City unabashedly ties progress to the particular tastes of the young professionals (the Creative Class) and equates industrial, northern Sudbury with stagnation. In so doing, the Creative City image claims the city on behalf of Creative Class values, thereby excluding an entire local cultural tradition and forcing traditional Sudbury "out of place."⁴³ In response, many residents challenged the new city conceptualization:

- An Arts Centre in Sudbury? Come on, this city is not an arts town, [*sic*] it is hillbilly town that likes it rough.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Richard Mende, letter to the editor, *The Sudbury Star*, April 7, 2008.

⁴¹ Comment by "Mike Boreal," on *The Sudbury Star*, "Roads Trump Legacy Projects, Poll Finds," October 27, 2008, <http://www.thesudburystar.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=1267121> (accessed December 2, 2008; page no longer available).

⁴² Comment by "Justin Woodley," on the Performing Arts Centre for Greater Sudbury – Petition Facebook Group Page, February 7, 2008, <http://www.facebook.com/home.php#/group.php?gid=8230538345> (accessed July 3, 2009).

⁴³ Cresswell, *Place*, 27.

⁴⁴ Comment by "What the," on Vicky Gilhula, "Greater Sudbury Needs an Arts Centre Now," *The Northern Life*, June 15, 2007, <http://www.northernlife.ca/News/LocalNews/2007/06-12-07-arts.aspx> (accessed December 2, 2008).

- This is vision? Disregard all other aspects and build a legacy to cater to incoming professionals... Turn the local hard working under paid majority into servants for the influx. Add insult to injury and make these local servants pay for this playground out of there [sic] meager [sic] earnings. the [sic] majority can only dream of ever actually enjoying these venues, other than to hope that someday they just might get a job in the restuarant [sic] so they can wait on the arrived ones.⁴⁵
- What our friends in power must remember is that most residents will never step foot in the Art's [sic] Centre and why? Because they'll be at the arena's [sic] with their children. The powerful people in this city, and I don't mean city council, understand the Art Centre is important in order to draw more influential people, their money and the jobs they will bring to this city but the little guy doesn't. They just want to make a living and dream about being a powerful person.⁴⁶
- The proposed legacy projects are financially irresponsible... My concerns are about the letter that states the money will come later, high income professionals need these facilities to enhance their lifestyle. Some self interest groups make comparisons to southern Ontario. Do they not realize we live in a community with a very large group of retirement [sic] and low income citizens with fixed incomes?⁴⁷
- A lesson that the influential and the politicians had better study. This is not "MY Sudbury." The only way we will move this Greater Sudbury area into a harmonic movement and improve the lot of all, is to make it "OUR SUDBURY." The Mayor decided from the start to forgo including the common man. His vision only included a very small clique and the people were having none of it. I am all for moving the entire community forward, but that movement has to be an all inclusive one, or it just will not be embraced. John Rodriguez ignored that simple concept. Council made the proper decision [in voting down the legacy project motion]. Thank God!⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Comment by "Driving Ms. Lanny," Michelle Fex, "An Historic Opportunity Has Been Lost," *The Sudbury Star*, October 25, 2008, <http://www.thesudburystar.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=1265955> (accessed December 2, 2008; page no longer available).

⁴⁶ Comment by "i have an opinion," on Denis St. Pierre, "ACCENT: What's next? The Failed Legacy Projects," *The Sudbury Star*, October 25, 2008, <http://www.thesudburystar.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=1265988> (accessed December 2, 2008; page no longer available).

⁴⁷ R. Macdonald, letter to the editor, *The Northern Life*, October 21, 2008.

⁴⁸ Comment by "Lobo," Denis St. Pierre, "Projects Defeated by Single Vote," *The Sudbury Star*, October 22, 2008, <http://www.thesudburystar.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=1258716> (accessed December 2, 2008; page no longer available).

- Think more towards the workin' man's perspective and less with your heads in the clouds with Financial Elitists...The Royalty thing just does not work in Sudbury!⁴⁹

Referring to the common man, to the hockey player or to the hillbilly, these perspectives represent the attempt to reclaim space in a way that is consistent with deeply-embedded working class and northern perceptions of Sudbury and to re-include these identities into the city brand.

Culture and Taste

Interestingly, exclusion from the new Sudbury brand is facilitated by the connecting of culture and progress. For those aligning themselves with culture, an alignment is at once made with improvement and, therefore, objectively superior taste. As I argued in Chapter One, support for Sudbury's Creative brand can be best understood as the attempt to create social "distinction"⁵⁰ by not only aligning with elite or southern tastes, but by recognizing them as objectively beneficial for the city as a whole. PAC proponents criticized their opposition, not for having different interests, but for being narrow-minded, trapped in the past and ignorant of (Creative Class) culture's value:

- Let's try and help people understand that done correctly and with due-dilligence [*sic*] a performing arts centre is a major economic driver in our community... We must move on from the Tim Hortons [*sic*], Beef and Burger joint mentality!⁵¹
- Get your heads out of your lunchpails [*sic*]. A centre for performing arts does not cater to 'the elite'. Ticket prices would be no more out of reach

⁴⁹ Comment by "Thee Lobo," on Denis St. Pierre, "Rodriguez, Bartolucci 'Officially' Bury Hatchet," *The Sudbury Star*, September 9, 2008, <http://www.sudburystar.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=1191301> (accessed December 2, 2008; page no longer available).

⁵⁰ Bourdieu, *Distinction*.

⁵¹ Comment by "Jeremy Mahood," on the Performing Arts Centre for Greater Sudbury – Petition Facebook Group Page, Feb. 3, 2008, <http://www.facebook.com/home.php#/group.php?gid=8230538345> (accessed July 3, 2009).

than the 60 inch plasma TV I'd bet half of you whining have in your living rooms.⁵²

In response to the failed City Council vote, even the Mayor described his citizens as “nattering nabobs of negativism.”⁵³ Others reacted similarly, attacking Sudburians for their limited vision:

- No wonder people think we are a bunch of blue-collar rubes with no culture – we act like it!⁵⁴
- We are still a small town with small-minded people.⁵⁵
- Sudbury will remain a "hick town" for many years. When I worked in Toronto I kept hearing the comment: "Oh you're one of those people from the bush." When I was transferred back to Sudbury, I realized how backwards this city is...⁵⁶

When the elite and southern are presented as progressive, their opposites, the working class and northern, are made regressive. Revaluing working class or northern values as practical and grounded, many PAC proponents insisted that arguments about culture's spin-off benefits were nothing but intellectual rhetoric aimed at duping the public into paying for the interests of a select few:

- More useless platitudes about the "arts"... It really gets under my skin when somebody tells me that culture or the arts will make everything that much better. PFFFFFTTTTTT.⁵⁷

⁵² Comment by “Just Me,” on Vicky Gilhula, “Greater Sudbury Needs an Arts Centre Now,” *The Northern Life*, June 15, 2007, <http://www.northernlife.ca/News/LocalNews/2007/06-12-07-arts.aspx> (accessed December 2, 2008).

⁵³ Carol Mulligan, “Sudbury Needs New Attitude,” *The Sudbury Star*, November 18, 2008, <http://www.thesudburystar.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=1301716> (accessed December 9, 2008; page no longer available).

⁵⁴ Comment by “John Grubber,” to Bill Bradley, “Arts Centre on Wish List for 2007,” *The Northern Life*, December 28, 2006, <http://www.northernlife.ca/News/LocalNews/2006/12-29-06-ArtsCentre.aspx> (Accessed December 2, 2008).

⁵⁵ Citizen quoted in Denis St.Pierre, “ACCENT: How Things Are Done In Other Cities; Why North Bay Seems Able to Do Things Sudbury Only Dreams About,” *The Sudbury Star*, November 15, 2008, <http://www.thesudburystar.com/ArticleDisplayGenContent.aspx?e=9281> (accessed December 2, 2008).

⁵⁶ Comment by “barriam,” on “Mayor Refers to Citizens as Nattering Nabobs of Negativism,” “civic” Blog, *The Sudbury Star*, November 2008, <http://www.thesudburystar.com/Blogs/Communitypage.aspx?un=civic> (accessed December 9, 2008).

⁵⁷ Comment by “valleyboy,” on Editorial, *The Sudbury Star*, “Defining Infrastructure,” May 2, 2008,

- Self serving groups do not speak for the Majority [*sic*]. it [*sic*] is getting rather tiring to watch these people attempt to somehow convince anyone of their misconception. Just shows how gullible the proponents think the public at large are. Pathetic arguments [*sic*] based on false facts and propped up by a Mayor that is not above putting a spin on anything... Council has to hunker down and sift through the actual existing priorities that need attention, fairy tale legacies and personal egos need to be suppressed [*sic*]... John Rodriguez can yell all night [*sic*] and day about perks and no malfeasance here,, [*sic*] he can even wax eloquently about princes and princesses but we have a City that needs to deal with the procrastination that has gotten us in this shape.⁵⁸⁵⁹

In examining the relationship between perceptions of culture and class, identity, place and taste in Sudbury, the for and against sides in the PAC debate come to represent the Creative agenda, which supports elite and southern culture (the culture of the powerful) and the defence of Sudbury's working class and northern cultural identity. Framing culture as a social and particularly as an economic driver ties it with growth and therefore, objective good, giving legitimacy to Sudbury's cultural policy and PAC plans. Though much opposition to the PAC is based on the financial burden of tax increases for those who do not expect to gain from the centre, ultimately, the adverse impacts of the PAC proposal are much more than financial ones, or even issues of government prioritization of perceived elite or southern interests. Politics always involves the management of competing interests. Nevertheless, examining the PAC debates makes it

<http://www.northernlife.ca/News/Editorials/2008/04-22-08-define.asp?NLStory=04-22-08-define> (accessed July 3, 2009).

⁵⁸ Comment by "Andy of Mount Pilot," on Michelle Fex, "An Historic Opportunity Has Been Lost," *The Sudbury Star*, October 25, 2008, <http://www.thesudburystar.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=1265955> (accessed December 2, 2008; page no longer available).

⁵⁹ Much more could be said of power dynamics in the PAC discourse through a simple analysis of which voices and arguments are represented in city documents and newspapers, and which ones are limited to newspaper discussion boards and Facebook. Online forums can be seen as a democratization of the public sphere, increasing the multiplicity of voices represented on political issues. However, it seems that more pro-PAC arguments appeared in officially-sanctioned documents, while most opinions representing the working class and northern perspectives appeared in online forums, without the legitimizing forces of official backing or professional editing.

clear that linking culture to the city's growth justifies the valuation of a limited set of tastes as the basis of a new city vision, the devaluation of contradictory cultural identities, and the consequential exclusion of those identities from city space.

Conclusion

In examining Sudbury's *Arts and Culture Charter and Strategy* and the Performing Arts Centre debates, this thesis set out to respond to three research questions: How does the dissemination of the Creative City trend affect the northern industrial city? How are the various uses of the term "culture" appropriated in this context and for what purposes? How do the uses of culture for city branding benefit or adversely impact different groups within the city and in what ways?

Chapter One outlined the cultural policy studies approach, which I used to address these questions. This methodology was useful because of its emphasis on the critical examination of both policy and cultural context. Chapter One also identified my theoretical perspective on the relationship between culture, class, identity, place and taste in Sudbury. Only by examining the intersection between cultural regulation, cultural practice and cultural perception through this methodological and theoretical lens was it possible to critically re-evaluate the policy-making process by unveiling some of its underlying power dynamics.

In Chapter Two, I considered literature from a variety of fields that assessed the shifting role of culture within the global economy, the importance of cultural symbolism in producing economic advantage, and the risk of social inequity that comes with culture-based inter-urban competition and the Creative City trend. This chapter also examined the position of small industrial cities within this context and some of the challenges unique to such cities in their pursuit of culture-led regeneration schemes.

Chapter Three situated Sudbury within global trends, to show how it, as a northern industrial city, has faced significant economic, social and cultural challenges

resultant from economic restructuring and how it came to invest in cultural symbolism as a solution. Furthermore, this chapter analyzed Sudbury's history as a way of understanding its current development issues and more importantly, the perceptions of Sudbury's identity and image that shaped responses to the Creative branding strategy.

Chapter Four then presented my analysis of Sudbury's *Arts and Culture Charter and Strategy*, responding to the question: how are the various uses of the term "culture" appropriated in this context and for what purposes? Through time, cultural policy has been justified according to the salience of different moral, political, health, educational, social or economic imperatives. As seen in Chapter Two, contemporary discourse on urban cultural policy predominantly favours economic rationales. Though Sudbury's policy goals define culture according to general social benefits, as evidenced by the overwhelming emphasis on Florida's Creative Class theory and the link between cultural branding and economic development in the policy's proposed tactics, understandings and uses of culture by Sudbury policy-makers are primarily economic.

The question of culture's appropriation in Sudbury was further probed in Chapter Five's examination of the PAC debates. A discourse/content analysis of the debates revealed that arguments in favour of Sudbury's Performing Arts Centre, both official and non-official, also favoured economic rationales to encourage public funding of culture. The PAC was positioned as the symbol required to anchor Sudbury's new Creative brand. Hence, culture was understood primarily as an economic development tool, being a preference of the Creative Class, the culturally-savvy, urbanite, (privileged,) knowledge-workers imagined as the new citizens of Creative Sudbury. Based on this, culture was used to support a Creative Class claim over city space. Conversely, the debates also

revealed that in the broader public realm, culture was understood by many, not according to its economic development possibilities, but as symbol of the elite and southern Ontario power represented by the Creative Class. Consequently, the cultural debate brought on by the PAC issue was used to resist the southern and elite claim on the city in favour of northern industrial Sudbury.

Chapter Five also responded to the question: how do the uses of culture for city branding benefit or adversely impact different groups within the city and in what ways? The research for this thesis revealed two distinct ideological strands in the discourse relating to Sudbury culture, one representing the Creative Class argument and one defending Sudbury's northern or working class values. It is easy to reduce the social tensions in the PAC debates to a conflict between the powerful elite and South, and the marginalized, working class and North. But, this would be ignoring the convincing nature of the Creative Class argument and that its proponents, powerful themselves or not, expect general local economic growth to benefit the city as a whole. Because the Creative Class argument represents growth, its social implications easily go ignored. Because of that, tensions should be understood as a conflict between those who accept the Creative branding strategy, thereby, though not always consciously, favouring the powerful and those who identify with and sense the exclusion of northern and working class values. Seemingly artists, cultural workers and citizens taking pride in municipal cultural amenities benefit from investment in a Creative image. Ultimately though, long-range benefits, both symbolic and material, are strongest for the urban knowledge-workers whose interests, tastes and identities are targeted and validated by the strategy. Adverse impacts are felt most strongly among those who identify with or value the

northern and working class character of Sudbury and whose interests, tastes and identities are devalued by and excluded from the new city vision.

Impacts of the Creative City Trend

To conclude, I turn to my overarching research question: how does the dissemination of the Creative City trend affect the northern industrial city? A criticism commonly levelled at Creative City policies is that despite purporting to use culture for social development, they fundamentally remain economic in their formulation and objectives. As demonstrated by my research of the Sudbury case, such policies either knowingly neglect socially-oriented measures or assume social development to be a natural bi-product of economically-motivated ones. The economic emphasis is inevitably interested in supporting culture that can be sold more than culture that improves the lives of citizens. Predictably then, the culture promoted is also the culture most appreciated by those with the interest and income to support it. As a result, not only do these policies overlook social development, they even risk producing and exacerbating social tensions in their open prioritization of particular class interests.

If the Creative City increases social polarization in the large urban setting, I argue that such a threat is heightened in the northern industrial city through the imposition of not only perceived elitist Creative Class ideals, but also their accompanying southern cosmopolitanism. Analysis of the Sudbury context demonstrated that it, like many of Canada's hinterland, resource-based communities, struggles with adapting to changing economic conditions and has been challenged by a decreasing population, unemployment, declining community conditions, limited opportunity, a negative city image and increasing social polarization. According to Richard Florida, the key to

reviving industrial cities lies in accepting the new unavoidable economic reality, embracing the knowledge economy, and actively pursuing Creativity.¹ Sudbury has long sought to dematerialize its economy and is indeed in transition. Nevertheless, accepting and implementing the Creative Class theory, while perhaps encouraging Sudbury to develop new industries, also demanded that the city discount fundamental elements of its history and identity by, as Jonathan Paquette says, “problematising the North.”² Florida insists that harnessing a city’s Creativity involves the celebration of local history and distinctiveness;³ however, municipal cultural policies are still formulated for the anticipated preferences of the market. In order to sell itself to professionals from Southern Ontario, the northern industrial city must present itself as a place with cosmopolitan comforts – an obvious paradox. Hence, to attract the Creative Class, this city must only represent its northern and industrial specificity as a feature of the past, perhaps in a tourist museum, but not as a prominent element of current local identity.

The tensions visible in Sudbury’s implementation of a Creative branding strategy were clear in the debate surrounding the PAC. The debate demonstrates that far from addressing issues of social polarization, the application of Creative policies in the northern industrial city alienates residents who identify with northern and working class values, thereby highlighting social tensions.

Beyond Managing the North...

Supposedly, culture contributes to social cohesion, community-living and quality of life. That said, in favouring the interests of outside investors, tourists and skilled

¹ Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, 302-3.

² Paquette, “Engineering the Northern Bohemian,” 304.

³ Florida, *The Rise of the Creative Class*, 228.

workers over those of the existing population, it seems unlikely that such ideals could be achieved. The problem is not with economic rationales for cultural policy. In fact, cultural sector professionals have been keen to adopt economic rhetoric themselves, recognizing the strength it provides to arguments for arts funding. This thesis has simply aimed to show that when culture is positioned as an economic investment, rather than a subsidy, those types of culture which do not produce economically, but do provide community benefits, go largely ignored. Though economic arguments might secure arts funding, they also risk undoing years of advocacy in favour of an agenda which is more concerned with investment, tourism and human resources than with the needs of the arts community.⁴

When arts and culture have been met with historic resistance in cities like Sudbury, a manufactured Creative image, as argued in this thesis, highlights social tensions, but it is also unlikely to convince either the targeted outsiders or residents themselves. The PAC debates demonstrated a major disconnect between conceptions of culture and the general public. For that reason, cultural policies aimed at economic development must be combined with policies that consciously and enthusiastically nurture local talent and encourage community-based collaborations and outreach projects that either celebrate or critically examine the northern experience. As such, the perceived barrier between culture and the public can be broken down, as culture is made more relevant to their lives. Many Sudburians appreciate and are inspired by the cultural experiences afforded by the city's smallness, its isolation, its natural beauty and its cultural heritage. Rather than negating these, Sudbury must move forward by harnessing the history of progressive cultural development Laurie McGauley identified, one which is

⁴ Ibid., 298.

rooted in working class heritage and the rocky landscape.⁵ Sudbury may have to accept that tourists or young professionals seeking a cosmopolitan experience are not likely to search for it in Sudbury. However, they are more likely to be sold on a city which prides itself on outdoor amenities and community-building, not on an artificially-fabricated Creative image. Only by embracing the strengths of Sudbury's historical character, along with the rising Creative Class voice, can Sudbury develop an authentic, believable and inclusive cultural scene and work towards remedying its city image.

⁵ McGauley, "Dispatches of Longing."

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