Thinking about Social Mobility:
A briefing paper for the Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries Programme

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This paper was produced in August 2018 in response to a brief from Jerwood Arts to provide research and evidence to support the development of the next edition of the Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries programme. It has been used to strengthen the assumptions underlying the programme and refocus its core activity for 2020-2022.

Summary and key points

1) Social mobility is a contested concept. For academic research it is a technical term; in policy and media discussions it has a much broader meaning.

2) Social mobility, particularly its meaning in current policy, has been subject to extensive critique. Ultimately it focuses too much on individuals, rather than addressing entrenched social inequalities.

3) Social mobility is important in cultural and creative industries. Arts, media, museums, and publishing are crucial in creating representations of individuals, communities and society.

4) As a result, *who* works in these occupations, for example their class origins, their gender, and their ethnicity is important to ensuring good, well rounded representations on page, stage, and on screen, as well as in galleries and museums.

5) However, individuals from upper middle class origins are currently over-represented in many creative occupations, compared to those from working class origins and compared to society as a whole.

6) The question for the programme is how to change the class composition of creative and cultural occupations so they better reflect society as a whole. This change must come in the context of *intersections* of class with other under-represented characteristics, such as gender or race.

7) This question can only be answered, as the critical literature on social mobility shows, by asking more from institutions and organisations, rather than solely focusing on individuals' careers.

8) It is clear that the three waves of the programme have had important impacts on participant's careers. However, the programme has not fulfilled its aim of increasing the diversity of the workforce over the longer term. Chronic issues of class, race, and gender under-representation persist.

9) Although getting *in* is important, getting *on* is also where major barriers still exist. There are now several schemes and programmes addressing transitions from education into cultural jobs, but fewer focused on mid-career development.

10) There is best practice across cultural organisations and funders, for example BBC, BFI, and ACE's approaches to social mobility. Cross-organisational dialogue is therefore essential.

11) There is also best and new practice from policy. The Social Mobility Commission has added geography as an important lens through which inequality can be understood.

11) Rethinking social mobility is also not a task just for the organisation. Both measurement frameworks, and the overall ideas underpinning the programme, must be developed in dialogue with participants and host organisations.

12) For participants this may focus on making sure measurement frameworks and language fit with their needs and experiences, particularly thinking beyond internship and entry level positions.

13) For organisations this may focus on general organisational change programmes.

Introduction

Social mobility has emerged as an important consideration for a range of government departments. At the same time, media and popular discussion of social mobility, particularly with regard to social class, means the issue is part of the public's understanding of social inequality in Britain today. Against this backdrop, a range of critical voices have raised questions in association with the social mobility agenda: from the extent to which social mobility is happening, and improvements or deteriorations in its rate; through whether specific interventions are effective at enhancing or encouraging social mobility; to the legitimacy of the term and the associated politics and ideologies. This paper will place the Creative Bursaries programme in this context, outlining current debates, trends and directions in policy, and possible futures for the next round of Creative Bursaries interventions.

What is social mobility?

Social mobility is, unfortunately, a confusing term. This is because it has two main uses, one is a technical academic term, the other reflects policy and media use(s). Whilst these two uses seem superficially similar, they are distinct in several ways. Moreover, academic work has critiqued the policy and media versions of social mobility, further adding to some of the confusion. In policy and media social mobility captures a range of social inequalities in contemporary Britain. It is also embedded in a broader political project of social fairness and meritocracy (Littler 2017).

For academic research, social mobility has a precise definition. It describes the rates of individuals moving from one social position to another, from their *origin* to their *destination*. These origins can be based on parental occupation, with the occupation an individual ends up doing later in life as the corresponding destination (Goldthorpe 2016). Origins and destinations can also be based on income, with parental income for origins, an individual's income later in life as a destination. Social mobility for academics involves a description of probability of moving classes or moving up the income scale, rather than a comment on the fairness, or morality, of society. Social mobility research captures how for some people there is no movement: the class they are born into is the class they end up in. For others there is long- or short-range mobility between classes.

This idea of long- or short-range mobility is usually associated with class being defined as a set of occupational groups. This is based on the Office for National Statistics' occupational classification (NS-SEC) that places individual occupations into a set of 7 groups, with an extra one for those who are unemployed. NS-SEC clusters range from I (higher managerial and professional, which includes doctors, CEOs and lawyers) to VII (routine occupations such as bar staff, care workers, and cleaners), while VIII is those who have never worked or who are long-term unemployed.

ONS currently asks people about their class origins by asking what the main income earner in their household did for work when they were 14. This means people can be classified into the NS-SEC categories for social origins, for example if they had a parent who was a doctor (NS-SEC I) or a cleaner (NS-SEC VII). This information means we can know how many working or middle class origin people there are, and thus compare people's parental occupational origins to their own occupational destinations. We can ask how many children of cleaners (NS-SEC VII) end up working as doctors (NS-SEC I). This allows us to understand social mobility in society, how many individual origins are different from destinations. Thus, we can work out the overall rates of social mobility. Much of the work on occupational mobility has suggested stability in terms of social mobility. The chances of an individual ending up in a different occupational class, which academics call *relative* social mobility has not changed in several decades (Goldthorpe 2016). However, *absolute* social mobility, the fraction of people who end up in a different destination class from their origin class,

has changed considerably, as the British economy has more middle class occupations and therefore more middle class parental origins, than the 1950s and 1960s when there were more manufacturing and manual labour occupations.

This understanding of social mobility is very different to how the idea is framed in media and politics. This has drawn on important work from economists (Blanden and Machin 2007, 2008, Goldthorpe 2013) that suggests social mobility in terms of income, rather than occupation, has declined. The economists' work has been in the context of widespread political concern with unfairness or lack of meritocracy in British society. Payne (2017) notes we now have a perception in policy of a crisis in social mobility with a range of policy prescriptions that are less well evidenced, for example current policy and media discussions of the need for more grammar schools. In contrast, the occupational understanding of social mobility gives a very different, albeit equally bleak, picture of social mobility in the UK. Here the argument is that although *absolute* mobility has declined, for a variety of reasons, *relative* mobility has been stable. This reflects the changes in the class structure and occupational basis of British society (Goldthorpe 2016). Here the lesson is that Britain has a long history of inequality when measured by occupation, and the 'golden age' of social mobility in the 1960s was driven by the expansion of professional occupations, rather than by policy interventions. This is a very important point, as it suggests structural changes to the type of jobs in the economy, rather than specific policies such as grammar schools, were the cause of this 'golden age' of mobility (Mandler 2016). Moreover, these changes in economy and society were experienced differently according to gender and ethnicity, and social mobility for women was experienced very differently than the usual story of the 'working class boy made good' (Todd 2016).

The impact of this technical discussion is important because it frames the broader debates that are discussed below. On the one hand narratives of a crisis in social mobility have motivated much policy activity, for example the government's Social Mobility Commission. This has done much to highlight more general inequalities associated with education and geography. From the occupational approach we see a much more complex landscape where many interventions may be limited in the face of structural changes in British economy and society that are resistant to specific policy fixes. Striking the balance will be important for the programme, particularly as social mobility, as currently deployed in public policy, is a problematic concept.

What is the problem? Introducing inequalities in creative occupations

The department for Culture, Media and Sport defines Cultural and Creative Industries as nine clusters of occupations within the economy: Advertising and Marketing; Architecture; Crafts; Design (product, graphic and fashion design); Film, TV, radio and photography; IT, software and computer services; Publishing; Museums, galleries and libraries; and Music, performing and visual arts. These sectors correspond with 30 groups of occupations, for example Music, performing and visual arts is constituted by: Artists; Actors, entertainers and presenters; Dancers and choreographers; and Musicians. Within this part of the economy we can see that inequality, by gender, ethnicity, and social and economic status, is an important characteristic of cultural and creative work (O'Brien *et al* 2016). Some more details are included in the short appendix section.

In terms of social class, every sector apart from Craft is dominated by those from professional and managerial, middle class, origins. Although people from professional and managerial (NS-SEC I) origins are only around 14% of the working population, they are 26% of Film, TV, video, radio and photography, 37% of publishing, 26% of Museums, galleries and libraries, and 29% Music, performing and visual arts. In contrast, although working class (NS-SEC VI-VIII) origin people are 35% of the working population, they are only 13% of Publishing, 18% of Music, performing and visual arts, 12% of Film, TV, video, radio and photography, and 21% of Museums, galleries and libraries.

We can say that people from upper middle class origins are currently over-represented in many creative occupations, compared to those from working class origins. They are also over-represented compared to the overall numbers of upper middle class origin and working class origin in the labour force as a whole. It appears that creative jobs are thus highly exclusive.

In terms of class origin, there are clear pay gaps between those from upper middle class origins and those from working class starting points. For example, in Film, TV, Radio and Photography occupations there is evidence of a class pay gap of up to £23,000 a year; however, much of this class pay gap is related to individuals' education levels.

The pay gaps suggest that even when women, ethnic minorities, and workingclass origin individuals make it into cultural and creative occupations, they face significant penalties because of who they are. Moreover, recent work (reviewed by Oakley and O'Brien (2016) and Friedman and Laurison (2019)) has suggested there are specific barriers to progression in cultural and creative occupations for those who do not fit the 'somatic norm' (Friedman and O'Brien 2017) of the white, middle class origin, man who is found in the most powerful positions across the sector. Here we see barriers associated with assumptions about individuals' ability, their cultural or social 'fit' with other members of staff, the importance of social networks, the ability to survive unpaid and uncertain working patterns, as just some of the issues research has raised.

These inequalities, and the dynamics underpinning them, are important to understanding how to develop interventions in response. They also open questions about whether social mobility is the appropriate frame for the issues in the sector. This question is the subject for the following section.

The problem of social mobility

The introduction to this discussion noted the various debates between sociologists and economists, as well as the differences with how policy and media use the term social mobility. However, the concept of social mobility is now the subject of extensive critical academic literature, along with media and popular commentary questioning its appropriateness as a frame for policy interventions. The following sketches some of the media hostility to the term before moving to engage with the academic literature. The literature clusters around four key critiques. The first is the language of social mobility suggests an 'escape' from class origins; second, and related, that there are specific emotional costs and negative impacts for the socially mobile; third that social mobility discourses make little or no demand for organisational change; and finally, a specific critique on social mobility into highly competitive cultural labour markets characterised by low pay and poor job security.

Against social mobility

Social mobility has been important to both major political parties. However, it has been given more prominence under the current administration, despite recent political issues associated with the Social Mobility Commission. Media discussions have reflected this, with op-ed commentators questioning and critiquing the idea as the Coalition came to power in 2010. Owen Jones, for example, suggests that the focus on social mobility misses the need for better working conditions across the British economy, penalises those who are not socially mobile from their working class origins, and aims to only to take a small number from working class origins into middle class professions, rather than benefitting all in society (also Chakrabarti 2014, Reay 2017, Moore 2017). Most recently, Dawn Foster (2018) raised the spectre that much of the approach to social mobility was about 'rescuing' gifted children from their working class starting points, rather than improving education and living standards for all. At worst, social mobility is seen as a means of erasing or correcting any traces of working class culture and origins to fit middle class destinations (Edemariam 2017), suggesting working class origins are something needing remedial interventions. Whilst much

of this political commentary reflects ideological positions, this sort of critique has been reflected in broader academic discussions over social mobility and meritocracy, with Littler (2017), Reay (2017) and Hanley (2017) all questioning social mobility as an appropriate ideology for tackling social issues. In particular, these writers have drawn attention to the impact of the language of social mobility.

The language of social mobility and moral judgements about class

For public policy social mobility is a good thing, which we need more of, reflecting a sense that society should be open and meritocratic, rewarding of hard work and talent irrespective of social origins. However, this ignores several issues. First is the way that social mobility is overly focused on moving *upward* with no interest or concern with the need for analysis or policy concern with *downward* mobility (Lawler 2018, Roberts 2017). Here social mobility discourse claims everyone can be a winner, thus obliterating concern and analysis with structural barriers causing disadvantage. At best social mobility discourse takes a focus away from challenging entrenched, for example, class, gender, or racial discrimination, but at worst insists we start by denying the existence of these issues altogether. If everyone can be a winner, then the focus is on the individual, rather than the social situation shaping their careers and lives.

The focus on the individual leads to particular moral judgements associated with social mobility and particular policy interventions. In terms of moral judgements, the risk with social mobility is that middle class positions are seen as deserving of social status and rewards, whilst the working class who are not mobile get what they deserve from the social settlement (Lawler 2018). This is closely linked to moral judgements about the desirability of middle class status, over and above professional occupational destinations, in the context of judgements against the desirability of being working class and of staying in those social origins (Reay *et al* 2009). Whilst it is true that precarious and low pay work characterising much of the contemporary British economy can be contrasted with more stable, higher paying, professional occupations (albeit occupations with their own issues and negative dynamics), social mobility discourses may see the rewards of specific occupational destinations conflated with moral judgements about the deficiencies of individual working class origin people (Skeggs 2004).

A final point is directly related. Payne and Lawler (2018) note, echoing Young's (1958) ironic take on meritocracy, there is a political and ethical question unanswered in social mobility discourses. This is with regard to the 'unmobile' and the broader low paid and precarious set of occupations characterising contemporary British economy and society. Whilst occupational mobility might have been an academic sociological concern in the era of mass employment with the prospect of well-paid working class jobs for life, what should we make of ideas about social mobility in a society where lack of mobility may have significant negative impacts in terms of pay, job security, and overall life satisfaction?

The negative impacts of social mobility

The previous section raised the question of the appropriateness of social mobility as a frame for public policy, in the context of precarity and low pay in modern working class occupations. There is another side to the potentially negative impacts of social mobility, which is on socially mobile individuals themselves, within Britain's unequal and hierarchical class society. This is in contrast to the overall negative impact for those who do not make it into professional middle class occupations and face potentially poor and precarious working lives. Friedman (2016:4) has noted the sense of 'unease, anxiety and dislocation' found in interviews with those who are socially mobile. This is often experienced as anxiety about background and social origin when moving into professions that have middle class cultures, alongside the sense of alienation or distance from working class family and

friends. This has been summarised for a popular audience by Hanley's reflections on her own mobility (2017), along with personal academic reflections by Skeggs (1997) and Reay (2017). Indeed, Friedman's conclusions gesture towards anxieties associated with mobility stopping or hampering career success, a situation also noted by Friedman *et al* (2016) and Friedman and Laurison (2019). Whilst class has been a key category for understanding the individual, psychological, experience of social mobility, there is also extensive academic work on how class and mobility intersect with gender and race.

These two demographic categories have also been important in public policy, where debates about social mobility have sat alongside other forms of social inequality such as gender pay gaps in professional occupations, or the absence of ethnic minority leadership from the same professional settings. Rollock *et al* (2011, 2014) detail how Black British middle classes who have been socially mobile face issues associated with both racism and the transition from working class origins to professional middle class destinations. Here individuals have to develop strategies to navigate double discriminations, with potential alienation from both their white middle class peers and their Black working class starting points. Indeed, they note how the category of middle class is itself 'heavily saturated by whiteness' (Rollock *et al* 2012).

On gender, Lawler (1999) is part of a broad range of literature that has questioned the underlying assumptions of social mobility discourses. In particular Lawler's work notes that much of the discussion of social mobility has been dependent on the figure of a working class boy done good, embedding a specific set of assumptions as to *who* is the socially mobile individual into the policy imagination. Indeed, this set of assumptions can be seen in some of the original work on the life satisfaction of the socially mobile, which looked primarily at male baby boomers who had ended up in secure, professional occupations (Goldthorpe 1981). Women's experience is markedly different (Todd 2016, Reay 2017, Skeggs 1997). Todd (2016) has highlighted the complexity of women's experience of mobility, with nuances around their desire for both the opportunities and also the constraints of middle class occupational destinations. At the same time, as Lawler (1999) notes, the dominant frame for social mobility, particularly in the policy imagination, excludes the reality and also the aspirations of many working class origin women. Here, as Savage *et al* (2015) point out, the emotional imprint of mobility intersects with embedded sexism in many professions, meaning working class origin women face potentially unhappy experiences as they struggle to fit the classed and gendered norms of a professional world structured around the norm of the middle class man (Puwar 2004).

There has been debate over the emotional impact of social mobility. Chan (2018) has criticised the research highlighting negative emotional impacts. Using large scale survey data, he suggests there is no evidence of negative impacts on the self-reported wellbeing of the socially mobile. However, despite this critique, the testimony captured by the research reviewed in this section remains powerful and suggests the need for caution in how social mobility is framed and discussed. Taken in tandem with critiques suggesting social mobility is a form of 'escape' from working class social origins and communities, the potential for a rethink of, at least, the language of social mobility is clear.

It is vitally important to draw the correct conclusions from this discussion. It must not be read as a call for those from working class origins to know their place, in the context of the risk of negative experiences of social mobility. Rather, as the following section stresses, we must think about how organisations and more broadly British society, can change in response to the issues outlined in the research summarised here.

Changing work, changing organisations, and changing society.

The negative emotional impacts of social mobility are not the fault of the individual; rather they reflect the strong middle class norms that dominate and discriminate in professional settings. There is excellent evidence of this in the arts. In the case of acting and in the case of television production, for example, Freidman *et al* (2016) and Friedman and Laurison (2019) find extensive evidence that the socially mobile suffer for not having the right networks, the right set of cultural references, and the knowledge of the right way to present themselves. In cultural occupations these are almost all unwritten rules, which in some cases are reflections of middle class norms rather than objective criteria for success (Skeggs 2004). The evidence here is especially powerful in the context of race and gender, rather than just social class origins, where the extensive discrimination has been catalogued by a range of academic researchers (Allen *et al (*2018) Conor *et al* (2015) DeBenedictis, *et al* (2017), Gill (2014), Hesmondhalgh (2018)).

As a result, there is the risk that social mobility for individuals will do little, if anything, to change the occupational destinations they move into. This lack of impact should be seen against the backdrop of concerns over the future of the sector. Who makes culture, the representations they create, and the audiences and consumers that are engaged, is a crucial tripartite question for current academic research (Allen *et al* 2017). It is also important for media discussions and campaigns, framed by ethics such as 'if you can't see it, you can't be it'. Changing the composition of the cultural sector, notwithstanding the lack of a definitive theory on the exact mechanism between production, representation, and consumption, is therefore an important element of current discourse on the cultural sector. This is true whether the concern is over gender, ethnicity, or social class.

These concerns mean that social mobility that is focused on individual access to cultural and creative careers may do little to address the structural issues that limit social mobility, as well as leaving questions of inequality in production, representation, and consumption unchanged and unchallenged. A useful example to illustrate this point is from the government's industrial strategy and the creative industries sector deal (HMG2017). Here the issue of under-representations of specific demographic groups, whether in terms of gender, ethnicity, or class origins, is seen as an issue of skills mismatches and shortages within the labour market. Although organisations are charged with working harder to find talent, issues of discrimination in hiring, or specific forms of bad practice in creative industries that see individuals leave the sector, are almost entirely absent from this area of policy. As many academics critical of social mobility have noted, focusing on changing the individual, rather than the organisations or society, does little for social justice, particularly for occupations claiming to represent and reflect society.

Lawler (2018) is one of a range of examples that has sought to question interventions that rely on raising aspirations, educating the right sort of 'character', or adapting individual personalities to fit destination environments that would otherwise be hostile to them (Allen *et al* (2018) Conor *et al* (2015) DeBenedictis, *et al* (2017), Gill (2014), Hesmondhalgh (2018)). In terms of soft skills, or cultural capital, needed to fit into middle class professional environments, social mobility may approach those from working class, or similarly demographically marginalised origins, as needing correction, rather than demanding organisations adapt to be more open to all social groups. As Reay (2017) notes, the 'cruel optimism' of social mobility asks a great deal from the individual in terms of risk-taking and personal transformation, and little or nothing from their destinations. This point is echoed by Littler (2018), who is clear that the focus on meritocracy, with the aim of helping the marginalised into professional positions, hides unequal social structures.

A lack of organisational or sectoral change potentially associated with the social mobility agenda is especially problematic in cultural work. A range of academic research (e.g. Hesmondhalgh and Baker

2010) has demonstrated that although cultural and creative jobs may have high levels of autonomy, self-expression, and job satisfaction, they are also potentially very low-paid, highly insecure, precarious, and ultimately exploitative. As Savage (2015) and Friedman *et al* (2016) note, where the socially mobile enter middle class jobs such as arts and culture, they suffer pay gaps and lack of progression. This means that policy makers' aspirations to see more people from demographic groups that are currently under-represented into cultural and creative jobs will do little to change the working conditions that are part of the reason for under-representation in the first place. Those individuals are less likely to rise to the very top of professions, less likely to be in decision making roles, and less likely to be visible role models.

As continued low-pay and insecure conditions in some parts of the creative sector mean than even where entry into the occupation is opened up, the longer-term likelihood of success is limited by access to economic, social and cultural resources. One response to this is to suggest we should stop or lessen efforts at expanding social mobility into occupations that may be hostile or unrewarding. This is not the lesson to be drawn. Rather, the key point is to think about how cultural and creative occupations, with their risks, precarity, and rewards, can be reformed as to benefit all of their workers. By making the occupations fairer for all there would be fewer rewards for those already advantaged, an important element that may contribute to social mobility. Moreover, and to return to the beginning of this paper, part of this set of reforms would think about how to expand secure and good cultural work, in the same way the traditional professions expanded in the post-war era to the 1980s. A growing, fairer, cultural sector would promote social justice, rather than offering social mobility to a minority of individuals who are likely to suffer penalties and exclusions as a result of their background, even when they do 'make it'. However, this currently seems far beyond contemporary policy discourse on social mobility in the cultural sector.

Policy and social mobility

Notwithstanding the previous section's conclusion, social mobility is an important and high profile element of policy discourse. However, its status is uncertain within central government, as the Social Mobility Commission is being reconstituted following a high profile set of resignations in 2017. It is expected the new Commission will be announced in October, although this may be subject to delays.

Two points are noteworthy from its most recent work. First that it sees social mobility in the broadest sense, encompassing a range of social inequalities and divisions. In both the State of the Nation report (2017a) and their Review of social mobility policy from 1997-2017 (2017b), social mobility is viewed in relation to child poverty, educational attainment at school, youth unemployment, and geographic inequalities. This latter is a crucial second point, as the Commission focuses on 'cold spots' for social mobility as well as noting the divide between London and the South East, and the rest of England and the UK. This geographical lens is an important additional way of thinking about social mobility. Here a range of indicators, including rates of school readiness and free school meals, attendance at university, numbers of young people not in education, employment or training, earning below the living wage, home ownership levels, and numbers in professional and managerial jobs, are used to define 'cold spots' and the 'postcode lottery' for the chances of getting on in life (Social Mobility Commission 2017:iv).

Whilst specific, high level, policy interventions might have paused as the Commission is reconstituted, creative sector policymakers, along with individual firms and organisations, are instituting interventions. To deal with the latter first, the Cultural Learning Alliance (2018) has raised the alarm over the decline of arts subjects in state schools (in contrast to fee-paying education), a decline that impacts both on access to university arts courses and the sorts of 'cultural capital' associated with employment in the sector (Brook *et al* 2018, Campbell *et al* 2018, Friedman and

Laurison 2019). Related to questions over education, the Bridge Group and Sutton Trust have a range of educational and occupational programmes designed to address the sorts of barriers discussed earlier in this paper. In particular Sutton Trust are campaigning and working on the need for better quality internships and support for those seeking to enter the professions, whilst the Bridge Group concentrates on higher education and transitions to the professions via research commissions.

Some of the recommendations and practices from these organisations have been implemented in Whitehall. The most recent guidance on measuring socio-economic background from the Cabinet office (2017a, 2017b) reflects changes to recruitment to the Civil Service Fast Stream programme, including more recruitment in the regions, a broader range of universities included in outreach, and a direct link between summer diversity internships and the Fast Stream programme. The BBC has implemented similar monitoring approaches (BBC 2017), publishing data on socio-economic diversity of its staff and highlighting its focus on developing the workforce, particularly in terms of minority ethnic representation.

These programmes and approaches reflect a policy landscape for the cultural and creative industries. The government's recent Creative Industries Industrial Strategy Sector Deal (BEIS 2018) promises an industry-led creative careers programme for 2,000 schools and 600,000 young people, as a way of raising awareness of the range of jobs available in the sector, along with upskilling and retraining programmes. The focus here is on the 'talent pipeline' framed as a set of skills mismatches and lack of awareness of potential jobs in the sector. The core strategy is focused on digital skills (as a result of the conflation of IT occupations and cultural and arts jobs within DCMS statistics (Campbell *et al* 2018) and advertising and awareness programmes, with little direct intervention from DCMS.
Moreover, the clusters-based approach, focused on cities and regions with existing capacity for creative industries development raises questions as to the effectiveness of creative economy policy in addressing (or actually accelerating) geographic inequalities highlighted by the Social Mobility Commission (2017a).

However, even with investment in creative economy research from AHRC and the Industrial Strategy, there remains a considerable distance between the issues identified in the academic literature and much policy intervention. To be blunt, developing a sense of the range of possible jobs in the creative economy for young people in under-represented groups, along with focusing on closing skills gaps and labour market mismatches will not solve the problem of inequality and lack of social mobility (in both the broad and narrow versions) in creative occupations. The problem of internships and unpaid work more generally, of structural barriers to women and ethnic minorities, the dominance of (and excessive costs associated with) London and its role in career development, the importance of networks, and the class and gender pay gaps, identified earlier in this paper all require much bolder and more fundamental changes.

The Sector Deal is noteworthy because it does address the need for a more diverse creative sector, even though social mobility is not mentioned and does not form part of this section of the industrial strategy's rhetoric. The BFI and ACE are seeking to address socio-economic diversity in their sectors and are both scheduled to announce monitoring on this topic. BFI is currently working on bringing class origin, and the associated questions of occupational social mobility, into its diversity standards (2017). It also commissioned a review of research on workforce diversity in the screen sector (CAMEo 2018), which reflected all of the issues and barriers identified in current academic research. Crucially it concludes, 'There is some evidence that interventions in the form of training schemes and mentorship programmes can be successful in providing entry routes into the screen sector workforce for limited numbers of women, BAME people and disabled people. There is, however,

little to suggest that these interventions have to date had any success at addressing the underlying causes of inequality or the existence of barriers to equal participation.' (2018:7).
ACE faces similar issues. It has recently concluded a research project on measuring class origin for its National Portfolio Organisations (Hussain 2018, Oman 2018). This is in the context of *The Creative Case for Diversity* (2017) and the ongoing work on a new 10 year strategy. It is expected, given the research project, that class and social mobility will play a part in a rewritten and reconfigured equality and diversity programme at ACE. This will be necessary given the longer term structural inequalities in arts occupations, highlighted by ACE's recent evidence review for the strategy (ACE/Britain Thinks 2018).

The policy landscape suggests three points. First that social mobility will be part of policy agendas as the Social Mobility Commission is reconstituted and as BFI and ACE publish strategy documents. Second, that the definition of social mobility will be broad, and capture a range of social inequalities, rather than the more technical sense discussed in academic research. Finally, there will be contradictory impulses from policy, as the industrial strategy focuses on skills, talent pipelines, and internships, whilst ACE and BFI confront more systematic social inequalities. What is clear is that there will be support for, and interest in, programmes that address social mobility in the context of transitions into employment in creative occupations with a view to addressing structural inequalities in the sector. The extent of the effectiveness of such programmes remains to be seen.

Where next for the Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries programme?

As this paper has outlined, social mobility is a complex and contested concept. Indeed, the media and academic critiques mean that many are sceptical of the idea. Arts Emergency, for example, have moved away from the language of social mobility to focus on being a 'social justice' organisation. This orientation has seen Arts Emergency dispense with the language of social mobility, seeking to challenge a range of inequalities in the education system and the arts workforce, rather than just focusing on outcomes for individuals.

That notwithstanding, social mobility will be part of the policy landscape for the foreseeable future, as a result of the reconstituted Social Mobility Commission, and ACE and BFI's forthcoming work on measuring class and monitoring social mobility into their sectors.

If social mobility remains part of the policy discourse, where does the WJCB programme fit in, and where might it develop? The original iteration of the programme aimed to 'make entry into arts professions more accessible to people who cannot afford to undertake unpaid work placements, and thus open up arts careers to a wider group of people' and 'to support a new generation of talented artists and cultural workers into the arts, in the process increasing the long term diversity of that workforce' (WJCB 2018). The current evaluation strategy reflects this aim (WJCB 2018).

Whilst the former aim has been fulfilled with the 84 participants, the latter is a larger and more complex problem. This is especially the case with regard to longer term trends in social mobility into creative jobs. Brook *et al* (2018) have estimated that the cultural sector has been highly exclusive at least since the 1980s, and recent figures (O'Brien *et al* 2016, Oakley *et al* 2017) show no signs of this changing. Despite eight years of Jerwood's work, the long term diversity of the sector is stubbornly hard to fix. Some of this is as a result of the continued persistence of internships as a route to work in the sector. The Roberts' (2017) highlighted cultural and media sectors as particularly problematic in terms of dependence on internships. In turn, the experience of undertaking internships penalise all social groups apart from those from higher socio-economic status (Holford 2017), even where they might result in entry to a profession.

As a result, the Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries programme might rethink the aims of longer term change. In particular aims of long term change that are narrated through encouraging social mobility for individuals, given that criticism of the social mobility agenda, and academic research on inequality in the sector, suggests longer term benefits of the programme may be isolated to individual participants, rather than transforming the sector itself. In order to achieve this, the focus could turn from the individual to the host organisations. The programme could demand more from hosts, including higher financial contributions and firmer commitments to total organisational change rather than just the support for an intern. The programme could develop new strands of work to support this, particularly with regard to changes across hosts' middle and senior levels.

This latter point is related to the issue of career progression. The lack of change in the class basis of the arts may be related to the need for more middle and senior levels to reflect class and other forms of diversity. Thus, getting *on*, rather than just getting *in*, could be an important subject for an expanded bursaries programme, to ensure longer term, sustainable changes in host organisations and then the sector more generally.

Looking towards institutional change and career progression may also open a more critical, policy development, position for the scheme. As noted above, the industrial strategy and personnel changes at both DCMS and the Social Mobility Commission mean there is space to influence the direction of social mobility policy for the cultural and creative industries. The previous impact of the Weston Jerwood Creative Bursaries, and the evolution of the programme might provide case study material for this area.

Two final points can be taken from the discussion. Currently the programme's measurement of eligibility is focused on maintenance support during undergraduate study. This could be supplemented with information gathered by the BBC (Parental occupation, parental education, type of school attended by the individual). This approach is currently being discussed by ACE and BFI, and expected to become the standard for assessing the class composition of the cultural workforce.

Second, a focus on geography, corresponding to the Social Mobility Commission's 'cold spots' might prove fruitful, particularly if the programme has resources to link with national organisations, particularly in London. As the Commission's data highlights, there are specific areas of the country where there is a crisis of life chances, as demonstrated by bringing several sets of data together. The map of 'cold spots' provides another way of assessing the fit to the programme, as well as providing sites with arts organisations that may benefit from the Creative Bursaries programme.

Appendix note

The recent *Panic! Social Class, Taste and Inequalities in the Creative Industries* report demonstrated the nature of the inequalities and exclusions in cultural and creative occupations. Using data from the ONS's Labour Force Survey, the report notes how the arts are not diverse in terms of ethnicity; Museums, galleries and libraries (2.7%); Film, TV, video, radio and photography (4.2%); and Music, performing and visual arts (4.8%) all have particularly low numbers of Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) workers. This is compared to the workforce as a whole (10%) but also compared to London (39%).
Almost every occupational sector has an under-representation of women in its workforce, with Publishing (52.9%) and Museums, galleries and libraries (64.8%) the only two sectors where women are not under-represented compared to the workforce overall. Even in these sectors the over-representations of women in the workforce has not translated to dominance of leadership or similar high-profile roles across the sectors.

As well as having issues of access associated with class, ethnicity, and gender, there are also important pay gaps. Across all creative industries women are estimated to earn £5,800 less per year than otherwise similarly employed men. In the Film, TV, video, radio and photography this gap is estimated at £15,000 per year less for women.

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