Political Economy and Global Arts for Social Change
A Comparative Analysis of Youth Orchestras in Venezuela and Chile

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Research Puzzle

Public Arts Programs...

- Inspired 241 projects in 55 countries
- Engaged over 5 million youth in 2013
- Impacted the UN Millennium Development Goals
- Garnered support from the World Bank, IADB, and UNHCR
- Earned funding from 55.4% of US grantmakers in 2013
Public Arts Program Logic

Creative Expression and Arts Education

Self-discipline
Imagination
Academic Achievement
Self-esteem

Increased Opportunity for Employment
Increased Potential for Social Mobility

Gang Involvement, Crime, and Drug Abuse
Research Question

To what extent does political-economic context influence the implementation of public arts programs?
Intellectual Context

Debates on the Arts and Social Change

- Social Consequences of Arts Training
- Arts Education and Economic Development
- Arts Programs and Politics

“Writing about music is generally designed to look as if it is working from causes to effects, but it is better understood as working backward from valued belief to reasons for believing it.”

-Nicholas Cook
“Writing on Music or Axes to Grind: Road Rage and Musical Community,” Music Education Research
The Gap in Our Knowledge

Social change impact of public arts programs can *only* be measured by specific, static outcomes.

How political-economic context shapes the dynamic process of public arts program implementation.
National government control over institutions, prioritization of social welfare, and competition for public funding shapes a public arts program’s social goals, daily operations, and definition of success. In turn, this process of implementation influences how we interpret a program’s social change impact.
### Research Design

#### Case Selection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Venezuela 1974-2015</th>
<th>Democracy</th>
<th>Decreasing Democracy / Dictatorship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(FMSB, El Sistema)</td>
<td>Venezuela, Pre-Chávez</td>
<td>Chile, Pinochet Dictatorship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chile 1964-2015</td>
<td>Chile, Post-Pinochet</td>
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<tr>
<td>(COLA, FOJI)</td>
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#### Similar Cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socialism</th>
<th>Democracy</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chile, Pre-Pinochet</td>
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<td>Venezuela, Chávez+</td>
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| Conceptualization: | - Government control over institutions  
- Competition and accountability in public funding  
- National prioritization of social welfare | - Social mission  
- Daily operations  
- Definition of success | Our knowledge on the extent to which public arts programs affect social change |
| Operationalization: | - Numerical democracy and economy scores  
- National government spending and policies  
- Discourse and decisions of politicians regarding social welfare | - Textual analysis: founding documents, mission statements, speeches, and interviews  
- Observations of rehearsals and performances | - Discussion of program impact  
- Findings from impact studies |
Findings

Less Free Market and Less Democracy

- Low accountability and competition for public funds
- Large recipient groups for public services

High power/control over bureaucracy and institutions

More Free Market and More Democracy

- Small recipient groups for public services
- Low power/control over bureaucracy and institutions
- High accountability and competition for public funds

Success of public arts program measured by **scope** of participation

Large participant group
- Display-based funding
- Less conclusive impact studies

Small participant group
- Results-based funding
- More conclusive impact studies

Success of public arts program measured by **impact** on participants

High power/control over bureaucracy and institutions
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<tr>
<td>-Arts Program</td>
<td>-Threat of Jorge Peña Hen</td>
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<td>-Domestic alternative to European orchestras</td>
<td>-Slander</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Caracas</td>
<td>-Resignation</td>
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<td>-Funding from CONAC</td>
<td>-Execution</td>
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<th><strong>Socialism</strong></th>
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<td>-Results-based funding</td>
<td>-Social inclusion=universal access to music education</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Rigorous impact studies</td>
<td>-Community focus</td>
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<td>-Geographic tension</td>
<td>-Class barriers and socioeconomic discrimination</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Cooperation with traditional institutions</td>
<td>-Extra-musical impact</td>
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<td>-Higher education scholarships</td>
<td>-Education and Defense Ministry funding</td>
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<td>-CNCA and private sector funding</td>
<td><strong>Venezuela, Chávez+</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-Social inclusion=more participants</td>
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<td>-Display-based funding discourages rigorous impact studies</td>
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<td>-Resources to performances</td>
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<td>-Parallel Musical Careers</td>
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<td>-Competition, hierarchy, salaries</td>
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<td>-Funding from the Office of the President</td>
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Conclusions

- Visionary individuals often shape public arts programs
- Public arts programs can be purposed to meet political goals
- We need to rethink universalist approaches to public policy and social change
Implications for Theory and Practice

Context Matters

- Creative mitigation of global inequality
- Reassess standardized plans

Perhaps the principle and lasting value of El Sistema… is putting the idea of social action through music on the international public agenda.

-Geoffrey Baker
El Sistema: Orchestrating Venezuela’s Youth
Further Research

My new Arts for Social Change Context Framework...

- Unpacks complexities
- Understands relationships between program goals, operations, and impact
- Accounts for changes in national context and individual actors
- Must be tested in other cases