

THE CULTURAL INDUSTRIES

An introduction

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From culture to creativity – and back again?

Twenty years ago publishing a book on the cultural industries would first, no doubt, demand some kind of reckoning with Adorno's monolithic Culture Industry. One might point to their pluralisation and fragmentation – into the cultural *industries* – alongside continuing processes of agglomeration and concentration. It would involve recognition of their more contradictory and ambiguous relationship to those wider processes of power and control articulated within and through their structures and products. This work of retrieval and complication, done under the broad rubric of the political economy of culture, communications and/or media, had been under way in North America, France and the United Kingdom (UK) since the 1970s (Mosco, 1996). Unlike other approaches – notably that of cultural studies – the political economy approach was less concerned with the high/low, art/commerce distinction than it was with the role of media and communications systems in the reproduction of a complex modern (capitalist) society. It wanted to know how, and on what grounds, might the modern democratic state organise or regulate such a system, and what complex social, economic and political considerations needed to be made in the light of this. It was very much engaged – not implacably opposed but engaged – in the heated debates about the de- or re-regulation of the broadcast media and new kinds of commercial and public sector channels coming into being across the 1990s (Hesmondhalgh, 2013a).

Elsewhere the reckoning with the Culture Industry took a local turn. A book on the cultural industries in the mid-1990s might evoke an eclectic new set of producers and intermediaries who mixed art, popular culture, technology and a kind of street-wise entrepreneurialism quite tangential to the formal structures of the arts funding system (Wynne and O'Connor, 1996; Leadbeater and Oakley, 1999). Community arts and new social movements combined with a contemporary popular culture (animated by the spirit of cultural studies) to embrace an urbanism re-emerging from under the rusted hulks of the Fordist city (Bianchini and Parkinson, 1993). These announced a new potential for local re-invention. By the mid-1990s consultancy and

local government reports in the UK were identifying this new breed of cultural producers as being in possession of the kind of qualities required for a transformed city – a city with the potential to take its future in its own hands, no longer determined by the accidents of geography and geology.

Autopoiesis rather than autonomy was the watchword, as endogenous growth based on re-inventing and mobilising existing strengths became an alternative to the disempowering script of attracting mobile global capital. Though often thought of as some kind of economism or instrumentalism by which the arts sector attempted to protect its shrinking funding base, the cultural industries at local level tried to diffuse the structuring tension between culture and economy. As culture was becoming more important economically so too 'economics' (though the discipline was lagging behind the reality perhaps) was finally acknowledging the reality of culture. The cultural industries might not be the whole solution to the questions raised by the socio-economic transformation of the post-industrial city, but whatever the solution there was little doubt culture would be part of it. Nicholas Garnham – involved in the experiments of the Greater London Council 1979–86 (Garnham, 1990) – linked these political economy and urban development strands together: both contemporary democracy and democratic cultural policy at multiple scales demanded an engagement with the realities of the production, distribution and consumption of culture.

It is less likely that such a book – in the Anglophone world at least – would acknowledge that they were in the middle (1988–97) of the World Decade for Culture and Development (WCCD, 1996). Emerging out of a number of United Nations umbrella organisations – in particular the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) – the 'culture and development' tradition emphasised both the cultural context in which development necessarily took place and the values articulated by this culture as a crucial benchmark of a qualitatively human rather than technocratic development process (Arizpe, 2004; De Beukelaer, 2015; Isar, this volume). In this the cultural industries, conceived as a modern cultural infrastructure of production, distribution and consumption, were crucial both to nation building and protecting local identity in the face of a globalising culture. Growing out of the failure of the New World Information and Communications Order (UNESCO, 1980; Mosco, 1996; Singh, 2011), the cultural turn in development studies (as generally in the social sciences) and post-colonial and post-development literatures, 'culture and development' combined both an anthropological and a political economy approach to cultural industries. However, in the metropolitan heartlands, worried by the domestic employment impact of the re-location of manufacturing to the 'developing world', the cultural industries appeared primarily as a developed world option.

Ten years on and the landscape had changed considerably. First the creative industries, and then creative economy, had either replaced or been bolted on to the cultural industries: cultural and creative, or cultural creative. Indeed there were other couplings such as art and cultural, art and creative, creative and digital; or various idiosyncratic terms such as 'copyright', 'attention' or 'experience' industries/economies. Many at the time saw this as a purely pragmatic title change, or were 'what's in a name' agnostic; it was not immediately clear how the replacement of 'cultural' by 'creative' worked both to preserve and to expunge elements traditionally associated with 'culture'. 'Creativity' as an input (rather than culture as an output)

allowed the imaginative, dynamic, transformative and glamorous aspects of culture to be pressed into the service of an innovation machine. Questions of value other than innovation and other economic impacts were dropped.

That this was not immediately apparent says a lot about the cultural industries 'imaginary'(s) of the mid-1990s, which should neither be reduced to a simple 'precursor' of the creative industries nor viewed as a radically distinct set of ideas and aspirations (O'Connor, 2013). In general, the kinds of loose coalitions that pursued the creative industries agenda grew out of those involved in the cultural industries. They were concerned with cultural small and medium size enterprises (SMEs) and entrepreneurs, regenerating cities and regions, programming new kinds of mixed use cultural spaces, setting up local development agencies, re-tooling higher and further education courses, developing training programmes and sometimes, via the relevant culture or trade ministries, trying to influence legislation or gain political legitimisation.

Three developments altered this easy continuity. First came the explosion of the Internet and digital and computing technologies generally, with their reconfiguration of the established nature of, and connections between, cultural production, texts and audiences. The UK government's addition of computing and information and communication technology (ICT) to the 'creative industries' list in 1998 has been frequently commented on (Garnham, 2005; Tremblay, 2011). Not only did it boost the employment numbers, often by around 40 per cent, but it worked to subsume the cultural (now creative) sector under the rubric of the knowledge economy. Many promoting the cultural industries had already positioned culture as part of the knowledge economy but its imaginary had shifted from that of a city or region able to re-invent itself through resources of culture towards the capacity to release the heroic entrepreneurial energies eulogised by the Californian ideology.

It seemed incontrovertible that the 'digital revolution' was transforming the landscape of (what had been) the cultural industries, pulling the plug on their business models, bringing in new entrants, transforming the way audiences interacted, purchased and adapted cultural texts. In this light the creative industries, with their horizontal networks, co-creative practices, and open-ended texts providing digital affordances for the creative citizen-consumer, could be seen to incarnate (and make redundant) many of the transformative aspirations of the cultural industries (Hartley, 2005). The creative industries announced a new kind of economy that drew on culture-inflected creativity within a (transformed) commercial sector that was as far away from Adorno's Culture Industry as one could possibly imagine. At the same time – given the radical flattening of hierarchies and the infinite creativity of the consumer – it could simply sidestep the dour strictures of political economy.

Second came Richard Florida's creative class, which seemed to encapsulate – and indeed statistically *nail* – the broad connections between culture and the future of the post-industrial city that had emerged in the 1990s (Florida, 2002). The simplicity of the idea – build 'cool', 'edgy' places in the city as amenities to attract artists and cultural workers, scientists and technicians, senior management and professionals – has both been routinely denounced and phenomenally successful (Peck, 2010). Florida's opening out of arts-led regeneration to embrace hip, popular and everyday cultures (lifestyles) was welcomed as a democratic move. It also made the spaces of cool consumption – and of course local cities could insert almost any new development

into this space – a synecdoche for the wider creativity of the city (even though the real economy might lie elsewhere). It was this unspecified – yet seemingly statistically demonstrable – catalytic connection between a trendy consumption infrastructure and the overall creativity of the city that proved irresistible to the elected officials – if not the cultural managers – of many otherwise sensible cities.

The third change was perhaps the most surprising – certainly for the agency that had come up with the term in the first place. Soon after the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) launched the 'creative industries' idea in 1998, it was taken up by the very East Asian countries – or 'economies' as they had become known – from whose manufacturing prowess these new industries were meant to allow the post-industrial countries to escape. Singapore, South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan and eventually China enthusiastically embraced the creative industries as the next step up the value chain (Wang, 2004; O'Connor and Gu, 2006; Kong et al., 2006; Keane, 2007). Taking seriously the evolutionary schema that was mostly political rhetoric in the UK – from a manufacturing to a service to a creative economy – these East Asian nations, also unlike the UK, put their money where their mouths were. In so doing they took seriously the notion of creative industries as intellectual property (IP) intensive and thus included in their lists bio-tech, pharmaceuticals, software and computing, product design, consulting and other advanced business services. They split them off from culture – which (somewhat off message) they saw as involving non-economic values – and subjected them to the kinds of 'catch-up' strategies they had earlier applied to advanced manufacture and other high-value added industries.

This created unexpected opportunities for agents such as the British Council – the brand leader – as western know-how was sought for these emergent industries. What they got was not quite what they wanted. Creativity and entrepreneurialism was very much linked to the artistic persona – the maverick, the rebel, the non-wearing of a suit. It also depended on notions of open, loose but high trust networks of SMEs that – according to the rhetoric at least – marked the kind of creative economies emerging in the West. What East Asia wanted were industry strategies, foreign direct investment, value chain analysis, brand management, market structuring and so on. These were rarely available from western cultural agencies who masked the complete absence of any kind of capacity, or willingness, for an industry strategy in the rhetoric of unplanned, market-driven creativity, where the job of the state was to get out of the way. These kinds of cultural-creative initiatives continue to operate in East Asia out of the various offices of the British Council and similar agencies from Germany, the Low Countries and Scandinavia. But they were often symbolic inputs. The real learning was from direct contact with the people who really knew – the global cultural corporations and their attendant consultancy companies (O'Connor and Gu, forthcoming).

The least successful export was the creative class. Eagerly adopted in Hong Kong, it quickly ran into problems when the persona of the 'creative' and the kinds of cultural ambiance they required – ethnic diversity, gay (friendly) businesses, bohemian enclaves – were deemed to be less than desirable. The new creative economy was to be run by serious people in nice suits and dresses, not BoHos. More popular was the older 'high culture' or arts-led regeneration. This had its brand impact – but it also took culture out of direct generation of wealth in ways that suited the 'traditional' outlook of East Asia.

The availability of the creative industries agenda outside the metropolitan heartlands was also embraced by the international development agencies who saw its possibility for developing, and not just developed, countries. UNESCO, traditionally the lead agency in the cultural field, was dealing with its issues around the 2005 Convention on the Diversity of Cultural Expressions – a complex combination of political economy and culture and development strands set against the rampant globalisation agenda of the World Trade Organization and other agencies of the ‘Washington Consensus’ (De Beukelaer, 2014a; 2014b; Isar, this volume). The United Nations (UN) agencies concerned with international trade stole a march and embraced the creative industries as a new sector more available to developing countries than other sectors requiring capital-intensive investment. Two reports on the trade in global in cultural goods and services would soon be published (UNCTAD, 2008; 2010), building on extensive statistical information showing how the balance of global trade was shifting away from the Global North to the Global South.¹ It was not yet completely apparent, but the signs were already there in 2005 that the creative economy was to be a global rather than a ‘western’ agenda.

In 2015 we are again in a different world. The global financial crisis was not the end of neo-liberalism but that programme is clearly no longer what it was. We go along with it because there is nothing else. There is an interregnum. In an age of austerity and economic uncertainty, mixed with a deepening cynicism about the political process, the optimistic threads that marked both cultural and creative industries have unravelled. Some might point to the resilience of the cultural industries or cultural economy in a post-global financial crisis world (Pratt and Hutton, 2013) but the optimistic vision of a creative economy set to replace the old in some evolutionary progression is gone. Not that iPhones won’t continue to sell. It is simply that the creative economy is perfectly compatible with the most egregious forms of exploitation, inequality and economic disenfranchisement. If the creative economy is going somewhere it is not clear where to or who it is taking with it.

Rampant gentrification and persistent urban decay; the increasing (self-) exploitation and ‘precarity’ of cultural workers; the instrumental use of flagship cultural buildings, especially in the newly developed countries; new forms of global dominance by cultural aggregators outpacing the old corporate cultural industries; cultural funding drastically cut; all this against a collapse of public value into economic metrics leaving cultural policy in a vacuum. In this context creativity, innovation and entrepreneurialism have become, along with sustainability, merely empty signifiers (Davies, 2014).

Many of these tendencies are outlined in the chapters that follow. The situation is not to be characterised in Adorno-esque tones of pessimism. In fact, unlike the 1990s – the true decade of Adorno according to Frederick Jameson (2006) – there are gaps and fissures, signs of hope and pressures for change. As this book illustrates, the growth of activism and scholarship (and activist scholarship) in the cultural industries has given a new purchase on many of the questions raised in the 1980s and so often cast aside in the ‘noughties’ (2000–09). Many of these issues have been taken up in the very different circumstances of ‘developing’ countries, as these too are now being brought into the creative industries development script. The hopes and aspirations of both governments and cultural producers open up points of

leverage for a more inclusive and locally grounded development agenda here (Pratt, 2014; De Beukelaer, 2015; Isar, this volume). Indeed, new connections are being made between 'developed' and 'developing' countries as places in both North and South grow to resemble each other. On the other hand, many of the concerns of the political economy school have been displaced almost entirely by a technocratic, market-driven set of rationalities. At the moment, it is rare to see these concerns for a democratic, diverse public media policy being aired as possibilities let alone implemented (see Freedman, this volume).

Creative industries

What purpose, then, a book on cultural industries? The object designated by this term has become elusive and the programme it might articulate uncertain. Located somewhere between the arts and the creative industries, does it include or exclude these two outliers? If it refers to a separate sector, what are its distinguishing characteristics? Are the cultural industries still at the cutting edge of economic and technological innovation – or have they become lumbering dinosaurs in a nimbler digital age? Do we expect from them employment growth or competitive flagship industries any more or is it more about global country branding, soft power or cultural diplomacy?

A trawl through various national and international policy documents won't get you very far towards an answer. The problem is not just a question of definitions and terminologies – which we discuss below. It is more that the broad agreement on the fundamental purpose of public policy for culture, media and communications has more or less collapsed, or at least fragmented. This makes the critical juxtaposition staged by the term 'cultural industries' no longer immediately available. In large part this is because the 'imaginary' of the cultural industries has been radically displaced by that of the creative industries (cf. O'Connor, 2013).

The creative industries, conjured up late at night in the offices of the DCMS, have remained notoriously difficult to define in terms of their taxonomic borders and distinct characteristics (DCMS, 1998). This is because they were designated by an input – creativity – and an objective – the production of intellectual property rights – that are so broad and vague as to defeat statistical precision.

'Creativity', when used outside of the cultural practices to which it has traditionally referred, can be applied to any professional activity that requires situated skills and intelligent judgement. As a consequence, the lines drawn between a 'creative sector' (media, design, marketing and so on) and other high skilled sectors can only be arbitrary – as the list of sectors frequently included by East Asian countries indicates. This is often glossed as the 'opening up' of creativity – mobilising bio-political resources for a knowledge economy and democratising a capacity previously locked up in art for art's sake. In fact it makes the identification and characterisation of a specific 'creative' sector very difficult without surreptitiously using the notion of 'culture' (O'Connor and Gibson, 2014).

The DCMS list included the arts as well as the cultural industries – only the addition of 'software and computing services' (distinct from 'interactive leisure software' i.e. video or computer games) was unusual. As was pointed out at the time, not

only did this conveniently add 40 per cent to the employment figures but it also opportunistically linked the cultural sector to the emergent discourse of innovation and national competitiveness – encapsulated at that time by the word ‘digital’. It sealed the homologies between the entrepreneurs of Silicon Valley and ‘creatives’ everywhere. However, the products of ‘software and computing services’ are platforms for cultural goods, not cultural goods in themselves.² In 2008 the DCMS dropped this sector from its statistics, as most European Union reports have done, but it persists elsewhere, causing immense confusion (O’Connor and Gibson, 2014).

The term ‘creative industries’ was on firmer ground in the field of advertising and marketing (Sinclair, this volume). Indeed the ‘creative’ tag – as opposed to ‘account management’ – in these industries was equally important for the new ‘creative industries’ moniker. The cultural industries’ agenda had already set itself against the denigration of the market in the name of ‘art’ or ‘culture’ as a position both illegitimate and unrealistic. But when it is simply a question of ‘creativity’ any tension between cultural and economic logics disappears. So it did not matter if creatives applied themselves to selling products as old as tobacco or as cynical as a political scare campaign. Indeed, the more an industry employed creatives the more creative it became, whether mining, finance or manufacturing. Similarly, the exponential rise of investment in advertising from the 1980s onwards along with its growing profile as a distinct business service sector could only suggest that the economy itself was becoming more ‘creative’. Any questions about the relationship between advertising and marketing and the wider communications systems of contemporary society were no longer of concern for creative industry programmes.

Similar things could be said about the third sector to which the distinctly ‘creative’ label is frequently applied, that voluminous catch-all known as ‘design’ – product, graphic, architecture, fashion, interiors and so on. Two arguments ran together here. On the one hand, design was about re-thinking the function of objects and systems through a process that involved some kind of suspension of the ‘normal’ functioning of both. Design thinking was clearly related to the kinds of ‘creative thinking’ commonly associated with artists but exemplary in the application of this capacity to functional, everyday uses. In the creative industries imaginary, the mark of that practical application was its commercial viability. On the other hand design exemplified the ‘aestheticisation of everyday life’, the increased role of aesthetic or symbolic consumption in the formation of individual identities. Function was no longer enough: the aesthetic form of the object or service was now a crucial part of that commercial viability.

Buried under the term ‘design’ then were the unravelled strands of what the early 20th century had anticipated as the unity of form and function, bringing together the decorative arts, architecture and new forms and techniques of production in a transformative project for a new mass industrial society. The persistent tensions between functionality and expressivity, and between individual and collective consumption exploded in the 1980s. Design in the creative industries imaginary came to be about developing products and services that might resonate with the aesthetics of niche commercial ‘lifestyle choices’; the application of ‘creative skills’ (often explicitly artistic) to production and service design; and about ‘sculpting’ the vectors of consumer choice (whether of public or of private goods and services) to produce commercially viable ‘affordances’.

In all these ways 'creativity' as input avoided any of the collective or shared values implied by 'culture' – it was an individual capacity to be harnessed by businesses or proto-businesses to commercial ends (NESTA, 2012; 2013). Yet the ability of creativity to designate a specific 'creative' sector (different from the skilled professional and technological practices of science, medicine, finance, advanced manufacture etc.) only makes sense if we see these 'creative' industries as about the communication of meaning through symbolic texts. The creative industries stripped these practices of any collective meaning other than that of aggregate consumer choice (revealed preferences) and of any overarching cultural or political values other than enhanced competitiveness. It thus undermined – sometimes explicitly (Cunningham, 2014) – the basic critical thrust of the political economy of culture approach and those strands of cultural studies that remained committed to some notion of culture as a collective value.

If the definitional shift to *creativity as input* was both arbitrary and debilitating, the concomitant emphasis on the production of intellectual property (IP) was equally misplaced. Clearly the cultural or creative industries as a whole produced IP, but many individual cultural businesses did not. Nor did they all receive the same (if any) share of the IP their labour created. The DCMS' easy equation of IP, individual wealth creation and talent was pure ideology to anyone who studied the sector in detail. More damagingly, this approach did not allow an informed understanding of how the cultural or creative industries actually worked. Though organisational creativity was emphasised over the individual 'romantic' genius (the *bête noire* of the last 40 years!) as an industry its growth could be best secured by ensuring a supply of creative individuals (increasingly defined in terms of problem solving within commercial constraints). For developed countries embracing the creative industries, the job of the state was to get out of the way. Indeed, as with many developing countries, that they did not need to fund or extensively support the sector was for many governments part of the attraction in the first place (De Beukelaer, 2015). This explains in part the paradox in which creative industries programmes are heavily promoted but chronically underfunded. Only research and development investment is allowed into the 'market failure' enclosure (Cunningham, 2013).

The shift around 2005, from creative industry to creative economy, was significant. Statistically it drops the notion of an industrial sector and focuses on occupations (NESTA, 2012; 2013). This allows it to count individuals in occupations outside the creative industries – which can often nearly double the numbers used for advocacy. It also transposed the definitional disputes around 'what is a creative industry?' to 'what is a creative occupation?' NESTA, for example, define creativity as 'the application of creative talent to commercial ends' and creative occupations as 'a role within the creative process that brings cognitive skills to bear about differentiation to yield either novel or significantly enhanced products whose final form is not fully specified in advance' (NESTA, 2012: 24).

This, of course, could apply to a broad range of skilled professionals and hence remains arbitrary. But there is also a deeper conceptual change. The creative economy is not a sector but the collective input of millions of creative individuals inside and outside the creative industries. It is a system of communication and culture that proceeds granularly through millions of small commercial innovations in the symbolic value of products and services (Hartley and Potts, 2014).

For some of its more wide-eyed proponents, a creative industry stops being creative the moment it settles into a fixed industrial pattern (Potts et al., 2008). It designates the pure cutting edge, the avant-garde, a kind of collective Schumpeterian entrepreneur hero.³ The creative economy designates that part of the innovation system in which new technologies interface with new patterns of social communication and individual expressivity leading to new commercial applications. They acclimatise the population to new technological possibilities, therefore feeding further growth in new design products (Cunningham, 2014). The content of the creative economy is of no concern – that is for the consumer to decide – and the Internet makes distribution less and less of an issue. The creative society envisaged by some of its proponents is one in which all are both producers and consumers, activities mediated by the direct one-to-one communication of the Internet (Flew, 2012). This utopian combination of Rousseau and Schiller (with a bit of the Young Marx thrown in) was precisely the kind of simple-mindedness against which the political economy of media and communications had set itself – but against the romantic Left rather than the libertarian Right (Garnham, 2000).

The creative industries agenda has done more than simply reduce cultural value to the economic or instrumental, in the manner of Oscar Wilde's 'price of everything and the value of nothing'. Creativity allows cultural value to be put to work. 'Creative labour', 'social market networks', 'creative innovation systems' allow the transformative energies associated with cultural production and consumption to be uncoupled from any judgement of cultural or indeed political value. Any friction between culture and economy – a thread running through most of the cultural industries literature as we shall see – is removed. Indeed, any such friction can only be the result of a residual elitism, bohemian aloofness or the temporary gap between a new idea and its subsequent commercialisation.

William Davies (2014: 4) suggests neo-liberalism is 'the pursuit of the disenchantment of politics by economics'. Politics might be disenchanting but the dismal science is re-enchanting, and the creative economy directly partakes in this. Reversing the culture wars of the 1990s, in which cultural industries were opposed to the conservative values of the New Right, the libidinal energies of creativity were articulated to the neo-liberal imaginary. Their celebration of creativity involved a displacement of collective cultural values – of the very possibility of collective or public values – onto the heroism of the creative entrepreneur, of the self or of a business, themselves mapped onto the innovation economy of the competition state (Jessop, 2002).

Davies also suggests neo-liberalism has become a form of nihilism. In its absolute utilitarian positivity it can admit of no ground, other than 'efficiency', on which to decide what is legitimate, what is of common value. Creative industries is equally nihilistic, providing no grounds for deciding what should be valued or why, only what is innovative and productive of new commercial value. It rests on a kind of vitalism, creativity as a switching or nodal point in a fast-moving global circuit of signs and symbols, money and desire. In this way capitalism as a creative economy proves endlessly fascinating for many critical opponents who can't help but admire its protean adaptability (Thrift, 2005). The creative economy mobilises a kind of Nietzschean self-overcoming whose collective sign is the multitude. This is not the virtual potential of Hardt and Negri's *Commonwealth* (2011), nor (though we are getting warmer) John

Hartley's (1999: 162) global humanity united under the golden arches of McDonald's, but the virtual humanity constructed by big data (cf. Kennedy this volume) which has no need of any conscious collective will as big data alone is capable of revealing this from the analysis of billions of small (creative) decisions (Andrejevic, 2013).⁴

Cultural industries by default?

There are many good reasons for re-introducing the term 'cultural industries'. David Hesmondhalgh's definition in *The Cultural Industries* (2013a) gives a more precise focus on those industries primarily involved in the mass production, circulation and consumption of symbolic texts. This allows him to distinguish this sector from the 'arts' – whose products tend to be singular or limited, and/or presented in live formats – and from 'design' – whose products involve more functional rather than symbolic considerations. We think these distinctions can be problematic and not always necessary, as we discuss below (Pang, this volume), but we have broadly followed the rubric (though we include sport – see Redhead, Rowe, this volume) in this book both for reasons of space and in order to focus on three key aspects of the cultural industries we think are crucial.

First, the 'cultural industries' has the benefit of using the word 'culture'. However elusive this term might be it designates a collective space in which a certain set of values are at play that are distinct from the 'economic' (Banks, Bilton, this volume). This friction allows the possibility of critical intervention and a way of understanding some of the specific dynamics of the sector. Second, culture/industry was a productive juxtaposition not just of culture and economy but more particularly the traditional artistic-centred mode of cultural production with that of mass industrialised production. It sought a focus on the specificity of mass cultural commodity production – what Mieke (1987) called their 'social logic' (and see Edwards, this volume) – without cancelling either 'culture' or 'industry' through their opposition. Third, though the relationship of culture and economy, or the production of culture as commodity, was crucial, this was only part of a reconceptualisation of the role of (necessarily) mediated culture in modern (though not necessarily) capitalist society. These all allow us to ask questions unavailable within the creative industries imaginary: how is cultural production structured in contemporary society; how does this affect the kind of culture we get; and why does this matter?

The scholars assembled in this book are all concerned with changing aspects of the cultural industries – their production systems, their 'texts', their audiences and their regulation. They draw on what is now a solid body of scholarship going back to the 1970s in order to locate the developments of the last decade in that longer-term perspective of continuity and change evoked by Hesmondhalgh (2013a). As such they are not exclusively focused on the 'cutting edge' at the expense of the commonplace – the outer limits of social media rather than the everyday use of television, for example (Freedman, this volume). Nor do they allow the profound implications of the Internet to displace the structuring dynamics of the cultural industries with roots in previous centuries (Brouillette and Doody, Doyle, Tebbutt, this volume). The cultural industries corporations are not dinosaurs, having responded in a range of complex ways to the

new landscape of the last decade, and neither are the new digital corporations free of these older constraints (Keogh, Fitzgerald, this volume). As such they represent a snapshot of active and engaged contemporary scholarship trying to chart the real dimensions of the cultural industries beneath the current creative hype.

Nevertheless, these questions are being addressed ‘after’ the creative industries. They return us to the question of the value of culture and why its modern industrial organisation needs to be clearly understood. They also return us to other aspects of culture that have become atrophied or distended in the creativity drive. The mutual accommodation between innovation, creative destruction, the tradition of the western avant-garde and the ‘counter-culture’ is clear. The creative industries have also marginalised values of ritual, social bonding, communal ethos, preservation and tradition and so on. Indeed, it has often been cultural conservatives such as Roger Scruton who have pointed to the socially destructive currents in contemporary cultural production. This more critical appraisal of the free creative consumer can be seen in the work of Philip Blond and ‘Red Toryism’ (2009) and various currents of ‘neo-communitarianism’ (Davies, 2014). On the other hand, as Ruddock (this volume) shows, older concerns with the effects of cultural industries – often dismissed as ‘mass culture’ theory – have returned, as well as work showing just how deeply entrenched in ritual contemporary media has become (Couldry, 2003).

‘Culture’ – for reasons very different to those noted by Raymond Williams (1976) – is now a difficult word to use. After the creative industries it can be easily be positioned as heritage, or the arts, or the subsidised, or the kind of broad everyday context that structures the choices of consumers and the drives of entrepreneurs. It is not easily available for those who would set up its value distinct from – let alone over – the economic as capable of informing public policy. The discourse of culture does not command the same legitimacy in the public realm as it once did. Its distinctiveness from economic value is now purely residual. As a consequence the predominant tactic of the cultural sector over the last 20 years has been to position itself as contributing to the economy, or at least the social cohesion and creative dynamism required by competitiveness and social order (Belfiore, 2012; Hesmondhalgh et al., 2014).

On the other hand, ‘industry’ itself is no longer what it was either. Evocations of the factory – central to Adorno’s polemical intent – have gone and so too have images of large, faceless corporations (though a brief glance at Apple, for example, might bring second thoughts about both). It is not just that production and consumption now take place across extended and articulated networks, or that it assembles a range of different actors and practices across complex ‘ecosystems’ taking us beyond the delimited sense of ‘industry’. We do not have to buy into the discourses of ‘production’ and distributed co-creation, or indeed the notion of the ‘social factory’, to recognise that, despite the continuing presence of large and powerful corporate players, the production and consumption of culture is much more pervasive than it was. This was already implied by the notion of creative industries and ratified by the switch to creative economy. For these reasons many use the term ‘cultural economy’ to designate this implication of wide swathes of social and cultural life in the production and consumption of cultural commodities.

The juxtaposition of culture and industry, culture and economy no longer has polemical power, nor is it the preserve of ‘cultural materialism’. We are all cultural

materialists now. Indeed the (relative) autonomy of culture is more likely to be invoked by the Left than the Right, who have thoroughly pressed it into service. Thus any attempt to use cultural industry or cultural economy now operates in a more complex field in which the relations between culture and economy, and the concrete analysis of cultural production, have been taken up within a number of different perspectives.

Political economy – cultural studies

David Hesmondhalgh's book (2013a) – the most comprehensive overview of the literature and issues in this field – is structured around the twin perspectives of political economy and cultural studies. This is a very well-rehearsed debate though one that many suggest is now superseded. Political economy did a number of things. First, it opposed the liberal pluralist analysis of the media and tried to show how the media reflected and contributed to the reproduction of domination and inequality. Second, it opened out the narrow 'economic' focus of neo-classical economics to bring social and political factors into the picture (cf. Mosco, 1996). Third, it foregrounded cultural production over consumption, seeing this as key to understanding how power was distributed and used in society. Fourth, it developed an account of the role of the media in contemporary 'distanciated' mass societies marked by an extensive division of labour, with particular respect to questions of the public sphere. Fifth, it outlined the ways in which the commodification of culture constrained the industries that produced them and contributed to the shape and dynamics of the sector. In the ensuing debate with cultural studies not all of these aspects were in play at any one time.

In the Anglophone sphere the political economy approach to media and culture set itself as a corrective to prior cultural studies that, they argued, was too focused on textual analysis (Garnham, 1992; Murdock and Golding, 2005). This gave rise to a long-running debate in which various scholars in cultural studies accused the political economy school of being about structure not agency; economic reductionist; too determinist about the reception of texts with their fixed meanings; concerned with news and factual media rather than entertainment – information not pleasure – and so on (cf. Wasko and Meehan, 2013). For cultural studies, very much concerned with the (potentially) autonomous agency of the 'end user', there were two things at stake. They stressed, first, the ability of individuals and groups to 'decode' previously 'encoded' messages and second, the possibility for culture to bind together a popular-political block. These two were of course connected in the 'Birmingham School' tradition of cultural studies. However, in later cultural studies the 'active viewer' was uncoupled from the necessity of putting this creativity to use in the construction of counter-hegemony. In any event cultural studies disrupted the easy connection between the structures involved in production and the actual use made of these products by the people for whom they were (though not always) intended.

The evolution of the 'active viewer' into the 'creative consumer' is fundamental to much of the academic creative industries literature, and is specifically exemplified in the work of John Hartley (2005). The refusal to see the market as anything other than a free play of expressed creative preferences; the rejection of claims of manipulation

or the prior coding of acts of consumption as intellectual elitism (the only elitism that matters) or Marxist; the use of Internet facilitated feedback to dissolve the hierarches between producers and consumers; and the evocation of a ubiquitous 'start-up' economy gradually eroding the powers of the corporate dinosaurs – all these are common tropes in the creative industries imaginary (Flew, 2012; O'Connor, 2012).

More critical strands of cultural studies have increasingly become concerned with the production of culture. Hesmondhalgh suggests that the opposition of the two schools is redundant and that they simply emphasise different aspects of the triad of production–text–audience. In recent years, for example, we have had a new 'critical media studies' (Holt and Perren, 2009) in which cultural studies has moved into production studies, claiming – against political economy – a more attuned ear for the micro- and meso-levels of this production and a concern with entertainment, not just news-centric media. The robust response of Janet Wasko and Eileen Meehan (2013) in their recent overview suggests the debate is alive and well, as they reject – as had Garnham and others before – the characterisation of political economy as about top-down, structure-led and information centred production systems. Indeed, they suggest that recent critical media studies often refuse to go beyond a certain level of analysis of media production and identify some of its more determining structures – suggesting that it is much less 'critical' of 'the industry' and capitalism than it likes to believe.

This shift towards production in cultural studies is paralleled by an increased interrogation of the kind of leeway claimed for consumers in their acts of decoding. If reception is not determined by the encoded message it is certainly manipulated by a range of techniques and 'affordances' (Edwards, Sinclair, Kennedy, this volume) – just as the social energies of 'fandom' have been integrated into the strategies of cultural industry corporations (Sandvoss, Fitzgerald, this volume). Equally there has been a concern with why this matters. As Andy Ruddock argues in this volume, there is a revisiting of the concerns with the effects of media on audiences that a decade ago was roundly dismissed as positivist, patronising, and the hand-wringing of disaffected intellectuals. Just what kinds of texts are being produced by the cultural industries and with what consequences for those constantly consuming them? What role do the cultural industries now play in social reproduction and control in societies marked by 30 years of neo-liberalism?

On the other hand, political economy – and social science in general – famously had its 'cultural turn' in the 1990s. Writers such as Bob Jessop have been concerned to integrate the 'cultural' into political economy. His work with Ngai-Ling Sum (Sum and Jessop, 2013) has a Gramscian concern with the moment of the political as crucial to the ways in which economic systems are reproduced, challenged and transformed. Their notion of the 'economic imaginary' draws on an anthropology in which any course of collective action necessarily demands that we select from a range of possibilities and develop these within a particular, simplifying narrative in order to become generally accepted. 'Cultural political economy' thus becomes aware of that symbolic and imaginary realm in which political and economic decisions are made and contested. However, unlike the political economy of communications and media, Jessop and others do not discuss how this media or cultural production system is organised or how the texts that it produces work to secure specific economic – or indeed other – imaginaries.

One of the strengths of the political economy approach applied to the media and cultural industries was that it attempted to show systematically how the commodification of culture actually worked and with what kinds of consequences for its organisation (Miege, 1979; 1987; 1989; Garnham, 2000). Like the wider school of political economy, it rejected the neo-classical model, bringing in historical, sociological and political aspects. At the same time it suggested that the cultural industries had their own distinct characteristics – they were a sector unlike the rest of the economy because of the nature of their product (an argument also made by Richard Caves (2000) within a more orthodox tradition). Cultural goods were uncertain in their appeal to volatile and fragmented markets; their tendency to become ‘public goods’ meant they were hedged around by all sorts of techniques to create artificial scarcity; they had high production and low reproduction costs; and they had to manage high levels of creative labour input in efficient ways.

Holding these ‘social logics’ (Miege, 1987) of production and distribution in focus whilst giving the complex relationship between texts and audience their full due, and accounting for the relationship between these and wider social reproduction and transformation was, and remains, the challenge for political economy and cultural studies. Cultural studies were very much marked – at least in those areas influenced by the Birmingham School – by an emancipatory notion of culture reaching back to those late 18th century and early 19th century traditions identified by Raymond Williams (1958a). So too the political economy school was deeply influenced by the concern with the public sphere outlined by Habermas (1989) and the role of the media within it. The tensions between cultural studies and political economy might in part be mapped onto these two traditions, even perhaps the two spheres – the political and the literary – identified by Habermas (cf. Garnham, 1992). Both of these traditions carved out a sphere for culture and communications that was distinct from the market and from the State, even though they were implicated in both.

Well into the 1980s ‘culture’ could act as a kind of unifying ‘imaginary’ around which a broad cultural politics could rally. This imaginary very much animated the cultural industries coalition of the 1990s and was still present in the early iterations of the creative industries. Culture was a material practice, an economy – but it was a different sort of economy involving non-utilitarian values and immaterial goods that made it refractive to orthodox economic analysis. However, across that same period the distinctiveness of culture was being eroded. On the one hand the growth of neo-liberalism in public policy eroded the very idea of a separate sphere for politics and – inevitably – culture (Davies, 2014; O’Brien, this volume). On the other, ‘the economy’ itself was becoming more like the cultural sector. As a consequence, the availability of ‘culture’ to act as a policy imaginary was severely attenuated. We can explore this a little more by looking at two other prominent approaches to the questions of cultural industries and economy that have become very influential in the last decade or so.

Cultural economy as actor network theory

Paul Du Gay’s (1997) introduction to *Production of Culture/Cultures of Production* positioned ‘cultural economy’ as a kind of moderator or intermediary between

political economy and cultural studies. 'Cultural economy' would focus on production *and* consumption, industries *and* texts, structure *and* agency and so on. The 'economics' of cultural production were embedded in specific social and cultural contexts that actors brought to bear on the production process, which in turn had a large influence on what texts were produced and how they were consumed, and thus the wider cultural context (cf. also Du Gay and Pryke, 2002).

However, Du Gay suggested two further things. First, that the economy itself was becoming more cultural. The aesthetic or symbolic dimensions of goods and services were now of growing importance, as were the kinds of skills required for their production. Similar arguments had been made by Scott Lash and John Urry in their 1994 *Economies of Signs and Space*. They had extended the claims around the information or knowledge economy to the specific activities of the cultural industries (as they were still known) – overnight turning their labour intensive, uncertain and highly reflexive production practices from those of pre-industrial handicraft to post-industrial cutting edge (see Gibson et al., this volume).

This 'aestheticisation of everyday life' (Featherstone, 1991), with new kinds of individualised identities resulting in the increasingly symbolic consumption of previously utilitarian goods and services, became a central theme of the creative industries. The democratising intent of Raymond Williams' 'culture as a whole way of life' (1958b) was transposed to lifestyle and the creative consumer, making design as well as advertising and marketing central to the imaginary of the creative economy.

The expansion of the 'cultural economy' outlined by Du Gay – echoed by many proselytising for increased policy attention to the cultural/creative industries – rapidly shaded into the broader claim that the economy itself was becoming more 'cultural'. This is not the same as suggesting high growth in cultural sector employment and income. It follows on from Lash and Urry's claim that culture – knowledge in general, aesthetic knowledge in particular – is now integrated into the manufacturing process at much deeper levels. Hence their claims about the 'cutting edge' – rather than exceptionalist – nature of the cultural industries (1994: 123). However, the proliferation of symbolic goods and their increasing impact on previously utilitarian sectors does not necessarily suggest that the line between culture and economy has dissolved. Or rather, it is not clear what this dissolution entails.

Andrew Sayer (2001) saw this dissolution as an erosion of the distinction between the 'system' and the 'lifeworld'. This is echoed generally in (cultural) political economy by its identifying processes and logics that go beyond the lived experience and immediately given meanings of individuals and communities. That is, one can identify the social and cultural embedding of the economic without thereby denying the specific and systemic efficacy of profit, accumulation, competition and so on.

In a telling exchange Ray and Sayer (1999) opposed culture to economics as the 'intrinsically meaningful' to the 'instrumental'. Cultural policy is concerned with substantive values as opposed to the instrumentality of economic means. In response Du Gay and Pryke not only pointed to the economic aspects of cultural production, but also suggested that any categorical distinction between 'intrinsically' and 'instrumentally' oriented activity is impossible; these judgements are 'contextually specific and historically contingent' (2002: 11). This exchange points us towards the idea that the economy is historically constructed – though not linguistically or

discursively as the 'cultural turn' was often accused of arguing – an argument which was picked up in that tradition of 'cultural economy' closely linked to Actor Network Theory (ANT).

The association of culture with 'intrinsic' and 'economy' with 'instrumental' need not be a-historical or essentialist. Nevertheless, the growth in the volume and pervasiveness of cultural production and consumption within a highly commercialised system may very well have implications for what we understand by 'culture' as a set of values and practices that once stood distinct from the 'economic'. We return to this at the end of this section.

The relational or constructivist trajectory of Du Gay's version of 'cultural economy' intersected with work coming out of ANT and science studies – especially the work of Bruno Latour (1991; 2005) and Michel Callon (1998). Latour especially set out to 'deflate' social scientific notions such as 'the social' or 'the economy'. This approach does not proceed as if there is an economy operating as an autonomous system in some distinct social space that then 'impacts' in various ways on social actors. They want to show how such a 'system' is assembled and maintained by a variety of actors, institutions and things. The 'economic' is *this* set of actors operating in complex networks organised in such and such a way, using such and such instruments, on such and such sets of things, out of the offices using this transportation network and so on.

The ANT version of cultural economy – as noted by Anheier and Isar (2007) and Hesmondhalgh (2013a) – does not normally deal with 'culture' as a production/consumption system. As exemplified in the *Journal of Cultural Economy*, it has focused on 'real' economic practices such as finance, corporations, risk, market governance etc. It has thereby provided some extremely valuable insights into how 'economic laws' are in fact constructed and maintained as such by a definitive set of actors.⁵ Latour and others have equally deflated 'culture'. Just as there is no economy (unless we can show how it is constructed and maintained through various actor networks), so equally there is no 'culture' that forms the 'context' for this economy, or stands over and against 'nature', or is the 'symbolic' or 'representative' dimension of 'society'.

There isn't a reality on one hand, and a re-presentation of that reality on the other. Rather there are chains of translation. Chains of translation of varying lengths. And varying kinds. Chains which link things to texts, texts to people, and things to people. And so on.

(Callon and Law, 1995: 501)

'Cultural economy' in this version then is not the mutual interpenetration of culture and economy but a radical de-ontologisation of both culture and economics.

In one sense then cultural economy as a mediating term ends up as a 'plague on both your houses' – political economy and cultural studies are both dismissed as clunky 19th century sociology. Positively we can see this approach as a call to 'do the work' of showing how 'culture' or 'economy' actually operate rather than resting on lazy nomenclature as a kind of *deus ex machina* to explain these processes. It asked us to show just *how* that which we call the 'financial market', or the 'social', or 'technology' and so on comes to be assembled and maintained in such and such a way in such and such a set of relations. It is an unabashed call to empirically grounded research (McFall, 2008).

Missing from much of this cultural economy project has been studies on the production of culture itself – the cultural economy of the cultural economy, so to speak. Joanne Entwistle and Don Slater (2014) have suggested that Latour never ‘reassembles’ the ‘cultural’ as he did the ‘social’ and the ‘economy’. Thus, for example, though the economy does not exist as such, Callon and others show how it is constructed and thus directly operative, as a real category with performative implications. This, Entwistle and Slater suggest, has not been done for culture – something they set out to rectify by a brief study of the use of models in the fashion industry.

Entwistle and Slater’s account of the use of fashion models is organised around the ‘look’. They set out to show, first, that this look is constructed across a multiplicity of actors. But second, they suggest that in fact it does bring in a wider notion of culture – one that is not a sociological category explaining these processes but a concept actively brought to bear by the actors themselves. The first act of deflation involves the ‘look’ that has usually been seen as a ‘self-evidently “cultural” good ... framed as text, sign or representation’ (Entwistle and Slater, 2014: 167).

Against this backdrop, ANT provides a principled basis on which to contest the ‘textualising’ of cultural objects whereby they are treated as produced, circulated and consumed as representations in and through logics of signification. Instead of analysis positing models and looks as texts imbued with ‘meanings’ and ‘symbolism’, we follow models as materially assembled entities, whose identity and meaning is widely dispersed, both within the modelling world itself and beyond, to the eventual consumption of model images by readers.

(167)

This is simply a straw man, written as if the last 30 years of debates in political economy and cultural studies had not existed. Nevertheless, thus identifying the ways the ‘look’ is constructed in the complex production–consumption complex with its various actors and intermediaries, Entwistle and Slater suggest, *pace* Callon and ANT, that ‘culture’ does come back in to play – not as ‘a totalised social moment wheeled on as an explanation of the social’ (171) but as a term invoked by the actors themselves as a way of understanding their own practices. The actors in the modelling industry see the ‘look’ as something to be produced but also as having objective form outside of their attempts to produce/control it – an existence that ‘belongs to a wider network beyond them which is constantly evolving and transforming’ (171). This ‘beyond’ is referred to by the actors as ‘the ‘zeitgeist’ or contemporary taste or ‘values’ or simply ‘Culture’.

This context is treated as objective: as an environment to which they must adapt and respond. Knowledge of this context may take the form of market research and formal measurement (e.g., sales figures, gut instinct or embodied knowledge and experience).

(171)

Welcome to the cultural industries!

The actual results of this ‘reassembling’ do not particularly stand out from – though they ignore – the work that has been done routinely around the cultural industries for

three decades. Moreover, like much of the ANT literature, whatever new insights it might generate, the refusal of 'totalisation' means it fails to account for the systemic nature of the kinds of cultural production discussed here.⁶ Equally, it makes the 'objective' dimension of culture difficult to specify. But the project of reassembling culture will, Entwistle and Slater suggest, require some very large-scale architectonic reconstruction:

Finally, we can think about larger recognisable cultural objects such as 'western fashion', or overarching 'values' (equality, inclusiveness, empowerment) which form the invoked backdrops to interlinked practices. In all these cases, the analytical gains of de-textualising and deflating cultural goods – of returning them to the moving assemblages through which they are dispersed – must be weighed against the actors' 'realist' stance: their constitutive assumption that things like looks, brands, genres, fashion, values and culture are real entities or social facts in relation to which they may act.

(170)

Ignoring the sense of disciplinary arrogance – we've deflated your categories whilst we set about reflatting them in our terms – we are presented with the kind of 'behind the back of the actors' kind of reasoning against which ANT set itself in the first place (Latour, 2004). 'We' know it is a construct but the actors don't, so we need to tread carefully and take them seriously. Given this, any expectation that we might get a critical account of a cultural production system that might sustain a cultural (industries) policy or politics might have to wait some time.

In fact some of this larger architectonic work has been done by Tony Bennett. He brings to cultural economy that tradition of critical cultural policy studies which set out to dismantle the radical Marxist pretensions of cultural studies and sought to find a framework and a language (attuned to the ears of policy makers themselves) in which a reformist cultural policy could be effectively formulated (Bennett, 1998). His historical project has been to show just how the 'work of culturalisation' (Moor, 2012) was done. Recently (Bennett, 2013) has followed ANT in suggesting that 'culture' is not a distinct ontological realm or space manifesting the 'general properties of the symbolic or logics of representation'. However 'culture' does exist as a 'complex', that is:

the public ordering of the relations between particular kinds of knowledges, texts, objects, techniques, technologies and humans arising from the deployment of the modern cultural disciplines (literature, aesthetics, art history, folk studies, drama, heritage studies, cultural and media studies) in a connected set of apparatuses (museums, libraries, cinema, broadcasting, heritage etc.). The historical and geographical distinctiveness of this complex consists in its organisation of specific forms of action whose exercise and development has been connected to those ways of intervening in the conduct of conduct that Foucault calls governmental.

(Bennett, 2013: 14)

There is, we would suggest, no necessary connection between the first and second half of this statement. We might want to look at how culture has been constructed

historically in this way – this is surely part of the ongoing work in understanding contemporary culture. However, the specific claim that this culture is brought into being exclusively or primarily by the governmental processes of the liberal state is not a corollary of this. Indeed (noting Entwistle and Slater above) historically the invocation by actors of an emancipatory (political or personal) and transformative potential for ‘culture’, one that is not reducible to either the logics of the market or the state, has been an extremely powerful motive force. ‘Deflation’ here might play the role of a recall to clear-eyed historical reassessment; equally it might also be a highly political intervention against those who would hold on to this emancipatory potential.

There is clearly a serious ethical and political gap between the deflationary analysis pursued by the social scientist and the belief by actors in the ‘reality’ of the values they pursue. The ‘instrumentalisation’ of culture, for example, has been a major stake in public debates around culture, certainly since the 1980s. The ‘culture’ here is not some eternal ‘intrinsic’ meaningfulness versus materialism and utilitarianism; nevertheless, historically this kind of opposition is what ‘culture’ in part had come to signify. Deflationary accounts of these as ‘fictions’ are certainly not a precondition for empirically grounded analysis of the cultural industries and have limited application to the question of why that culture is seen to matter.

The work of Boltanski and Chiapello (2005) around the emergence of a new cultural capitalism⁷ shows how detailed historical and sociological work can inform these debates without adopting some ‘value-free’ *epoché*. Boltanski and Chiapello’s work charts the ways in which in 1960s white collar workers’ ‘cultural critique’ of capitalism was registered and then reworked by management to transform the capacities they could require from these workers (mobility, networking, creativity etc.), and thus the nature, conditions and remuneration of that work – along with the alliances they might form with non-white collar workers. Boltanski and Chiapello approach the issue of culture in a specific context in which the kinds of value articulated by culture (such as non-alienated labour) are subjected to ‘test’ – to contestation and negotiation based on a broadly shared sense that these values matter in some way (see also Boltanski and Thévenot, 2006; Davies, 2014). It is the nature of this ‘test’ around the value of culture and cultural production, and which way the values it articulates are being transformed, that is at stake across the current, multiple conflicts around cultural policy, cultural work, public broadcasting, urban cultures and so on – conflicts or ‘tests’ and their possible results that many of the essays in this volume try to elucidate.

Cultural economy as economic and urban policy

Informed and critical approaches to these issues have benefited enormously from another strand of cultural industries scholarship, one emerging from urban and regional economic geography and often directly linked to policy development at city, national and international levels (Gibson et al., this volume). It has been concerned with the cultural industries as a substantive, and substantial, economic sector, but has also retained a critical edge derived from its recognition of the value of the *cultural* in the cultural economy. As such it should not be confused with the kind of

economic arguments used to promote the creative industries and concerned only with some general capacity of creativity, or innovation or IP generation. Nor is it about the 'economics' of culture as in the work of cultural economics, with which it is often linked (cf. Throsby, 2000; 2010; this volume). We would broadly distinguish these two approaches in that cultural economy does not separate the 'economics' and the 'culture' into two parallel value systems. Like political economy, it tries to show how the values of culture are intertwined with, and actively inform, the ways in which it is produced – and vice versa. In turn, if political economy tends to focus on the specific nature of the cultural commodity, and the consequences of this for its commercial production, cultural economy in this sense focuses on the locational factors and structuring dynamics that underpin the production of cultural commodities, what that production requires from its location and with what consequences.

This spatialisation of cultural production brought an important new critical dimension to the cultural industries literature. It has its complex provenance in economic and human geography that experienced a social (if not yet cultural) turn in the 1980s. As with political economy this school rejected the narrow focus of neo-classical economics, in particular its 'frictionless' modelling of industrial location and competitiveness. Economic activity was deeply embedded in networks of trust, knowledge and other 'shared externalities' including local 'cultures' (Scott and Storper, 1992). In the 1990s Allan Scott (2000) and others (cf. Christopherson and Storper, 1986; 1989) applied these insights to the cultural industries themselves, whose complex relation to the places in which they were located exemplified to a high degree these embedded firms working 'between hierarchies and markets'. As with Lash and Urry's (1994) re-ordering of the historical temporality of the cultural industries – from remnant of the past to cutting edge – the cultural industries were not exceptional but exemplary of locally embedded knowledge intensive economies, the kind of economies that were set to expand in the future.

The study of cultural industries was thus immediately locational and very much focused on the large metropolitan areas where this production and consumption was concentrated. This grounded empirical economic analysis coincided with the increasing interest of cities globally, which were beginning to see the cultural industries as a future growth sector. In this way the work in regional and urban economic geography in North America crossed with concerns in Europe to develop urban and regional economies as post-nation re-invention of municipal social democracy. In this European tradition local cultures were to be central to any kind of embedded, endogenous post-industrial economies. In this way local cultural industries' strategies flowed into a wider stream of culture-led urban regeneration and branding strategies (Bianchini and Parkinson, 1993).

Allen Scott's work characterises the cultural industries as intensively transactional, requiring face-to-face communications and demanding highly specialised skills in a complex place-based division of labour – conditions generally only met in urban agglomeration economies (Scott, 2000; 2004; 2006). The cultural industries are part of the wider knowledge economy but they are more particularly specified as 'cultural-cognitive' industries (Scott, 2007). They demand the kind of formal and informal cultural infrastructure and amenities, embedded tacit knowledge, and the dynamic clash and exchange of ideas that has long characterised urban life. This cultural aspect of

production – they deal with a range of meanings, experiences and signs – is thus symbiotic with the culture of the place. Urban landscape and cultural production mutually inform one another, as the place of production is incorporated into the product, and vice versa (Scott, 2001).

In Europe Andy Pratt has also applied regional and urban economic geography concerns to the cultural industries, in addition linking the themes of embeddedness, networks and shared externalities to the specific ‘social logics’ of cultural production. This was done less in the sense of the specificity of the cultural commodity and more in the requirements such production makes of its locale. That is, he is concerned with the cultural industries’ rootedness in a wider ‘ecosystem’ or ‘cultural economy’. This approach has also been more closely connected with the tradition of the cultural industries going back to the Greater London Council (GLC). That is, as a new and complex set of cultural producers with strong links to the arts, popular culture and new social movements and as concerned with cultural values and making a living as much as rapid, profit-driven growth. These do not show up in standard neo-classical business analyses but are the preconditions that make the formal cultural business sector possible (Pratt and Jeffcut, 2009; Pratt, 2012). As such Pratt (again recalling the GLC experiment) is much more concerned with questions of (urban) governance and thus what the ‘cultural’ in cultural economy policies might entail.

Pratt suggests that the cultural economy – the production system of cultural goods and services (Pratt, 2008) – is not amenable to neo-classical economic analysis or the standard industrial policy that derives from it (Pratt, 2012). He uses the term cultural economy to refer specifically to this spatially located system of the production of culture – which includes a range of ‘non-cultural’ (professional services, manufacture etc.) as well as profit and not-for-profit, third sector and institutional inputs (Pratt, 2004). Though he has written about the national level (mostly in developing countries) his main focus is on the urban scale, where most cultural industries are located, though recognising their role as nodes in global networks (Pratt, 2000; 2002).

Both writers have spatialised cultural production in ways that have allowed a much more nuanced, location specific and non-dogmatic account of how cultural industries are embedded in a wider cultural economy. Rather than strict taxonomic borders, there are place-based ecosystems in which different values – social, cultural, economic – are in play. Thus the subsidised arts as well as design industries can be included as both contribute to the cultural economy of cities – providing a range of inputs and externalities (a thriving local cultural offer, for example, or local brand) – without which many ‘mainstream’ cultural industries could not work. In placed-based production and consumption ecosystems the role of arts, crafts and design – and indeed manufacture and other related ‘non-creative’ services – becomes a matter of empirical investigation rather than taxonomic rigour.

Focused on the urban level, they are also able to identify shared cultural values that directly inform production and consumption, rather than a generic capacity for ‘creativity’. Unlike many locational studies of the creative economy – which tend to be ‘value-neutral’ econometric accounts with little sense that this is the production of anything other than a specific kind of service or knowledge-intensive product (contrast with, e.g. Cooke and Lazzarretti, 2008) – they are well aware of the exploitation, inequality, displacement and injustice involved in the cultural economies of

cities (cf. Scott, 2008). As such they – Pratt especially (2000; 2002; 2009) – have intersected with critical urban studies. This latter tends to be more directly focused on questions of equity and participation – with ‘gentrification’ being a key term – and on the ‘ownership’ of urban brands. Those working in this area tend to be positive about small-scale cultural production and independently led consumption spaces – often providing detailed research and grounded local rationale for cultural economy and creative industry programmes (cf. Part III, this volume). They have been less sanguine about the use of such dynamics to promote urban regeneration and city branding. Sharon Zukin’s work is a touchstone here (1982; 1991; 1995). It has been critical of Richard Florida’s instrumental use of urban culture for exogenous growth programmes (attracting the creative class) and the ‘creative city’ rubric more generally. It has stressed the everyday production of culture, the connection between culture and social movements, and the wider connections between citizenship and the urban scale.

Recognition that this is a cultural economy does not necessarily mean a reduction of culture to economics. This urban and regional economic geography approach certainly emphasises the growing importance of this sector to employment and economic well-being. Pratt especially has been involved in a great range of policy related interventions on behalf of cities, states and international agencies trying to promote the cultural industries. In pursuing this policy agenda both Scott and Pratt have addressed the question not just of how the cultural economy can be promoted but why it matters. Indeed, they suggest that understanding the latter is key to pursuing the former.

For Scott and Pratt, the cultural economy matters not only because it brings the economic benefits expressible in aggregated gross domestic product terms but also because of the kind of employment and income it generates. The cultural economy is, on the whole, a more progressive, equitable economy, relying on high levels of skill and knowledge, and involving a myriad of small firms and entrepreneurs alongside the large corporations. They are rooted in place, thus more resilient, and they contribute positive externalities to the city, making it more liveable, which in turn increases the stock of shared cultural knowledge and personnel available for the cultural economy. In short, it is a benign economy and contributes to the quality of urban living for producers and consumers.

It is this potential – complexly juxtaposed to the innovation imaginary of the creative economy – that has tended to inform urban based cultural economy policies, concerned to link endogenous development to quality of life in ways, that national governments have found difficult to achieve. The city has become a central horizon of cultural economy thinking.

As noted above, this potential has also been crucial to the cultural or creative economy agendas of international development agencies. For those ‘emergent economies’ that see the IP intensive creative sector as leading their manufacturing and service bases to higher levels, the creative economy has been most appealing (O’Connor and Gu, 2014). For those who see limited possibilities for the growth of a creative industries sector, it has been the mobilisation of local cultural capacities and the requirements of local education, rather than spending on capital investment capacities, that has been key. In this sense the cultural economy agenda has crossed over into the ‘culture and

development' agenda (UNESCO, 2013; Isar, this volume; De Beukelaer, 2015). Here culture moves from being a context *for* development towards culture *in* development (Pratt, 2014) – the kind of investment in local skills, knowledge, micro-finance, access to markets, cultural infrastructure and so on not only helps generate new economic possibilities but does so in a way that empowers people and makes them resilient rather than providing yet another fleeting, low skilled, off-shoring initiative.

Thus an economic policy for the cultural industries is in many ways a *de facto* cultural policy. One of the key points of leverage within the uneven, contested, confused and expanding landscape of the global creative/cultural economy agenda is that the economic benefits of this sector can only be fully realised if it is governed in accordance with its particular requirements (cf. Isar, this volume). That is, cultural economies are embedded in, and mobilise, a range of local social and cultural capacities that require investment and nurturing (Pratt, 2012; 2014). They operate within dense transactional networks in which cultural, social, ethical values are at play alongside the economic. This cultural economy therefore intersects with those critical strands of development, feminist and ecological thinking that seek to re-embed and re-think economics in their wider socio-cultural and environmental context (Mosco, 1996; Gibson-Graham, 2006; Gibson, 2012). That is, to return to the tradition of 'political economy' in which the economic is approached from the perspective of the ways in which it generates and distributes wealth as part of a 'good' society (Mosco, 1996; Piketty, 2014).

Thus Pratt's approach to the governance of the cultural economy is one that breaks with traditional neo-classically informed business development strategies and recognises the range of different values being created and pursued. This requires far more complex and sophisticated forms of governance, building on high levels of networked intelligence and research, with varied quantitative and qualitative indicators linked to open and flexible forms of ongoing sectoral consultation (Pratt, 2012). We would suggest that this kind of thinking informs much of the pragmatic, day-to-day operations of cultural policy consultants and activists working in what is now a global field of cultural economy. It is often this approach that keeps culture in play in an otherwise purely innovation-driven Masters of Business Administration-dominated field of creative economy thinking. If you want a cultural economy you need to pay attention to the wider cultural infrastructure – education, facilities, spaces, micro-finance, arts, social and community enterprises and so on. That is, cultural economy puts into play a series of tests around the value of culture in which local negotiations and contestation take place.

However, we also suggest that there are a number of challenges.

First, this approach very much builds on the imperative to build up local cultural production connected with the agendas famously associated (first) with the GLC (Garnham, 1990) and other cities or regions. It is frequently sold as a solution to post-industrial challenges. Its focus on the requirements of production rather than consumption demand a level of strategic thinking from governments that set it apart from the quick fixes of Florida's 'creative city' (Peck, 2010). And, of course, Pratt, Scott and others are aware of the need to address issues of distribution and access to market, that not every place can build up a significant cultural economy – the global

landscape is dominated by a few metropolitan nodes and this is not likely to change quickly. However, it is very hard for them to argue for an investment in a cultural economy if this is not likely to produce high levels of growth. On what grounds a cultural economy policy that delivers mainly cultural benefits?

Second, the call that a cultural economy requires a governance system that pays attention to the socio-cultural values at play in this economy frequently falls on deaf ears. The rampant gentrification consequent on (and sometimes pursued by) the rise of cultural activity in an area is frequently noted. The growing disaffection with the 'creative city' is one symptom of this (Oakley and O'Connor, this volume). Another is the way in which the cultural economy is easily transmuted into the high-growth, commercial-led focus on design, digital media and other 'innovative' sectors at the expense of long-term investment in more inclusive cultural economy growth. This applies in creative industry strategies in a developed country such as Australia (O'Connor and Gibson, 2014; Gibson et al., this volume) as much as in the very different economies of West Africa (De Beukelaer, 2013; 2015). That is, a de facto cultural policy only goes so far. Unless it acquires a more explicit narrative of cultural value it will constantly be sidelined by the current economic imaginary that recognises itself in the creative, rather than the cultural, economy.

Third, the localisation of the cultural economy approach in place-based development – one that is so much part of its strength – has its limits. The cultural economy agenda here has bifurcated from that of media and communications policy. This has been the case since the 1990s as nation-states willingly or unwillingly opened up their media and telecommunication spaces to new global companies. These have increasingly set out to undermine the rationale for public sector broadcasting or, indeed, any public rationale for media regulation other than consumer choice and 'free' competition, IP protection and ethical (defamation, explicit images and so on) standards (cf. Hesmondhalgh, 2013a). There is very little connection between these core concerns of the political economy of media and communications and the cultural economy school we are discussing here.

This is in part a question of scale – cities are not nation-states, nor do they control major media and communications systems. However, it also relates to the different emphases on production and consumption. Cultural economy sees production as rooted in the active, vernacular, place-based view of the city (cf. Zukin, 1991 and her place/market distinction) whereas cultural consumption is viewed as external, abstracting, passive (Pratt and Hutton, 2013). Production-focused approaches recall the validation of the expansion of cultural activity celebrated in the GLC-style approaches. Garnham's ambiguous tribute to the GLC (1990) suggested not only the need to gain control of distribution mechanisms (a political economy concern) but also that production is elastic whilst consumption is relatively inelastic. That is, a cultural policy emphasis on production was limited without an understanding of consumption practices and structures. This is what the place-based cultural economy school tends to lack.

As the political economy school has reminded us, shared, collective cultural values are inevitably complex – they are established across a range of market, state and civil society actors and intermediaries in a context of a society that is inevitably mediated. As such, however benign localised cultural economies and their

governance may be, unless they deal with this trans-mediasphere(s) they cannot fully address the issues of contemporary culture.

All of these suggest an expanded cultural (economic) policy would have to have an explicit set of cultural values. They cannot be smuggled in under the guise of a (benign) economic development agenda. This, however, is made somewhat problematic by the ways in which an older cultural policy – art centred, ‘romantic’, an unqualified public good – is often counter-posed to the solidly contemporary and materialist cultural industries (cf. Hesmondhalgh and Pratt, 2005; Pratt and Hutton, 2013). Acknowledging the limitations of traditional cultural policy and its failure to adequately recognise the cultural industries as anything other than ‘commercialisation’ does not necessarily imply a rejection of that prior tradition. How the two can be recombined is surely one of the key challenges of the next decade.

Making this connection would take us into the territory of the political economy of media and culture – which had its own difficult relationship to cultural policy, despite its promising start (Girard, 1982). Here the notion of citizenship and its relationship to ‘culture’ has become increasingly central (Stevenson, 2013). It is the decreasing availability of both ‘citizen’ and ‘culture’ that is concerning. Culture as a kind of mobilising rhetoric or ‘resource’ (Yudice, 2003) with which to alter or temper the dominance of economic value has been marginalised – not that it was ever central (Bell and Oakley, 2014; O’Brien, this volume). Any power claimed by culture as it announced its rapprochement with the economic has been attenuated by its rapid incorporation – mostly via ‘creativity’ – into the imaginary of neo-liberalism. Of course, any renewed agenda for citizenship faces formidable challenges, not least in the declining legitimacy and power of the nation-state before global cultural corporations operating more or less outside of anything but *Pax Americana* – tempered by the *real politick* of negotiating with powerful market territories such as China. This is why the emergence of a global cultural economy agenda becomes so essential – as a way of articulating cultural citizenship across the multiple sites in which it is being contested (UNESCO, 2013).

At the same time it has been difficult to establish what a cultural public sphere (McGuigan, 2005) might entail. How are the literary and the political dimensions to be reconciled (cf. Garnham, 1992)? This takes us back to the political economy/cultural studies dispute around the use of texts and the political moment of the cultural. This is less a question of the creativity of the audience than the establishment of shared value(s) through which culture is to be judged. Hesmondhalgh and Pratt (2005) note the challenge presented by questions of aesthetic judgement, explored later by Hesmondhalgh in some detail (2013b). Here is Stefano Harney on the ‘unfinished business’ of cultural studies:

Art is closer to people than at any other time in history. People make and compile music. They design interiors and make-over their bodies. They watch more television and more movies. They think deeply about food and clothes. They write software and surf the net of music videos and play on-line games together. They encounter, study, lean and evaluate languages, diasporas and heritages. There is also a massive daily practice in the arts, from underground music, to making gardens, to creative writing camps. And with

this there is production of subjectivities which are literally fashioned, which are aesthetic, which are created. ... There is a massive daily register of judgment, critique, attention, and taste.

(Harney, 2012: 156)

On the other hand, Eric Hobsbawm, surveying culture and society in the 20th century, pointed also to the proliferation of culture, the erosion of the walls between art and life, work and leisure, body and spirit:

At the end of the twentieth century the work of art not only became lost in the spate of words, sounds and images in the universal environment that once would have been called 'art', but also vanished in this dissolution of aesthetic experience in the sphere where it is impossible to distinguish between feelings that have developed within us and those that have been brought in from outside. In these circumstances how can we speak of art?

(Hobsbawm, 2013: 19)

As both Bennett (2013) and Ranciere (2013) in their different ways have argued, culture is not anthropologically prior to art, something to which this elitist distillation must return as the democratic vernacular of everyday life is returned to its rightful place. The two concepts emerged at the same time, and with the demise of one as a distinct realm perhaps we will witness the demise of the other. Nevertheless, the problem of a complex society mediated by images, sounds and texts, in which the common good can be articulated over and above the utilitarian nihilism of neo-liberalism, remains central to the work of any critical study of the cultural industries.

Conclusion: Why cultural industries now?

As we hope the above has made clear, we believe it is crucial to retrieve the notion of cultural industries as a distinct and rich tradition rather than an interchangeable label with that of the 'creative industries'. We have tried to show in this introduction and in the pages that follow how characterisations of the cultural industries as some lumbering corporations linked to an outmoded nation-state centred policy framework (cf. Cunningham et al., 2008) are incorrect. We have suggested four reasons for asserting the relevance of cultural industries as a term.

First, it retains the distinct and critical 'cultural industries' approach to the subject of mass cultural production. This has a much longer established academic and policy literature than that of creative industries. The focus is not on the very broadly defined input of 'creativity' (which in many instances draws in computing, science and high-tech) but on the production and consumption of goods and services whose economic value is drawn primarily from their cultural or symbolic value. This allows us to focus on questions of industry and of policy from a perspective of cultural value as well as economic growth. Making this explicit and drawing on a longer history of

writing on this subject allows this book to reframe the issues around this sector in new and progressive ways.

Second, this volume combines industry, policy and socio-cultural themes in a critical but also empirically up-to-date manner. Moving beyond outright condemnation and uncritical celebration, the book asks its contributors to assess the current challenges facing the cultural industries from a range of different perspectives. Questions of industry structure, labour, place, international development, consumption, regulation and so on are all explored in terms of their historical trajectory and potential future direction.

Third, this book assumes a longer historical context than the creative industries debate (which tends to start post-1997) and thus explores the historical dimension in a set of important essays. This will provide context for new readers as well as critical orientation for those more familiar with the subject.

Fourth, we retain a focus on the culture that is being produced and consumed by these industries, in addition to their wider economic and socio-cultural impacts. Whilst these will be addressed in the conceptual chapters, the emphasis will be on what is being produced, how, by whom, for whom and in what structural and dynamic circumstances. This will allow the book to reassert the role of cultural industries as precisely that – *cultural industries* with a distinct relation to wider areas of cultural and other public policy and to broader social and economic change.

The different parts will be introduced individually. Clearly some chapters could fit into other sections. We have not imposed any ‘line’ on the authors other than to mark or reflect on the terminological distinction between cultural and creative industries. Many talk about both, as we have done in this introduction. Our choice of authors inevitably reflects our own networks and reading and location. Nevertheless, we hope they reflect some of the extent and multiplicity of current negotiations and contestations within, around and about the ‘cultural industries’ and why they should matter to us.

Notes

- 1 That China accounted for most of this shift, and that it did so because ‘cultural goods’ covered a range of manufactured products such as toys, glassware, furniture and audio-visual hardware, did little to dampen the enthusiasm.
- 2 We might want to include them in the ‘depth’ account of the cultural sector – along with a range of manufacturing and ancillary services. But this is not what the list of ‘creative industries’ was attempting nor did it include any of these other sectors.
- 3 Giving rise to the rather gnostic claim that the creative industries (as a sector) are not really creative industries (Potts et al., 2008).
- 4 It is no coincidence that the doyen of the creative consumer has written a book on cultural evolution with a neo-liberal economist and member of Australia’s far right Institute of Public Affairs (Hartley and Potts, 2014).
- 5 Timothy Mitchell’s work, though not aligned with the JCE, exemplifies this critical work (Mitchell, 2008).
- 6 We might note the invocation of Bourdieu in this paper as precisely the kind of systematic field organisation that Latour lacks or refuses.
- 7 Also the work of Jacques Ranciere (2013) around the space of the aesthetic. His non-governmental account of the historical specificity of the ‘aesthetic regime’ has thereby attracted the ire of Tony Bennett (2013).

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