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**Article (Accepted version)
(Refereed)**

Original citation:

Pratt, Andy C. (1997) Production values: from cultural industries to the governance of culture.

[Environment and planning A](#), 29 (11). pp. 1911-1917.

DOI: [10.1068/a291911](https://doi.org/10.1068/a291911)

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**Production values:
From cultural industries to the governance of culture**

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Pratt A C, 1997, "Production values: from cultural industries to the governance of culture" *Environment and Planning A* **29** 1911-1917

Abstract

This aim of this paper is to introduce this special theme issue and to reposition the debate about cultural industries in a broader perspective and in so doing to open up new research possibilities. The paper argues against the analysis of cultural industries in a separate realm (either the industrial, economic or cultural) and in favour of a hybrid notion that interweaves industry and culture. It offers the notion of 'the governance of culture' as a potential perspective for future work.

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Introduction

The term 'cultural industry' is a relatively new one to academic studies of urban and economic development¹; however, it is a topic that is now receiving considerable attention from cultural, economic, and urban policy makers. There is irony in the fact that so much enthusiasm has been generated by a topic which seems to be so under researched and poorly defined. There are two perennial issues which cause problems in this research area: definition and impact. As in many other areas, these two issues although often treated separately, are best considered in an interrelated manner. Moreover, cultural industries have been subject to a 'perceptual problem' similar to that which has dogged the service industries: namely that they are considered frivolous or insignificant - the fact that the product of the cultural industries is perceived to be 'mere entertainment' does not help them being taken seriously².

The papers collected together in this special issue attempt to establish the significance of the cultural industries: to take them seriously. However, just arguing

¹ The term 'cultural industries' is associated with Adorno and Horkheimer (1977). Pursuit of this literature is of little immediate help here as it was originally used to figure mass society - the focus of their attention - rather than to analyze cultural industries *per se*. Indeed, the mass production of cultural products was viewed much the same as other consumer products. Given the significance attached to the 'aura' of original art, mass produced art was seen as degraded (but, see Benjamin, 1977 for discussion). However, in relation to the current paper, the Adorno and Horkheimer analysis reproduces the emphasis upon the cultural pole of the dualism: culture-economy. More recent analyses, such as Lash and Urry (1994), have placed the 'cultural industries' centre stage and sought to argue that cultural industries were post-Fordist *avant la lettre*; hence, they are worthy of the attention of those primarily interested in industrial change in other sectors.

² This view does seem to be changing. Along with the dramatic transformations brought about in the wake of digitization and deregulation- namely, convergence (of products and organizations) - huge and powerful (economically and culturally) multi-media/ communications corporations such as Time-Warner are emerging as key actors in the global economy. A good example of the broader context of such changes - one which is shaping and is shaped by the cultural industries - is sketched out by Castells (1996, Chapter 5).

the case for the analysis of cultural industries and documenting their empirical social, economic and political import will not change the structuring of knowledge within which cultural industries are positioned. With this problem of adversely situated knowledge in mind, the strategy taken in this paper is to attempt to reposition the debate in a broader perspective; in so doing the aim is to open up new research possibilities. The paper argues against the analysis of cultural industries in a separate realm (either the industrial, economic or cultural) and in favour of a hybrid notion that interweaves industry, culture and much more besides.

This objective resonates with a broader trend in economic sociology and economic geography; that is, to re-consider the relationship of the 'cultural' to the 'economic'. However, such a move is not without problems. The upsurge of interest in the analysis of culture within the social sciences has juxtaposed and repositioned - in a Gestalt shift - the economic and the cultural. In part, such a state of affairs is understandable in the light of the theoretical genealogy of such debates in the social sciences. The cultural, for so long down played or marginalized, now receives 'star' treatment. However, the net result is that the (political) economic dimensions of culture, and the specifics of the cultural industries, have once again been neglected. The attempt to reformulate the debate regarding the economic and the cultural is of general importance in geography, sociology, and economics; however, it has particular pertinence for the consideration of cultural industries themselves.

Research themes in this issue

It is an opportune moment to carry out a re-evaluation of the cultural industries for at least two reasons. First, there has been an upsurge of interest in the role of culture in urban and economic development within geography and related disciplines. Currently, there are many attempts by economic geographers to reconceptualize their sub-discipline in order to adequately address these issues (see Thrift and Olds 1996). These debates themselves are marked by the more significant currents of cultural geography and cultural studies. Some of the indicative directions for future work have emerging through debates about industrial districts and industrial networks (see Amin and Thrift 1995); notable here is the work of Thrift (1996) on technology and cities, Storper (1993) on learning and innovation, and Amin and Thomas (1996) on governance.

Second, the empirical growth in the cultural industries themselves³. This has been especially marked in the electronic arts with the promotion of digitization that has allowed a dynamic cross-fertilization of media both within and between software and hardware. Related to this, and perhaps more obvious as a result, is the 'effect' of the cultural industries: either in terms of ownership of large corporate entities; through their employment of large numbers of people; of the impact of their trade⁴; or, the positioning and social relations of the consumption of their 'product'⁵. The papers collected together in this issue are primarily focused on concerns related to the object of political economy; and, by extension its regulation. Whilst this agenda does contribute to our understanding of these neglected topics it does produce the effect of positioning mainly economic concerns against cultural ones. For example, there is little immediate connection between the analyses presented here and that figured in recent debates about music and space (see for example: Smith 1994 ; Kong 1995). But, the argument can also be reversed with equal validity. This problem of the impasse of cultural analyses is addressed in the final section of this paper; before that, we turn to the content of this special issue.

In the first of the papers collected together here Sadler, in his analysis of the global restructuring of the music industry, highlights the organizational trends toward vertical and horizontal integration. This paper works with a traditional narrative of power and control, focusing upon ostensive aspects of economic organization with little attention to the cultural product per se; aside from the problem of capturing its value via copyright. Thus, questions of organizational structure are to the fore, the question of effect is left unexplored. Aksoy and Robins also take up the theme of globalization but are concerned with its local contestation - and thus its effect - in the case of Turkey. Their analysis highlights both how the broadcasting industries were positioned in the struggle for political and cultural hegemony and how they were

³ The issue here is both a conceptual and a definitional one. To acknowledge the effects, some definition and an empirical measure has to be devised. Until this happens the phenomena remains invisible. It does seem that our concepts, and technologies, of measurement and surveillance have lagged behind the pace of material developments in the cultural industries.

⁴ In respect of the cultural industries, Royalties are the classic case of 'invisible earnings'. Analyses show the contributions of such earnings may be significant to a national economy, outstripping many conventional areas (see Pratt 1996).

⁵ The most obvious impact: the 'power' of television, or of computer games, etc.

used - as well as their programme material, especially music - by oppositional groups to create political spaces for themselves. This analysis offers an interesting twist to the narrative of deregulation and freedom by interweaving questions of cultural identity and nationality. Clearly, the uses of music or broadcasting are manifold; but the control of communications technologies figures very strongly in such strategies.

Pratt's paper extends the debate about cultural industries by proposing the analysis of the cultural industries as a collective: the cultural industries production system. This notion seeks to capture both the conceptual and practical interrelationships of the many different cultural industries. The idea of the production system is a novel blending of Bourdieu's (1993) concept of the 'cultural field' and Lundvall's (1992) concept of the 'innovation system'. The concept of the cultural industries production system is then operationalized with respect to employment change in Britain between 1984-91. This paper demonstrates that the cultural industries are significant employers, and that the effects of restructuring are felt in particular places and occupations (in this it mirrors the rest of the economy), and that much of that employment is localized, particularly in London. This last point is one of considerable research intrigue; what is the relationship between metropolitan centres and the continued vitality of the cultural industries? Given the obvious economic and cultural importance of the cultural industries, this topic is likely to become an increasingly significant one in terms of both local economic and urban policy agendas (see Castells 1996, Hall 1997).

The field of cultural policy has long been the preserve of national government in the UK (see Greenhough et al. 1992); characteristically such policies have focused upon the establishment and maintenance of art collections, theatre and classical music performance. The key anomaly, given the preceding discussion of the growth in significance of the (mainly) commercial cultural industries, is that national policies generally focus only on subsidized arts. Intervention in film and television is normally about cultural mores rather than as a fundamental industrial strategy. However, as noted below, there are signs of change in this area⁶.

⁶ As I write the UK general election campaign is in full swing. One of the last acts of the opposition Labour Party was to launch a strategy for cultural policy, arts and the creative economy (Labour Party 1997). Significantly, this document specifically pinpoints the role of the cultural industries.

The Department National Heritage formed in 1992 has responsibility for arts, museums, galleries, libraries, broadcasting, film and media, tourism, and sport and recreation. Moreover, it has overall concern with the recently established National Lottery (the first funds were allocated in 1995). The Department of National Heritage's arm's length bodies, the Arts Council and the Regional Arts Boards, distribute funds locally with regard to the performing arts, visual arts, literature and media. Local authorities, using a combination of locally raised funds and central allocation, are able to distribute funds to local museums, galleries, and libraries.

This system, although it was previously spread across a variety of UK Government departments, has been fairly stable for much of the post-War period. However, a recent change concerns the establishment of the National Lottery. A proportion of National Lottery funds are dedicated to the support of arts and culture. The initial concept was that National Lottery funding should be a net addition rather than a substitution for existing funding; thus, in principle, it is net additional funding. It is too early to establish the impact of the National Lottery on arts financing. However, this will clearly become an increasingly important component in arts funding. At present, there does not seem to be a strategic logic to the distribution of Lottery funds; it is predominantly based on competition.

Aside from the National Lottery, innovation in cultural policy has emerged from two types of local initiative. The first, which draws upon concerns with the restructuring of industrial activity more generally, as well as growth in the cultural industries in particular, has focused upon local economic policy. The second, is linked to two stands of debate. One is associated with the potential role of culture to differentiate competing localities, especially cities, with respect to inward investment or tourism. The other is more centrally concerned with urban renewal; here cultural activity is a replacement focus for urban life. Significantly, both types of initiative, city competition or renewal, mobilize the cultural as a means to an alternative end. It is not surprising to find opposition to this 'hi-jacking' of culture, and attempts to refocus such strategies upon cultural activities as an end in themselves. The remaining two papers in this special issue pick up this theme in their analyses.

In the late 1980's many British metropolitan authorities developed cultural industry strategies; perhaps the most publicised, yet least implemented (due to the abolition of the Greater London Council) was that devised in London (GLC 1985). There remain key tensions within most of the cultural policies that have been developed by other agencies since, between an industrial strategy, a cultural promotion

strategy and a social welfare strategy⁷ (see Bianchini 1993). In part this might be explained by the internal organization aspects of local government (especially in the UK) which has a very strong functional division of activities; hence policies that cut across divisions become difficult to manage and are thus subject to 'capture' by individual departments.

It is in this light Bianchini and Radtke's paper is pertinent in looking at two contrasting examples of Sheffield and Birmingham. What emerges from their analysis is that the mode of governance is as crucial as the focus of the policy itself. One major problem for cultural industry strategies (like local economic development strategies more generally) is that they fall between the gaps of the traditional organizational departments and responsibilities of local government. The problems of coordination, the traps of departmental fiefdoms and rivalries, and the issue of financing and local government priorities, are highlighted as central to understanding the potential (both opportunities and limitations) of a viable strategy.

Finally, Boyle's paper extends the analysis beyond the realms of local government to explore the attempts to forge alliance with non-governmental agencies, to hitch cultural promotion to city promotion (compare here with the recent work of Molotch, 1996). Boyle's analysis of Glasgow's attempts at self promotion offers an unusual insight into the analysis of growth coalitions in that it focuses upon the different and contrary ways in which strategy is appropriated and used by individual and groups in practice. In this sense there are resonances with Aksoy and Robbins' work; highlighting both the role of cultural activities in more conventional political struggles, and as new sites into which different constituencies are drawn in (see also Zukin, 1995, on urban public spaces). In fact this echoes a point that has been made elsewhere about cultural industry strategies more generally. Bianchini (1993), reviewing the European experience, highlights that cultural industry

⁷ Industrial strategy in terms of local economic development, usually in the form of an industrial district or cultural quarter; cultural strategy in terms of the promotion of local arts, or targeting arts for particular minority groups; social welfare strategy where, for example, drama or music production courses are used to socialize disaffected youth and increase future participation in the labour market (usually not in the field of the arts).

Another strategy that could be added to this list is the harnessing of the arts or sport to aid forms of city competitiveness. Such approaches rely heavily on infrastructure provision, and usually neglect the actual activities.

strategies have primarily been about political mobilization, especially of groups not previously active in the political activities.

In summary, these papers are all set against a backdrop of a particular articulation of cultural policy. Primarily, cultural policies have concerned themselves - directly or indirectly - with the 'not-for-profit' sector (usually, high art), within this there is a substantial vein of political mobilisation either at the level of the nation state, or the city. Little, if any concern, its directed at the production of culture either the industries, or the artists concerned. Where cultural policy has been figured otherwise it has either been as a social welfare, or social polarization palliative; or as an attempt in local economic promotion. What is absent is a degree of national co-ordination in such local policies. Or, on a broader canvas a consideration of the relationship between cultural policy and industrial policy. It would be unhelpful to simply suggest that an economic orientation to cultural policy is now needed: cultural industries as industrial strategy. Of course, that does need to be argued; but, it needs to be viewed through a new lens of industrial strategy, a lens that acts as a focus for political, cultural, social and economic activity. In order to achieve this end, a new conceptualisation of the topic of concern needs to be opened up. The remaining section of this paper offers some notes towards such a task.

Hybrid culture, hybrid industry

Topics that do not fit easily into pre-given categories are always an illuminating point of analytical departure, rather than being tempted to force the topic - cultural industry - back into one of our convenient classificatory boxes we might consider instead how it has come to be that it does not fit. A brief historical survey yields the intriguing point that cultural industries have tended to be marginalized because they are conceived as laying outside of dominant cultural, economic or geographical discourses. For example, from an economic point of view they are seen as either derivative or parasitic; not a true source of value. From an arts or cultural perspective they are seen as inferior art, machine art, of little integrity or value.

What can be discerned here is what Latour (1993) terms the 'purification' of categories, the creation of pure forms for analytic purposes. Against this Latour, in common with other writers, such as Haraway (1991), has suggested 'hybridization'. Strategies of hybridization seek to avoid the reductionism to essential categories (art, economics, individuals, societies, etc.). A body of work that draws upon debates on studies in science, technology and society (Latour 1987; and Law 1991), and governmentality and power (Rose 1989; Burchell et al. 1991) is of considerable value

in navigating this world of hybrids, cyborgs and monsters (see Clegg 1989 on both strands).

Without going into the elaborate detail of this debate we can highlight a strategic shift from the analysis of static pre-conceived objects of study to the ongoing processes of dynamic construction and reconstruction. Such approaches offer potential insights into the economic and social forms that are woven around, and constitute, cultural objects. To continue the metaphor of the web, these objects are caught in particular tensions of power. These tensions are dual faceted. First, they have the effect of configuring the possible forms of cultural objects and social organizations, and visa versa: they are co-productions⁸. Second, power does not flow along these webs (from the core to periphery, top to bottom, or whatever), rather they are the effect of the ensemble⁹.

The governance of culture

There is not space to elaborate these arguments here, except to suggest that a useful theme for analysis might be the 'governance of culture'. This theme might allow an investigation of the various 'ordering practices', the effects of which are the social forms and practices that we identify with culture, art, industry and cultural industries. Ordering practices are simultaneously forms of knowledge and organizational practices, situated in time-spaces. The outcomes, the effects, are the locally forged knowledges and practices of our world. These practices are the means by which we understand, and identify with things such as culture, city, factory, industry, etc.

The value of such an strategy in the study of cultural industries might be to offer an irreductivist approach to such couplets as culture and industry, or art and science, that underpin theorizing, empirical analysis and policy making¹⁰. As a minimum it

⁸ An example of this approach is that of Cawson et al. (1995) with respect to the introduction of new multimedia technologies.

⁹ I am thinking here of capillary power. See Clegg (1989) on discussions of this in the context of both Actor Network theory and Foucauldian work on networks and organizations.

¹⁰ It is useful to refer to Williams's discussion of the keywords 'art', 'industry', and 'culture' and their modification and interrelation in the introduction to Culture and Society, Williams (1963).

should foreground the socially constructed nature of the categories and the dangers of their reductivist poles. At a maximum it could shift the agenda to one where the constant interweaving of meaning, difference, identity, organization and power are central to the analysis. With this in mind we can more confidently mark 'cultural industries' as an interesting point of departure.

Re-positionings

This is not to suggest that the contributors to this collection share, or are willing to sign up to, such an agenda, however, I think that it offers an interesting way of reading what they are saying. The papers, in their various ways, all highlight the point that cultural industries are becoming a very interesting and important site for economic, cultural, and political analysis. These analyses are very clearly situated within a (usually unacknowledged) problematic concerned with the constitution, and thus governance, of culture. This problematic is a dynamic one. Moreover, culture is so often taken as a given, thus the multifarious ways in which it is constituted and configured - its governance - is rendered either invisible, or reduced to a quasi legal definition of cultural policy.

Reflexively speaking, this debate also sheds some light on a local dilemma within human geography; namely how to respond to the cultural turn in the social sciences more generally, and within geography in particular. To date the dominant response has been another round of purification with the bifurcation of economic geography and cultural geography. It would seem that both act as residuals of the other ¹¹. Instead of bifurcation, hybridization might offer a more satisfactory research strategy. It is to this end that I think this special issue can be orientated. What better focus than a category that is, in a sense, already a hybrid. Instead of attempting to create purified definitions we ought to follow the 'messiness' of the cultural industries wherever it leads us: into the economy, through politics, into culture and back again.

Viewed in this way, the collection of papers found in this issue begin to outline the various attempts from different empirical and theoretical loci to work with a hybrid form, and implicitly, to follow it without fear or favour through society, to observe

¹¹ A statistical metaphor is intended here; the residual is explained by the other sub-discipline.

'culture in the making'¹². They range from questions of intellectual property (Sadler), and individual and collective identity (Aksoy and Robbins, Boyle), to the form of cultural product, its making and distribution (Pratt, and Bianchini and Radtke). These webs or networks of meaning are spun from homes, in cities, in nations, and across the globe. A key concern that can be highlighted is the attempt to shape and control products, processes and places. To this end the actors involved have sought to form alliances with one another, as well as with their products, to 'fix a meaning' so that others have to subscribe to, or reproduce, it. The success or otherwise of such machinations are their continued existence: in short, reproduction. Given such a messy and dispersed set of actions and things it is clearly limiting to be hemmed in by received notions of 'the economic', or 'the political', or 'the cultural'.

¹² Those familiar with Actor Network Theory will recognize the voices of Callon and Latour in this. One of their concerns has been with 'technoscience: science and technology in the making'.

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