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Part I

Theory and Overview

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CHAPTER

1

Creative Industries and Labour Process Analysis

Chris Smith and Alan McKinlay

Introduction

Definitional problems beset the field. What precisely are creative industries and who works in them; what do they produce and are these products commodities or goods with special social and national as well as private individual utility? How are creative goods distributed and how does the form of distribution affect the character of the product; how is a live concert or performance different from a recorded one, and what is the precise relationship between performance, audience and production? Is there a unified definition of the organisational field of creative industries and do those working in this field share common work organisation, employment relations, motivation and purpose?

Overarching terminology used to capture the entire field has shifted from the idea of the arts to cultural industries to creative industries. The concept of *the arts* is widely used as a sub-set for theatre, music and many branches of long-established creative expression with solo or ensemble production at its centre. An *art* also has the connotation of skill, talent or ability, thus drawing attention to the idea of an artist as a trained but also innovative person, with a gift or knack that might be innate, person-specific and hence not easily learnable; hence the centrality of individual expression, calling and aptitude in *the arts*. Asset or skill specificity is highly individualised, specific to the *person*, not occupation or company which is more typical of external and internal labour markets (Osterman, 1984: 174). This makes creative labour in the arts comparatively distinct. When generalised to sectors outside this tight list, such as advertising or new media, the term *the arts* loses purchase because the production system and skill structures in these sectors are different. There are also intense problems of ranking or stratification of taste, with notions of high and low brow, mass and elitist

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products, tastes and markets. But for reasons of narrowness, the concept of *the arts* is no longer used by those wishing to capture the entire field.

The idea of *cultural industries* raises the opposite problem of being too eclectic and broad. This is because the concept of culture is notoriously opaque, embracing as it does the role of tradition, identity, values and social belonging, with links into sub-cultures, multi-cultures and cultures as expressions of group identities, whether as national culture or youth cultures, counter-cultures or black and ethnic minority cultural identity. How these social manifestations of cultural identity are linked to notions of creativity or an industry or commercial production is a major problem, although culture has the advantage of placing social groups, society and broad definitions of producers and consumers of culture at the centre of the debate (O'Connor, 2007). *Cultural industries* as a term has the major disadvantage because of boundary problems – what to include and what to exclude in the term culture – and the relationship between social and unique or individual production, which is central to ideas of creativity. It also lacks a strong connection to a political economy, as commercialisation of life styles and youth cultures are within industries (fashion and clothing) with conventional mass or batch production labour processes, and are not usefully defined as creative.

Creative industries is the new dominant and politically fashionable term being more inclusive of new and old sectors, such as theatre and new media, but sufficiently discriminating so as to produce a relatively clear industry category. Nevertheless many insist that the term creative industry is too broad, as leading with the term 'creative' makes it difficult to discriminate between scientific/technical creativity and artistic creativity (Haunschild, 2008; Pratt, 2005). However we favour this term in this book to help explore the work of those working within traditional and new sectors that share certain features of innovation, risk, uncertainty, performativity and differentiation from repeat or mass production sectors.[1]

This book is not about definitional themes however, but will instead focus on the production of creative or artistic products, and the labour processes, employment relations and organisation of work that surround the different production processes. These labour processes vary across numerous components of the creative industries, and the book will explore the commonalities and differences between industry segments. Variation in work organisation and structure of the same branches also exists across various national contexts, and the theme of comparative difference is explored across several chapters. Comparative research is important for examining truth statements about 'an industry' or occupational group, as comparative research immediately reveals local prejudices and differentiation, thus testing the robustness of categorical statements about essential features of a particular field. An important part of a labour process account of creative labour in this book is

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to suggest that one cannot adequately or rigidly divide human labour power into creative and non-creative absolutes, as all human labour involves some creative elements, such that *envisioning* or imagining producing something prior to doing or execution is part of what it is to be human. We will pick this critique up in Chapter 2.

The purpose of the book is to look inside the production or work process of different creative industries, because how work is structured and what people do when they make creative products remains relatively under-researched. Authors within the book use a labour process perspective to different degrees, as what characterises this approach is a focus on production relations, and issues of control and authority, wage-effort exchanges, conflict and social or class relations between the owners of creative capital and those who work as employees or freelancers to help expand the value of this capital and their share of it. A labour process perspective, as we discuss below, looks inside the experience or actuality of production processes and reveals how inputs of human labour, machinery and 'raw materials' are transformed into finished products, which within a capitalist political economy, means creation for the purpose of profit or accumulating more capital, by producing use values which possess high value for both producers and consumers. Applying this framework to labour processes in film, television, theatre and new media will help interrogate some of the broader claims for the creative industries as unique or special sites of production compared with other branches of the economy.

Themes in the book include changes to the division of labour and job structures in key branches of creative industries; the expansion of jobs and reduction in wages as labour supply expands and capital moves around geographically to reduce production costs; the role of social networks for distributing information (especially job information) and people within the industry; the idea of craft or profession in some creative industries and its absence in others; the role of space as a type of social capital – for aggregating companies and people – and how spatial concentrations of creative capital and creative labour are undergoing important shifts as work is decentred, globalised and distributed away from established locations (such as Hollywood) and the consequences this has for jobs, getting work and the intensity of work. Before examining in detail the structure of the book and the contents of the different chapters, we will briefly outline some of the different ways in which creative industries have been theorised and described.

The creative industries, labour and the state

The creative industries – film, theatre, television, radio, arts and new media – have become a distinctive and expanded sub-sector of the economies of

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many advanced capitalist countries. Some writers have even suggested a new *class* of employees – 'creative workers' – have emerged in cosmopolitan centres and cities, with their own identity, interests, employment structure, work ethic and networks of organisation and communication that are distinct from other occupational classes (Florida, 2002). The coherence of this 'class' has been questioned however. O'Connor (2007: 39) notes that Florida's creative class is an 'agglomeration' of creative professions' and the 'book is marked by an absence of any empirical investigation into what [the creative class] is (Healy, 2002; Peck, 2005; Montgomery, 2005).' At best this is 'occupational class'; in other words part of the internal differentiation within the waged population of workers; but there is also ambiguity as sellers of creative skills are also a class of petty-owners, and hence class in both a Weberian and Marxist sense can be applied to the category. It is an occupational structure stratified by levels of skills and expertise (which in Florida's case are the vague skills of 'intelligence, knowledge and creativity'), which produce distinctions between the owners of these skills and other waged workers, and not just between the sellers of these skills and those that buy and put them to work. We would suggest that whatever differentiations are opened up between skilled and less skilled workers (and skill hierarchies are normal in all labour markets) it is as *sellers* of labour power they are united in having to enter labour processes to exchange these labour services for wages, and it is the exchange with owners that is the central economic and class relation, and not internal differentiation as waged workers.

Florida says that the skills or assets that the creative [occupational] class possess, is a *creative capacity* which is 'an intangible because it is literally in their heads' (Florida, 2002: 68). *Capacity* expresses precisely the commodity waged workers sell in the market place, but, as Warhurst and Thompson (2006) note, for 'that capacity to have any utility, it must be transferred from heads to balance sheets via forms of managing knowledge and creativity' and hence we need to explore the dominant relationship between sellers and buyers of 'creative capacity' and not assume that possession of this capacity itself has any economic or sociological novelty. The claim by Florida that the creative class 'are paid to create and have considerably more autonomy and flexibility …to do so' than those 'primarily paid to execute or plan' raises the problem of not only the uniqueness of this activity to this field, but also the classificatory problem of abstracting creativity, as defined above, as an economic or social category. As Haunschild (2008: 253) has noted: 'since the creation of 'new ideas, new technology and/or new creative content' is not limited to arts, music and entertainment, but is also a core phenomenon of science and engineering, architecture and education, this perspective [a focus on the content of labour] further broadens the definition of creative industries.'

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Therefore the complicating factor of labour power in the creative industries is the diversity of ownership of the means of production and problematic for the worker of selling or realising labour power through a production or labour process. Some occupational segments may own their means of production (instruments in the case of musicians, for example), and operate as jobbing producers moving from project to project, or venue to venue and hence share labour power features with many jobbing craft workers. They will also seek, as petty commodity producers, to control their intellectual product or property when this is commercialised, and there are major struggles between creative workers and employers over Intellectual Property (IP), especially in relationship to repeats or residuals – a significant issue in the 2007–2008 strike by the Writers Guild of America.[2] The degree of movement between self-employment, employee status and petty producer or owner positions seen in some segments is in contrast to creative occupations that are more typically wage labourers selling their skills or expertise as labour power – voice, looks, embodied and highly personal labour power as in the case of actors for example – through a collective production process and without a continued claim on the intellectual product or profit beyond the hours contracted to produce it. Often, this labour power is idle or not working to reproduce itself in a creative labour process. A typical actor is not usually acting but earning money through non-acting work, yet the individual will maintain a strong craft identity as an actor, and see not working, that is not being in a production process, as normal for the industry. Hence self definition and working practice are not always concurrent; and the under-utilisation of creative labour power is a major feature of segments of the sector, as there are always more people wishing to join the industry for the available demand, and the costs of maintaining this labour power is borne in other sectors, the family of the worker or through capital resources owned by the creative worker. These constraints often confine recruitment into certain segments of the creative industries to those with these other resources, and hence those from middle or upper middle class backgrounds have favoured entry. They also make the business of finding work – bringing labour power to the market – hugely problematic compared with most other labour processes. Hence much of the literature on working in the sector – and several chapters in this book – explore precisely this *problematic of realisation*, namely the difficulty of uniting labour power with labour processes, which strongly defines the experience of 'working' in the creative industries.

Returning to sector terminology, beyond looking at the *content* of creative labour, other approaches have preferred to focus on the special features of creative *industries*, arguing that there are a range of creative and non-creative occupations employed within this sector, which all share the features of the sector, most especially the precariousness of the market for creative products

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(Caves, 2000). Success factors normal in mass industries are absent in the creative industries where a 'no-body knows anything' argument remains dominant, as in the film industry where despite massive attempts to reduce uncertainty through star systems, blockbusters, big budgets, ownership concentration and formulaic production – uncertainty remains and expensive flops are normal (De Vany, 2004). According to this perspective the risk and unpredictability of production and consumption shape the dynamic of the industry, and the sector is defined by *outputs*. Hence production for the supply of 'goods and services that we broadly define as cultural, artistic or simply entertainment value' (Caves, 2000: 1) are what constitutes creative industries and these 'products' and significantly different from mass production products because of the uncertainty surrounding their consumption or marketability. Caves' approach has the advantage of arguing that not all work in the creative industries is creative as defined by Florida, but consists of what he calls 'motley crews' of differentiated occupations. But to stress market uncertainty in the selling of creative products as unique, misses huge uncertainties in other areas of commodity production (even mass confectionary for example, Smith *et al*, 1990). More importantly it misses shifts in product markets everywhere to more turbulence, and hence suggestions of flexible specialisation or mass customisation, which despite being overblown, do highlight more rapid obsolescence rates, competitive pressures and uncertainty in more globalised markets.

Agents in the creative industries are not simply labour and capital; governments play a role because some of the goods produced in the sector are treated as *public goods*, for example those with educational value; others have national or cultural value, both for internal purposes of social or ideological control, and also for inter-country competition and prestige. Finally, state intervention might also be about supporting nascent industries which have innovative or strategic commercial power – as in the 1997 Labour Government championing of the arts in the UK.[3]

O'Connor (2007: 5) suggested that 'Adorno's notion of the Culture Industry went in parallel with an emergent post-war cultural policy discourse which attempted to intervene against the market in order to secure culture from the miasma of commerciality.' But this public or national agenda for the state has moved towards narrower and more commercial objectives from the 1990s with the move 'from cultural to creative industries' and the discourse of partnership with the private sector being part of the policy strategy for integrating relations between employment in creative industries, production, the market and the state. Many research centres have been developed in universities to map the employment, size and industrial features of different segments of the industry, see for example, creative industries research centre at Copenhagen Business School[4] or the Film Business Academy at Cass

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Business School, in the UK. There has also been the growth of new media, culture and arts course within Universities to satisfy the demand of those seeking work within this emerging sector. There is increasing academic interest in the field. Witness a new *Creative Industries Journal* which has as its mission 'primarily aimed at those studying and practising activities which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent, and which have a potential for wealth creation.' Defining the field of study and practice as 'advertising, architecture, the art and antiques market, crafts, design, fashion, film, interactive leisure software, music, the performing arts, publishing, television and radio.'[5]

Establishing the idea of creative industries as national commercial champions has involved so called 'mapping exercises' which estimate employment and define the sub-sectors to be included within the field. These distort or exaggerate numbers of 'creative workers', as within each sub-sector – film, video, software, design, publishing, advertising etc – there exists Caves (2000) 'motley crews', with many more routine than creative positions. We should therefore be very cautious of employment statistics. With this health warning, Warhurst and Thompson (2006) quote UK government sources that suggest: '…the creative industries in the UK generate revenues of around £112.5bn and employ some 1.3m people (DCMS 2001).'[6] These 'mapping exercises' are also about differentiating the field both economically and spatially, as O'Connor (2007: 30) has noted:

> First, that the different sub-sectors (music, performance, visual art, TV etc.) were highly networked at the local level and that they operated somehow as 'clusters'. Second, these clusters were generally centred on the larger metropolitan areas, acting as the locus for urban networks and as service hubs for more dispersed sectors (such as crafts or manufacture), suggesting that the City or urbanity itself offered something crucial to the cultural industries sector. Third, that the line between commercial and subsidised sectors, between primarily economic and primarily cultural activities, or indeed between motives of 'art' and motives of profit was by no means clear cut at this local level.

Warhurst and Thompson (2006) using the British case where the government has been active in policy formation, suggest there are three 'industry types' in the creative industries with 'quite different organisations, work and employment' features. The different institutional and organisational settings offer an important mediating relationship for different occupational groups, and add a layer of structural complexity to arguments based on pure ideas of creativity, skills or the content of people's jobs in the field. The three segments include: i. large organisations outside the formally designated creative

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industries 'with an in-house design, architectural, media facility' such as the public sector where employment conditions reflect those in the sector, and not the occupations at large; ii. large employers in the creative industries, such as major UK television companies, where 'employment practices tend to be more standard, but with higher numbers of freelancers and smaller firms used on a project (temporary) basis;' iii. SMEs in the creative industries 'with a mixture of permanent staffs and more use of freelancers and other small firms to meet variations in workflow or to create capacity to undertake large projects' (Warhurst and Thompson, 2006).

In all three types, 'work is essentially project-based, especially for firms in the second and third categories' and 'work levels vary considerably' and 'this variation contributes to the wider use of freelancers and alliances with other firms to complete projects' (Warhurst and Thompson, 2006). However, while firms in creative industries are typically small, some grow and mature and rationalise along conventional organisational lines, and therefore, one should not assume smallness as some kind of essential quality of the sector. There are, after all, huge corporations as well, such as public broadcasters, the UK BBC, or the 7 giant US media empires: Disney (market value: $72.8 billion); AOL-Time Warner (market value: $90.7 billion); Viacom (market value: $53.9 billion); General Electric (owner of NBC, market value: $390.6 billion); News Corporation (market value: $56.7 billion); Yahoo! (market value: $40.1 billion); Microsoft (market value: $306.8 billion); Google (market value: $154.6 billion) at 2006 values.[7]

Hence whether it is the rise of a new occupational class, a new industry or specific state policy to support a new employment field, there has been a growing interest in creative industries and creative labour.

Why a labour process perspective?

The strength of a labour process approach is that it reveals the dynamics of working in real situations and looks behind the hype and rhetorical claims that can surround new fields of work and employment. There is certainly a lot of excitable puff around the creative industries, whether in regard to the size and significance of the sector, the uniqueness of work and employment relations or the motivation of workers within the sector. As Warhurst and Thompson (2006) note: 'the use of creativity alone as a distinguishing feature tells us very little about the content of work, [or] how it is organised and managed.' Indeed there is considerable diversity between 'creatives'; some with a distinguished craft or professional collective tradition, as with actors; while others are more individualistic, writers for example, while others remain more embedded within a collective technical labour process, as with software writers. In other words, there is looseness about the term

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that means that detailed empirical research of the type presented in this book, is required to highlight the specificity of each particular case. There is also a neglect of research into the doing or producing side of creative labour, and a bias towards analysis of the consumption of cultural artefacts. While the complexity of consumption in this area is important, production processes and values require more attention as through production one can demystify some of the mystique of the field.

This book offers an insight into the real lives of those working in the sector, drawing on firsthand research, and covering key segments of the sector – film, television, theatre and new media.

The labour process approach centres on the actuality of work from the perspective and orientation of the direct producers, those who provide the service or make the product. The approach is especially concerned with the *control, resistance* and *consent* elements in work; the authority and structure of discipline that ensures that workers not only turn up to work, but are productively employed when there, and engaged in reproducing their own work discipline (Burawoy, 1979). The approach draws from the *indeterminacy* of labour power; the fact that although wages may be known in advance, how much work effort is required is open-ended or left to be determined by workers and managers, as labour product is not given over without some measure of external determination, constraint or structure. The selling of labour power is the selling of a *capacity* that needs to be set within a labour process – with purpose, raw materials and technology – to become transformed into a product, which within capitalism means commodities (goods, products or services) for the market. The approach offers insights into what is distinctive and common to work and worker's experiences in creative industries, in what ways work and labour replicate forms of labour process practice and management control in mass media, mass entertainment, mass publishing and the mass music industry, or conversely, how the creative labour process expresses work values that appear to have their own distinctiveness, such as innovation, self-motivation, individuality, personality, performance, emotional labour, aesthetic labour and self-promotion. We are able to explore how far these values and work practices are transferring into all service encounters.

Recent writing about labour process and labour power has suggested there are two uncertainties or indeterminacies in exchange and production relations between employers and workers: wage-effort bargaining or *effort power*, and mobility-effort bargaining or *mobility power* (Smith, 2006). In other words, how hard or how much effort is extracted from the commodity labour power is subject to consent-based bargaining between employers and owners of labour power, namely workers. There is uncertainty around the quantity of effort because of the distinct interests of each party in the

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exchange, and due to competition between employers over trying to pin down performance standards – effort levels are not stable. There is also indeterminacy around mobility, as jobs are not secure and where the worker sells his or her labour power is their choice, and hence a potential source of uncertainty for the employer. There is a relationship between effort and mobility power, as increased intensity of work (effort power by employers) can push workers to exercise their mobility power and quit. There are similar equations between mobility power and effort power as threats of exit can change levels of work intensity.

Applying this language to the work in creative industries, we can say that the mobility power of workers can vary significantly depending on levels of talent and demand, but aside from 'star performers', workers mobility power is limited due to excessive labour supply and insufficient demand, and the difficulty for organised labour (uneven across the whole field) to close-off access to jobs. Hence employers have dominant mobility power over workers which affect effort power and this means employers can extract long hours or intensify work relatively easily. Therefore on the mobility account, workers are typically in deficit, except when they have established 'star status' which can increase an individual's (and possibly their chosen team or network) mobility power. But levels of work effort are also high, not only due to workers' mobility insecurity, but also because of the high occupational or craft value attached to work, this being an essential part of labour power in the field which places high value on intrinsic, person-specific talent.

Getting into creative industries is fiercely competitive, with performance or contest-based auditions for project-based short-term work contracts strong in many areas of the field. Labour power in this environment has to be maintained for the market in periods of idleness, and hence reserves of internal motivation or determination have to be strong, and external command control determination from employers concomitantly are weak and insignificant, as compared with other sectors. There can be exceptionally long periods of idleness for creative workers, when they have to maintain themselves and their labour power as their 'property' ready for the market, which requires, in the case of actors for example, keeping fit, investing in body and aesthetic maintenance, investing in networking and being connected or seen; doing free work to maintain contacts, sanity or collective identity. Getting training and maintaining investment in labour power without a formal hierarchy to train, requires a high degree of self-focused effort by the individual. The *contracting* of labour power in the sector reflects project-based work, absence of stable organisations in many sections of the field, cost-reduction and high labour supply which means that freelance or free-agents are more typical than permanent or secure employees. We have witnessed

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the hegemony of the self-employed contractor and critique of bureaucratic stability tied to dubious notions of innovation and insecurity, but this is sector specific and within the same occupational group. In acting for example, there can be different employment contracts as Haunschild and Eikhof (Chapter 8) highlight for Germany.[8]

In brief then, employers have objectively significant power reserves over effort and mobility in the sector, and workers have difficulty actualising effort and mobility power in their favour. But on the other side of the account, workers do have some key power resources. Firstly, the person-specific nature of much creative talent means it is sometimes non-substitutable, and hence the standard mobility power of the employer (to switch one troublesome worker for another potentially less troublesome one) is not always available. Secondly, excessive labour supply is also problematic for the costs of recruitment, and hence using tried and tested workers might be cheaper than recruiting new ones. Thirdly, because markets do not always function in all aspects of the sector (asset specificity of creative talent inhibits standardisation, for example) social networks or connections are endemic across the field, and these social networks can shelter workers from the pressures of excessive labour supply. Finally, the costs of production and the perishable nature of the product in certain creative industries means the threat of disruption from organised labour especially can be strong, and strategic effort bargaining can be effective – see McKinlay (chapter 9) for examples.

As O'Connor (2007: 52) notes while the neo-liberal hegemony of self-employment and the free agent dominates, this has mixed interpretations and may be ambiguous for the utilisation of labour power as mobility power for workers is expanded at the cost of organisational security:

> The new forms of (self) exploitation by 'creatives' raise another clear tension. Research looking at the nature of creative work involves a difficult set of working conditions, long hours for little or no money, or to the de-unionised, individualised responsibility for work, pensions, unemployment and health benefits; or the unequal power relations when it comes to negotiating IP rights on which they are supposed to thrive; or the constant struggle against de-skilling, usually in the face of new technologies (Ross, 2003; McRobbie, 2002; Bilton, 2007; Banks, 2007). Some see this supposed autonomy as a trick, the myth of free labour (Garnham, 1990; McRobbie, 2002). But others point to the pleasures and satisfactions of such work, as well as a commitment to the product and the process of creation. As Mark Banks makes clear, such creative satisfactions also come with ethical considerations; the 'moral economy' of creative work is one which – as with other areas of work – sets some real limits to economic logics of accumulation (Banks, 2007).

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The book chapters

The book is divided into theory or overview chapters in Part I and detailed sector case studies in Part II. Chapters in Part I provide the reader with a coherent signposting of the sector, while the discrete and more specialist chapters in Part II illustrate some of the diversity and commonality within the field, especially cross-national differences and commonalities within the same sector. Hence the book acts as both an introduction to work in the sector using labour process theory and case study examples of different elements of the sector to illustrate the application of this theory.

Part II is split between chapters on core-established creative sectors – film, TV and theatre – and *new media* industries developed on the back of ICTs. The chapters compare differences in scale of production and labour process; they are comparative between forms of employment, although there is a strong emphasis on what is emerging as the 'dominant' model of the self-employed freelancer (against the employee with a stable attachment to a single organisation). Within this dominant employment model, social networks are important for distributing information about work and solidarity, and while 'life styles' of creative workers might be said to create social 'clubs' of shared tastes and normative orientations, it does not mean that being within a shared social milieu is sufficient to find work, and as such individual instrumentalism (what Blair, in Chapter 6 calls 'active networking') is necessary and strong. This breaks down boundaries between 'work and life' (inherent in the idea of the art and artistic production) but in profoundly negative ways as Randle and Culkin (Chapter 5) demonstrate: 'leisure becomes work as 'seeing friends' means looking for job opportunities; the family becomes a source of continuing financial support, well beyond the years of higher education, as periods outside of paid employment mean falling back on parents; children become an unsupportable burden as periods in work mean long hours.' Christopherson (Chapter 4) also highlights the main problem of networks, as opposed to markets and open ability-based recruitment, namely the strong tendency for them to exclude.

The other critical factor explored in the case study chapters is the issue of space and the use of space as a force of production in creative industries. The theme of capital mobility to escape strongly embedded work organisation in which workers have institutionalised powers is discussed in several chapters, especially Chapter 5; the myth of virtual working, free of spatial constraints, is explored by Andy Pratt (Chapter 10); and the differences between marginal and metropolitan space is discussed by Irena Grugulis and Dimitrinka Stoyanova (Chapter 7). Finally, the role of national institutional differences for embedding creative industries in specific patterns of 'national' structures is explored in Chapter 11 and 12.

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Moving to look at the individual chapters in more detail then, in Chapter 2 Chris Smith and Alan McKinlay discuss the nature of creative industries and 'creative labour' through three themes: the characteristics of the work *content* of creative workers, the types of employment *contracts* typical of the sector and finally the form of management *control* used in the sector. The *content* of labour – being creative – does not define the field, due to the envisioning quality of all human labour, and the authors warn against elitist rankings of labour through a creativity skill index. However person-specificity is a relatively unique aspect of work in the creative industries and this does have implications for specific forms of recruitment (agents, auditions, skill competitions for example); forms of labour power delivery (self-employment or free agents); and forms of work organisation – ensembles, bands, etc often with short life spans. As the authors note: ' the creative industries are distinctive in that competitive advantage and profitability are dependent not so much upon the routinisation of work but on harnessing individual and collective creativity.' This implies 'a distinctive managerial imperative that is likely to be extremely wary of deskilling strategies.' That is not to say that management in the creative industries is indifferent to controlling labour or cutting costs, but 'rather, we are more likely to see processes of marketisation that mesh with ideologies of 'releasing' worker creativity from bureaucracy.'

Contracting creative labour can come through long-term employment where continuous organisations exist, but this is harder for one-off projects, small- and medium-sized enterprises where 'freelance' models of employment now dominate. The authors explore how this paradigm has infected stable areas (such as ITV companies and the BBC in the UK) as an ideological attachment to the supposed greater creativity of non-bureaucratic forms is elevated above stable work within a single organisation. Given the high level of self-motivation involved with getting work in the creative industries, the desire for performance and expression by creative workers, forms of management control typical of hierarchies is largely absent. Instead 'managerial authority turns on managers' ability to *demonstrate* their understanding and involvement in the creative process and to form administrative systems that impinge as lightly as possible on the labour process.'

The chapter looks at the value of labour process theory to the understanding work and employment relations in creative industries, stressing the importance of case study research in different occupations and sectors of the creative industries, as these are important for uncovering sources of difference as well as overlap within the field.

In Chapter 3, Paul Thompson, Michael Jones and Chris Warhurst argue that creative industries exist within two worlds – one of creativity of the artists, and another of the more routine and prosaic political economy of creative industries. They argue that two sets of claims can be identified across

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the literature on creative and cultural industries: the first, that creative work is the driving force of a 'new economy' (creative intensity); the second, that cultural industries have a special kind of creativity as an essential core characteristic – the aesthetic attributes of product and process (creative distinctiveness). After examining the literature and evidence the authors conclude that little explanatory power resides in expanded conceptions of either set of 'industries'. The central problem in such literature is that writers too frequently move from conception of artistic work to its consumption, without exploring through concrete analysis the activity of management, work, and employment relations. Whilst ultimately cultural industries possess their own logics and dynamics, given the nature of symbolic goods and the associated indeterminacy of outcomes, a narrower conception of creative distinctiveness in cultural industries has some analytical purchase. Hence the authors favour specificity of analysis, and to illustrate these boundary effects they analyse the popular music industry, where they outline a double articulation of creativity: musicians may self-manage their own creativity, but within a framework whereby record company personnel engage in multiple points of management, setting the terms of access to resources and influence, and ultimately to the market-place.

The concentration of media industries in specific cities and regions has meant that economic geographers have been the central discipline in developing our empirical and theoretical understanding of how they operate. Susan Christopherson's many fine-grained studies of the impact of corporate strategies on labour and labour markets in Hollywood and the US film industry have shaped debates for over two decades. In Chapter 4 she reminds us that labour has always adapted to shifts in corporate strategies. The danger, she warns, is that there is a slippage between the 'work' of developing and sustaining the personal ties that criss-cross the labour market and the 'networking' activities of corporate projects and managements. Nor is this slippage avoided by the use of neologisms such as 'heterarchy,' Grabher's (2001) influential, but fundamentally mistaken concept that depicts both local, 'village' sociality and corporate alliances as essentially similar in their capacity for organic self-regulation. While it is vital to register the social ties that ease job search, so it is no less important to acknowledge the unintended, structural effects these have for different types of workers. As Hollywood has shifted away from mid-range movies to global blockbusters, so the proportion of permanent employment has dropped as product portfolios have shrunk. Of course, since 1945 Hollywood studios have concentrated on genre and star vehicles to reduce market uncertainty: Christopherson is highlighting an acceleration of this long-established trend (Sedgwick, 2002).

Together with this move in production priorities, Christopherson points to the increase in young, college-trained labour ready to accept temporary, poorly-paid assignments to build their experience, contacts, and reputations.

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The craft identities – and the union jurisdictions to which they were bound – are giving way to more amorphous job titles and roles. Such 'hybrid' labour has learnt to cope with depleted budgets and foreshortened deadlines, but at the cost of accepting a labour market immune to union regulation. Workers struggles to cope with this new, kaleidoscopic production system by intensifying its use of established worker networks to mediate this increasingly unfamiliar, uncertain, and balkanised labour market. One key fracture is gender: one man's inclusive network is another woman's almost impenetrable charmed circle. Gender disparities in job opportunities and salary levels have increased as Hollywood has concentrated on global blockbusters. Together with downsized in-house writing and production staffs, Hollywood has subcontracted vital roles to *established* social networks to reduce risks as it saves cost. The uncertainty that has *always* been a characteristic of jobs in the media industries has increased in the last decade, yet we know little of how such risks are perceived, evaluated, and coped with by creative labour over time. Equally, there has been little detailed investigation of the formation of corporate strategies in the media industries, beyond issues of financial engineering and public policy concerns over, for example, the nature of political debate or retaining national distinct cinemas. Nor do we have any detailed appreciation of how work roles and labour market opportunities are reshaping social identities. We can see an abrupt move from what were clear craft loyalties based on tools, techniques and the labour process to, perhaps, less focused identities defined, in part, by an acceptance of risk and a *rejection* of 'outmoded' production-based identities. Just as broad categories such as 'knowledge work' threaten to usurp the defining prerogatives of the professions, so the easy use of the umbrella term 'creative labour' can mask significant – and sometimes deliberate – changes in job jurisdictions and contracts. Trade unions and producer associations, in Hollywood and beyond, cannot develop effective recruitment or representation strategies if they remain wedded to concepts of labour that fail to recognise these profound shifts in the identities and networking practices of contemporary media workers.

It has become commonplace to understand the dominant mode of organisation in the creative industries as the network, rather than the 'market' or 'hierarchy.' And this is true whether the subject is a global alliance between corporations, the intimate ties of knowledge, mutuality and trust that comprise collegiality, or the information screening and diffusion that increase the efficiency of labour markets. In all cases, however, network is a term that is almost always couched in wholly positive terms: the dynamic, flexible, social alternative to the impersonality of market forces or the dead-hand of corporate bureaucracy. Several chapters in this collection examine such phenomena. A particular strength of these chapters is their focus on networks in specific times and places: sector, project, or region.

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Keith Randle and Nigel Culkin (Chapter 5) provide an account of working in the entertainment industries in southern California, and the sources of threats to film and television segments of the industry as work migrates to Canada and other production sites. Freelance working in the US entertainment industries provides a graphic picture of the insecurity and uncertainty of project-based employment in the creative industries. The chapter opens with a discussion of the Hollywood film industry and the sources of employment uncertainty in the audio visual media industries more generally. The chapter dove-tails with that of Christopherson, and provides empirical details of the coping strategies of workers in the new environment. The traditional strength of industrial relations institutions in Hollywood have reduced as market uncertainties, the increased mobility of film capital and greater competition have weakened these sources of labour support. Against this background the chapter, using informant interviews, aims to examine the nature of employee strategies in a climate of uncertainty. These include amongst others, working for free and increased reliance on family support. Thus the chapter provides evidence of changes to the spatial concentrations of production mentioned above. While detailing background to employment relations in film and television, the main thrust of the chapter examines 'the reality of freelance work' as described by a panel of respondents. This evidence shows how increasing competition has affected finding work, and how longer periods without work mean more 'free working' simply to maintain contacts and labour power; and how this throws workers back on the resources of family support. Hence the traditional ways in which individuals start and develop their careers are being disrupted, and the author's interviews comment on the personal impacts on work that have been introduced due to the structural shift of employment out of Los Angeles.

In Chapter 6 Helen Blair's study of the social networks of a UK film crew is embedded in a wider consideration of how we understand the formation, durability and purposes of social networks in, amongst other things, building a reputation and finding work. For all the categorical sophistication of four decades of research into social networks, there is little insight into how workers gain access to – or develop their own – resources or how agency operates in such complex, dynamic contexts. Agency, Blair suggests, is vital to the dynamism of social networks, yet there have been few empirical studies of how this plays out in practice. Part of the explanation, of course, is the enormity of the methodological and logistical difficulties confronting any long-run or comparative study of social networks.

Theoretically, network research is bedevilled by a false dichotomy between, on the one hand, a rational calculating agent and, on the other hand, agents who are little more than unconscious dupes of established routines and habits. Blair seeks to overcome these false alternatives by using the concept

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of 'active networking'. Active networking is employed to capture both formal, rational networking activities and the maintenance and use of informal communications to convey one's self-image of, perhaps, professional competence or creativity and to receive soft information about job prospects. Soft information could include not just the availability of a job and its technical demands but also important impressions about the social ordering of a long-established film crew. Sociability, a capacity to read and adapt to a social setting quickly, is no less important than technical competence in a project-based organisation, working as they do to tight deadlines. For the job-seeker, the aim, to amend Mark Granovetter's (1973, 1983, 1985) notion of the 'embeddedness' of social networks, is to be a *familiar stranger*, socially adept *and* technically competent. For the individual hiring through social networks, the task is to establish which recommendations can be endorsed without personal knowledge of the applicant. And for the sponsor, the calculation involves both an evaluation of their own reputation and whether the job-seekers performance will enhance or jeopardise this important source of social capital.

In Chapter 7 Irena Grugulis and Dimitrinka Stoyanova provide a sectoral study of skill formation in film and TV, and thus add new insights into the differences and overlaps between these processes in a regional and geographically marginal location compared with more metropolitan centres. Whereas the literature focuses (understandably) on the activity of 'hubs' or the centres of excellence, Grugulis and Stoyanova suggest professional work and occupational learning are not confined to these areas and regionally-based networks, with all the limitations that that these possess are also important. Skill acquisition and development occurs through the medium of a community of workers, where newcomers learn on the job through observation and discussion with their peers and their entry into a professional network (coupled with the effectiveness of that network) is central to the success or failure of skills development. Generalising beyond the specific study, the authors speculate that this pattern follows optimistic predictions of the way expert labour will function in the future. Their research certainly reveals how effective professional communities can be at supporting skills development across formal organisational boundaries (see, for example Finegold, 1999; Blair, 2001; Piore and Sabel, 1984).

Clearly this form of development encourages and supports rather different behaviours to those fostered by a skill formation system based on lifetime employment and strong internal labour markets and we might expect technical skills to be combined with strong social skills, impression management and self presentation as opposed to, perhaps, loyalty, independent judgement and rigorous professional standards. Such communities or 'learning networks' are still comparatively understudied so this group of workers

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are of interest. The chapter opens with a discussion of work and employment in the Film and TV industry in Britain, before moving to examine their distinctive contribution, namely a focus on 'community skill' formation within a regional setting. Evidence is gathered through fieldwork and the authors quote informants experiences of 'getting a foot in the door' and learning on the job'.

In Chapter 8 Axel Haunschild and Doris Eikhof examine the social character, life style and motivations of German actors and how these interact with their labour process practices. They apply new German theories of employment to discuss this specific sector and seek to make generalisations about project-focused creative production in general. This type of work requires a high level of flexibility and mobility by creative workers as this requires severe uncertainties for work planning for both organisations and individuals. Working in such contexts can be interpreted as 'self-employed employees' characterised by high degrees of self-control, self-marketing and economisation of life. The aim of the chapter is to explore the effects of working as self-employed employees in a specific creative industry: German theatre. Based on qualitative empirical research, the chapter analyses how self-control, self-marketing and economisation of life shape the labour process in theatres. Finally, the chapter deduces general consequences of working in project-focused work relations.

This chapter looks at labour market strategies of creative worker and how these strategies impact on the labour process. As such the chapter proposes to fill a gap in the existing literature by analysing project-focused work from a wider perspective of trans-organisational work of theatre artists at an individual level by using the concept of 'Arbeitskraftunternehmer' or 'self-employed employee'. The analysis is based on 45 in-depth interviews in three major German theatres and in selected inter-firm institutions. The concept of the 'self employed employee' is more familiar in Germany and does not describe a category of employment so much as a broader theoretical terrain to illustrate a highly market-oriented and individualised form of work supply. The term 'self-employed employment' was not coined to describe existing forms of work or employment and their specific underlying contractual arrangements and as such it is an '…analytical framework for analysing a mode of labour use which, at the individual level, is characterized by the following three features: (1) a high degree of self-control, (2) self-marketing, and (3) economization of life together with blurring boundaries between work and private life.'

The chapter shows how: 'Networking and the strategic accumulation and use of social capital are the main practices of self-marketing in theatre For intrinsically motivated self-employed employees, working in trans-organizational projects leads to a seemingly paradoxical situation: Individuals understand

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themselves as creative, self-controlled and intrinsically motivated bohemians (for whom "art for art's sake" is a central professional value), but at the same time they have to be very clever as well as calculating managers of themselves as human resources.' Self-employed employees do not separate work and life with respect to, for instance, time, place or partners, but tend to mix or integrate both spheres. The authors suggest that lessons can be learnt from this sector and they argue that the fit with wide-ranging changes of the labour process beyond the creative industries.

AU: ... if the fit with ... . Pls check sentence.

The labour processes of the creative industries are – like any other industry – necessarily collective and involve issues of job controls, managerial authority, efficiency and coordination. Too often the object of academic study is defined in terms of empty abstractions, such as 'the organisation' or 'the project,' with little or no empirical grounding or sense of long-run change and continuity. Studies of the creative industries that simply assume that a loose, shifting labour process is a 'natural' response to the functional requirements of a project-based industry ignore the role of employers in *unmaking* regulated labour markets and *making* a deregulated market regime. Alan McKinlay's (Chapter 9) study of British commercial television locates the contemporary work organisation as the result of a systematic assault on job controls and union contracts that stretched over two decades. From the foundation of the commercial sector in the late 1950s, union rules were codified in increasingly comprehensive national agreements. This national contract established a *de facto* pre-entry closed shop in which only union members could work. The national contract allowed the broadcast union to control local and national labour supply. Each task in a complex, time-sensitive labour process was the jurisdiction of a specific craft group. The television crafts developed strong identities and jealously guarded their job domain. Encroachments into neighbouring jurisdictions were rare and incurred heavy penalties, particularly for management. Accordingly, management and unions assumed mutual responsibility for a stable labour process that absorbed technical change into the *status quo*.

This regulated regime began to dissolve in the first half of the 1980s as key companies confronted the union. In turn, this coincided with a more assertive bargaining strategy by the national employers' federation. By 1988, the national agreement had been virtually abandoned. Over the next decade the main broadcasting union all but collapsed as controls of working time, contracts and work organisation evaporated. The broadcasting union rebuilt a presence in the commercial sector, but has lost all control over labour supply, has at most minimal control over role definitions, and the correspondence between work and union identity has disappeared.

The main drivers of change in commercial television have been the penetration of accounting and performance measures into the fabric of the labour

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process. Nevertheless, McKinlay argues that the deregulated landscape of the contemporary television studio has opened up some paradoxical spaces for creativity. He portrays not so much a single television labour process as a spectrum that ranges from highly choreographed, high-budget network productions to local, 'live' programmes. Across the range, however, no programme form allows for the resurrection of craft controls or identities. Rather, echoing Christopherson's account of the emergence of new hybrid job titles in the US film industry, McKinlay hints at the ways in which television crews gain glimpses of how production *could* be organised differently, ways in which their collective skills are not just used but enhanced. Above all, crew members were required not just to use their craft skills but also to make aesthetic decisions about the look and feel of the programme. Of course, in commercial television, these are just that: paradoxical moments of collective, creative space that close down quickly as the crew disperse onto other projects. This rediscovery of the reciprocity and the language of mutual responsibility for a project is, suggests Banks (2006), the harbinger of a different sort of moral economy in the creative industries that is at odds with the realities of self-exploitation identified by many commentators (see Bilton, 2007; Ross, 2003). Further still, these individual experiences are collectively woven into an overarching narrative that provides a form of collective self-regulation that both limits *and* venerates entrepreneurialism, professionalism and a determination to complete projects to deadline and budgets, no matter how unrealistic (Wittel, 2001). The *craft* identity of broadcasting labour has virtually disappeared. Perhaps these fleeting moments of collective technical and aesthetic work will form the basis of 'new' identity of broadcast professionals, with no necessary connection to a shared craft heritage.

Human geographers, as noted above, have played a seminal role in charting the development of the creative industries, from the cluster to the city to the neighbourhood. Dense social networks based on intense face-to-face communication and concentrated in specific locales were identified by the geographers of culture. 'Place' itself became an essential *force of production*, especially where particular locations became identified not just with effective economic activity but also, and no less importantly, with specific cultural movements. This was as true for the 'Swinging London' of the 1960s as for 1980s Seattle and grunge, and the late 1990s dotcom boom of San Francisco. This interpenetration of cultural and business activities embedded in specific places has been empirically demonstrated by cultural geographers (see Scott, 2000). The inherent uncertainties of cultural products often results in a complex co-production process between client and provider, especially during the definition an innovative product or service (Wittel *et al*, 2002). Essentially, these networks operate as something between a collective factory and a collective entrepreneur.

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Andy Pratt's (Chapter 10) study of the emergence of the new media industry of San Francisco demonstrates an acute sensitivity to time, place and process. This location of industrial development is especially important when considering new media which held the promise of a perfect virtuality that completely transcended place. On the contrary, just as there are geographies of distribution and consumption for new media, so also there are location-specific clusters of production. Indeed, Pratt offers something of a micro-geography of a global industry. He focuses on one small place, a scruffy park that became a focal point for San Francisco's emergent new media sector. The overblown hype that surrounded the dotcom boom was not just that this technology enabled a 'perfect' market for goods and services, but also a new form of enterprise organisation entirely based on specific projects. In practice, this rhetoric reflected much more chaotic processes on the ground. The life-cycle of firms was not perfectly synchronised with that of projects. Rather, firms, or at least a handful of core staff, would remain more or less intact while churning through technologies, staff and wildly different business models. New media workers did not just soak up the sun in this Bay area park, but used it to update their skills, awareness of new business plans, and to project their entrepreneurial/technical selves to their lunching peers. Nor was this voracious networking simply bounded by place. Very real temporal constraints were placed on new media entrepreneurs/workers who had to work and play in the firms, bars and restaurants with the most buzz; hence, far from being freed from 'old economy' restraints that tie production to specific times and places, the new media industries exhibited extreme locational and temporal specificity.

If geographies of physical and social spaces have been dominated by the neighbourhood and the city, the two final chapters in the books add to this by considerations of national employment systems. They explicitly consider the relationship between national employment systems and the new media industries. The management and organisation of knowledge and work in the German internet industry is considered by Nicole Mayer-Ahuja and Harald Wolf (Chapter 11); the Swedish case by Frederik Augustsson and Ake Sandberg (Chapter 12). Both cases are markedly different from the experience of San Francisco described by Andy Pratt (Chapter 10). Where the San Francisco labour market was unregulated and highly volatile, in Sweden and Germany employment was much more permanent, and organisations more conventional in terms of their internal hierarchies and reward systems. In Swedish interactive media companies, employment was relatively stable and contracts typically permanent, in sharp contrast to the American experience of chaotic churn. The Swedish employment contracts were peculiarly imprecise relative to the national norm, but were far from the freelance project-bounded contracts of America.

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The German case sits somewhere between the American and the Swedish experiences. There is extensive freelance employment in the German internet industry, but this was regulated to some degree by organised labour pools. There were two areas in which all three cases had similar patterns of organisation. First, the main form of labour control strategy was 'self-organisation', a pervasive assumption that made for an uneven and uncomfortable development of employing bureaucracies. Second, in all three settings, this 'self-organisation' included workers search to maximise their individual autonomy and a willingness to sacrifice any reasonable notion of work-life balance. Again, as both the German and Swedish cases highlight, the danger is that we mistake the unsustainable expectations of a young workforce in an emerging industry with a permanent *status quo*. Only long-run panel data would allow us to track how the ethos of 'self-organisation' and internet career structures has actually developed or evolved.

The Swedish study also provides two important methodological correctives to short-run studies of particular places, companies or occupations. The Swedish methodology was replicated by the German study. Inevitably, such snapshot studies are prone to being bedazzled by the shock of the new. Equally, by concentrating on the specificities of a single moment, snap-shots are necessarily atemporal and aprocessual, liable to generalise from – or rather conflate – the needs of a particular phase of a project. The first methodological development is their use of surveys and interviews over time. This allows the Swedish study both to capture the wider distribution of tasks undertaken by new media workers and something of how they relate their project-based experience to their career development. By focusing on a broader range of tasks, Augustsson and Sandberg remind us that new media employees have responsibilities that are not unlike those in any organisation, large or small: reporting on project, negotiating, specifying targets, coordinating production. Nor are creative workers 'creative' all the time. Second, by categorising the labour process into three distinct elements – aesthetic, technical, and economic – we can compare project, firm, sector and national forms of organising interactive media production. This tripartite schema *does* allow for genuine comparative research.

Indeed, the Swedish study could be used as a template for how to study the creative industries more generally. Of course, in practice, these categories of task overlap. But, if Swedish employment contracts differ markedly from the 'natural' market assumptions that have shaped the Anglo-American experience, the production *is* organised around the project. Project management restricts – or directs – the 'creativity' of creative labour to specific phases, tasks and individuals. 'Creativity' is not, therefore, a necessary feature of all parts of the labour process. Again, this is an obvious, but important, theoretical counter to any futile search for the moment of 'pure' creativity. Much more important is the finding that production is characterised by a blurring of

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vertical hierarchies and complex, iterative exchanges across job roles as expertise is swapped and developed. The development of a wide range and unusually deep forms of tacit knowledge could be symptomatic of an emerging industry. It remains to be seen the extent to which industry standard modes of project management bureaucratise such tacit knowledge, and whether such administrative innovations target the technical and economic aspects of creative labour and remain frustrated by the elusiveness of 'creative' labour.

Notes

1 For an excellent overview of these issues and one which maintains a concern with arts/cultural production and not just consumption, see O'Connor (2007).
2 The Writer Guild of America 'demanded a greater share of residuals from DVD sales, new media revenues (digital downloads of movies and television shows), and jurisdiction over animation and reality television shows, which employ non-union writers. Before the final settlement was reached, the WGA removed their proposal on DVD residuals and concentrated instead on the issues involving new media and jurisdiction over reality shows and animation.' (Klowden and Chatterjee, 2008: 16) See: http://www.milkeninstitute.org/pdf/writers_strike.pdf writers.
3 See O'Connor (2007: 41–7) for an extensive discussion of the role of New Labour in shifting government towards 'creative industries' in the UK.
4 http://uk.cbs.dk/forskning_viden/institutter_centre/institutter/imagine/menu/publikationer
5 http://www.intellectbooks.co.uk/journals.appx.php?issn=17510694
6 **Table 1.1** Disaggregated employment in the UK creative industries for 2001

Industries	Employees
Software & Computer	555,000
Publishing	141,000
Music	122,000
Television & Radio	102,000
Advertising	93,000
Design	76,000
Performing Arts	74,000
Film & Video	45,000
Art & Antiques Market	37,000
Crafts	24,000
Architecture	21,000
Interactive Leisure Software	21,000
Designer Fashion	12,000
Estimated Total Employment	**1,322,000**

From Warhurst and Thompson (2005).

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7 http://www.motherjones.com/news/feature/2007/03/and_then_there_were_eight.pdf

8 Previous centres of secure, bureaucratic waged labour forms, such as the BBC, have now undergone retrenchment, delaying and downsizing. This has effects of transforming former employees (who had salaries, access to internal training rights, job ladders, and pensions) into independent producers or small production companies. However as then Chairman of the BBC makes clear below, insecurity can have a negative impact of innovation, against assumptions that entrepreneurial insecurity keeps talent focused:

> Casualisation [of employment in broadcasting] is leading to derivative ideas. You give the commissioners what you think they want, not what you are passionately dying to make and believe in. Because you're desperate for the work. Somewhere in British broadcasting there has to be a bedrock of sustainable talent with time to think, to observe, to absorb what's going on in the world outside broadcasting and to turn that experience into programmes of challenge, ambition, quality and innovation. Innovation does not come from watching other channels. But in return for the huge privilege of secure funding [employment security] that this implies, the BBC has to be able to demonstrate it is spending the licence fee prudently in the public interest. And it has to be able to do that openly and transparently.

Sources: Michael Grade Speech 'Building Public Value' Tuesday 29 June 200[0]4 ref from Website [http://www.bbc.co.uk/print/pressoffice/speeches/ stories/bpv_grade]

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