

**TWENTY YEARS AFTER: THE WORKSHOP ON CULTURAL ECONOMY**

**10 JANUARY 2020, 9am – 6pm**

**CITY, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON**

**ELGO1, Drysdale Building**

Northampton Square

London EC1V 0HB

**PROGRAMME (DRAFT)**



## Short timetable

9-9.30	Toby Bennett (convenor) Andy Pratt (Professor of Cultural Economy & Director of CCCI)	Welcome introduction
9.30-10.45 Witness Seminar	Michael Pryke Paul Du Gay Angela McRobbie Sean Nixon Don Slater Chair: Philip Roscoe	What Was Cultural Economy?
10.45-11.00	BREAK	
11.00-12.30 Positions and Provocations	Fabian Muniesa Jennifer Smith Maguire José Ossandón & Trine Pallesen	Finance: Cultural or Political? How Cultural Intermediaries Research Could Matter More Ethnographers Making Markets (or How to Intervene in a Market-intervention)
12.30-13.30	LUNCH (provided)	
13.30-14.30 Critical Trajectories	Angela McRobbie Felicity Callard	Stuart Hall, Black and Asian British Arts as Creative Economy #notallgeographers? [Human geography, university management, pensions, strikes]
14.30-15.30 Applied Cultural Economy	Joanne Entwistle & Don Slater Andy Pratt	Material Culture and Material Politics: From Affordances to Political Economies Cultural Production and Policy: Return of the Repressed?
15.30-15.45	BREAK	
15.45-16.45 Performances of work	Lizzie Richardson André Spicer	Office performance, Devices and Cultural economy Veblenian Entrepreneurs and the Untrepreneurship Economy
16.45-17.45 Financialisation and Enrichment	Syahirah Abdul Rahman Simon Susen	Title TBC [Postcolonial financial citizenship] The Economy of Enrichment: Towards a New Form of Capitalism?
17.45-18.00	Liz McFall Karen Gregory	Closing comments
18.30	Evening meal for contributors at The Peasant pub.	

## Context

The Workshop on Cultural Economy took place at the turn of the millennium, at the Open University's Walton Hall in Milton Keynes, hosted by the Pavis Centre for Social and Cultural Research. Here, a small group representing sympathetic but divergent social science subdisciplines each brought a 'cultural' eye to the changing status and social character of economic logics. The event produced an edited volume, *Cultural Economy: Cultural Analysis and Commercial Life* (Du Gay and Pryke 2002); within ten years, via a range of publications and collaborative projects, it had evolved into an increasingly robust, if still nascent, field of study (Bennett et al. 2008).

As editors and contributors (Cooper and McFall 2017; Entwistle and Slater 2014; Richardson 2019; Umney et al. 2017), as much as critics (Gregory 2014; Toscano 2016), have recently been at pains to note, despite considerable and microscopic attention to the making up of the 'economic' and the 'social', the specific pertinence of the 'cultural' and, yet more urgently, the 'political' (particularly issues of representation and resistance) remain difficult to articulate within the Cultural Economy project. This despite the centrality of the latter terms to practitioners of cultural studies, who enjoyed a foundational presence in its early construction.



On the occasion of its twentieth anniversary, therefore, we reconvene the Workshop: revisiting the conditions of its emergence; provoking consideration on its legacies and possible futures. Returning to this moment in a spirit both genealogical and renovative, we encourage original participants and those who engaged with later conceptual and institutional developments (sympathetic co-conspirators and passionate critics alike) to present their own evaluations of the (ongoing) 'making up' of the Cultural Economy moment.

The 2020 Workshop is co-hosted and generously supported by the Journal of Cultural Economy; the department of Sociology at the University of Edinburgh; and the Centre for Culture and Creative Industries and department of Sociology, both at City, University of London.

# About your hosts

## **The Journal**

The Journal of Cultural Economy was founded in 2008, as a direct output of the ESRC Centre for Research on Socio-Cultural Change. The Journal is concerned with the role played by various forms of material cultural practice in the organisation of the economy and the social, and of the relations between them. As such it is a unique interdisciplinary forum for work on these questions from across the social sciences and humanities. These include, but are not restricted to, the contributions of governmentality, pragmatism, narrative analysis, actor network theory and science and technology studies and associated debates about valuation, measurement, performativity and performance in economy, culture and society.

<https://www.journalofculturaleconomy.org/>

## **The Centre for Culture and the Creative Industries**

CCCI, based in the Department of Sociology, provides a rich and thriving academic environment in which to study one of the fastest-growing sectors of the global economy. We undertake world-leading research into many aspects of the international creative economy, and regularly advise organisations such as UNESCO and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport on matters of cultural policy.

This research expertise consistently informs our outstanding teaching. Our MA in Culture, Policy and Management is the longest established programme of its kind in the UK, with a near forty-year history and a network of alumni in prestigious cultural management positions around the world. A new MA in Global Creative Industries will launch in 2020.

<https://www.city.ac.uk/about/schools/arts-social-sciences/sociology/culture-creative-industries>

# Directions

## **The Room**

ELG01 is in the Drysdale Building, below ground. Enter through the revolving doors to University building at the main entrance on Northampton Square. Walk straight ahead and descend the staircase – the room will be signposted at the end of the corridor on the left.

<https://www.city.ac.uk/about/campus-map>

## **The Peasant**

After the event, contributors are invited to the Peasant pub for drinks and an evening meal. The venue is located a two-minute walk from Northampton Square. 240 St John Street EC1V 4PH

The pub is named for its location close to the Smithfield site where, in 1381, Wat Tyler, leader of the Peasants Revolt, is said to have met with King Richard II to successfully negotiate social and economic reforms – before being decapitated by the Lord Mayor of London.

<http://www.thepeasant.co.uk/>

## FULL PROGRAMME

# WHAT WAS CULTURAL ECONOMY?

**Paul Du Gay (Copenhagen Business School)**

**Michael Pryke (Open University)**

**Angela McRobbie (Goldsmiths, University of London)**

**Sean Nixon (University of Essex)**

**Don Slater (London School of Economics)**

**Chair: Philip Roscoe (University of St Andrews)**

*The witness seminar is a method of recording collective oral history, developed by the Institute of Contemporary British History to examine the role of expertise in events of the recent past. It is a structured group discussion, that has been used to study areas such as change in political governance, medical breakthroughs and the development of economic techniques. Here we apply it to the formative disciplinary mix of cultural economy, drawing out the recollections of a selection of participants in the original Workshop on Cultural Economy. The intention is part archival and part scene-setting: serving as a reminder of the material, social and institutional arrangements, as much as conceptual and textual ones, through which epistemic projects emerge and crystallise.*

*Panellists are asked to respond to the following questions:*

- *To what did the original workshop respond, in terms of both empirical events and scholarly disputes?*
- *What were the intellectual traditions which it drew on and set itself against?*
- *What was the institutional context in which it could be fostered?*
- *Did this moment cultivate subsequent path dependence? Which were the paths not taken?*

*Followed by audience discussion.*

## POSITIONS AND PROVOCATIONS

### **Finance: Cultural or Political?**

**Fabian Muniesa (École des Mines de Paris)**

*What is the use of calling "cultural" the set of habits, worldviews, practices, struggles and processes that go today by the name of "finance"? Cannot the subject matter be dealt with more aptly with the word "political", especially if the objective is to add some critical traction and contribute to political articulation? Drawing from a few old conversations on the subject matter (and from a couple of arguably new problems), a plea for the "cultural" is nonetheless offered, with special reference to the disorientating role that "political economy" and the concept of "value" play in the debate (and with connections to the current thread on "economic theology").*

### **How Cultural Intermediaries Research Could Matter More**

**Jennifer Smith Maguire (Sheffield Hallam University)**

*We gather in the rosy glow of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Workshop on Cultural Economy, and in the grim shadow of a general election that affirmed that the success or failure of products (political manifestos or otherwise) hinges less on objective properties and more on the canny perspicacity and*

*cultural-economic devices of intermediaries. I've devoted not a little ink over the years to suggesting how and why cultural intermediaries matter. In examining thorny questions of how culture and economy are co-constituted, the empirical entry point of cultural intermediaries usefully trains attention on discrete living bodies and embodied passions, material practices and constraints, and socio-historical contingencies and impacts. Among other benefits, this lends a sense of ontological security (this is who they are; that is what they do and what becomes of it) to a fundamentally insecure enterprise: an attempt to unpick (if not dispose of) the boundary between culture and economy, two categories of meaning that are central to daily sense-making and mundane, practical action. The empirical utility (indeed, inclusivity) of a focus on cultural intermediaries, however, is not unrelated to its analytical challenges. If framing and influence work are understood as fundamental to all social interaction (Smith Maguire & Matthews 2012), if culture is recognized as endemic to all economic forms and activities (Neilson & Coté 2013), if the boundaries around expertise are increasingly porous and every Twitter account serves as a soapbox for a would-be influencer, then the field will continue to struggle with long-standing charges of a 'dog's dinner' of a concept (Hesmondhalgh 2006: 227) and complaints of a lack of attention to 'the social effects and divisive nature of cultural economic regimes' (Jack 2002: 274). It thus seems an opportune moment to consider how research on cultural intermediaries continues to matter—indeed, could matter more—through a focus on the potential for crafting narratives, engineering cultural legitimacy, and orchestrating durable attachments (Cochoy et al 2017) to market relations that do 'creative justice' (Banks 2017) to their constituent people, products and ideas.*

### **Ethnographers making markets (or how to intervene in a market-intervention)**

**José Ossandón & Trine Pallesen (Copenhagen Business School)**

*The cultural economy moment enabled the huge expansion of the social studies of markets inspired by Callon. This has created a new type of "persona" for the social researcher interested in markets: an ethnographer who studies the practices of economists and other experts creating markets. The paper analyses a case of an ethnographer trained in this "new new economic sociology" (McFall) who has been asked to collaborate in a project to design a market. The case opens two important questions. First: how well equipped is the new new economic sociologist to participate in the creation of new economic forms? Second: the literature on performativity has shown that economists do not simply represent but transform the situations in which they participate. Economists economize markets, but what happens to markets when you add an ethnographer. What do we add – or how we intervene in – market making?*

## **CRITICAL TRAJECTORIES**

### **Stuart Hall, Black and Asian British Arts as Creative Economy**

**Angela McRobbie (Goldsmiths, University of London)**

*This paper makes three specific and interrelated arguments. First, it argues that the power of Stuart Hall's pedagogy can be understood as having established a "third space" between political activism and academic research, a space that in the 1970s and early 1980s permitted the development of British cultural studies as an anti-elitist, theoretically informed approach to the field of culture, in particular popular culture. Second, I propose that as this space also opened itself up, starting in the late 1980s, to emerging young black and Asian British artists, and as it extended itself so as to engage with the work of key postcolonial theorists, a body of films and artworks appeared that expanded this space, maintaining the integrity of a practice that refuted the distinctions between high and low culture, in terms of aesthetics, and rhetorical address, and audiences. Third, I argue that the advent of neo liberal political culture in the United Kingdom cuts short the conditions of emergence, which had supported this group of artists, with all that this augurs for future generations of black and Asian artists today.*

**TITLE TBC #notallgeographers [Human Geography, University Management, Pensions, Strikes]**

**Felicity Callard (Birkbeck, University of London)**

*Abstract TBC*

## APPLIED CULTURAL ECONOMY

**Material Culture and Material Politics: from affordances to political economies**

**Joanne Entwistle (King's College, London) and Don Slater (LSE)**

*Drawing on moves towards material politics and inventive sociologies, we look at ways in which cultural forms and ways of encoding 'the social' in materials can shape political and economic spaces. The paper draws on the work of our Configuring Light research group, which carries out studies of a specific material – light – as an actor in the making of urban public space and in municipal governance; and which explores collaborations between social researchers and designers, planners and other lighting-related professionals. This paper considers several examples of how shifting understandings of light and urbanity can produce different financial, marketing and policy spaces.*

**Cultural Production and Policy: Return of the Repressed?**

**Andy Pratt (City, University of London)**

*Abstract TBC*

## PERFORMANCES OF WORK

**Veblenian Entrepreneurs and the Untrepreneurship Economy**

**André Spicer (Cass Business School, City, University of London)**

*What is driving the declining quality of innovation-driven entrepreneurship? In this paper, we argue the growing entrepreneurship industry is an important yet overlooked explanation. This rapidly growing industry has transformed the nature of entrepreneurship and encouraged a particular form of low-quality entrepreneurship. It has done so by leveraging the Ideology of Entrepreneurialism to mass-produce and mass-market products that make possible what we term Veblenian Entrepreneurship. This is entrepreneurship pursued primarily as a form of conspicuous consumption. Aside from lowering average entrepreneurial quality, Veblenian Entrepreneurship has a range of (short-run) positive and (medium and long-run) negative effects for both individuals and society at large. We argue that the rise of the Veblenian Entrepreneur has contributed to creating an increasingly Untrepreneurial Economy. That is an economy which superficially appears innovation-driven and dynamic, but is actually rife with inefficiencies and unable to generate economically meaningful growth through innovation.*

## **Office performance, Devices and Cultural economy**

**Lizzie Richardson (University of Sheffield)**

*A founding move of cultural economy was to examine the relationship between cultural forms and economic realities to understand how the economy is performed. One means of approaching performance has been through devices, understood as more or less material operations that contingently construct the economic real. This intervention makes two linked points on devices. Firstly, contemporary digital devices result in materialising arrangements of the economy organised not simply through networks but around moments of temporary concentration of differently networked elements. Drawing on the example of office work with digital devices, new forms of temporary gathering of business activity through the growth of flexible office space (known in the real estate industry as “space as service”) are emerging, as well as the longer running dispersal from the office afforded by mobile technologies (e.g. teleworking). Through such logics of gathering and dispersal of different businesses, the office materialises temporary business relations as the performance of an economic real. This example indicates, secondly, the requirement for a rethinking of the relationship between devices and the economies that they operationalise. If at present the focus on devices has aimed to emphasise how a given appearance of stability or economic reality was achieved, contemporary digital devices foreground the performance of temporariness or contingency as the achievement. Temporary relations and changing content are the modus operandi of contemporary digital devices. Thus the device approach might shift from emphasising the contingency of economic reality as a performance, to focus on how contingency itself is achieved as an economic performance.*

## **FINANCIALISATION AND ENRICHMENT**

### **TITLE TBC [On Postcolonial Financial Citizenship]**

**Syahirah Abdul Rahman (University of Sheffield)**

*This paper explores the spatial and historically specific nature of financialisation in a postcolonial context. Specifically, the paper draws out the significance of FC as part of broader nation building objectives in Malaysia from an elite perspective, while also observing the reluctance of citizen investors who are engaging with the equity market to support the formal objectives of the policy. In doing so, it provides an example of the financialisation of everyday life in a distinctive and complex emerging economy context. Moreover, the paper explores these processes from both elite and citizen perspectives, allowing these layered relations within FC to be analysed. The paper, therefore, brings new understandings of elite–citizen relations in postcolonial nation-building strategies.*

### **The Economy of Enrichment: Towards a New Form of Capitalism?**

**Simon Susen (City, University of London)**

*The main purpose of this paper is to provide a critical overview of the key contributions made by Luc Boltanski and Arnaud Esquerre in their recent book *Enrichissement. Une critique de la marchandise* (Paris: Gallimard, 2017). With the exception of one journal article, entitled ‘The Economic Life of Things: Commodities, Collectibles, Assets’ (New Left Review 98: 31–56, 2016), their collaborative work has received little attention in Anglophone circles. This paper aims to demonstrate that Boltanski and Esquerre’s study, *Enrichissement*, contains valuable insights into the constitution of Western European capitalism in the early twenty-first century. In order to substantiate the validity of this claim, the paper focuses on central dimensions that, in Boltanski and Esquerre’s view, need to be scrutinized to grasp the nature of major trends in contemporary society, notably those associated with the consolidation of the enrichment economy. As elucidated in this inquiry, Boltanski and Esquerre’s ‘pragmatics of value-setting’ is based on four forms of valorization: (a) the ‘standard form’, (b) the ‘collection form’, (c) the ‘trend form’, and (d) the ‘asset form’. Arguably, the interaction between these*

*forms of valorization is crucial to the rise of a new socio-historical constellation, which Boltanski and Esquerre call 'integral capitalism'. In the final section, attention will be drawn to several noteworthy limitations of Boltanski and Esquerre's analysis.*