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Creative Jobs, Industries and Places

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Introduction

Creative Jobs, Industries and Places

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This special issue publishes some of the interesting work that is going on within the creative economy research field. This concept of the creative economy has been the focus of our own research for more than a decade. The most fundamental level building block of the creative economy is, of course, creative individuals. Richard Florida's *The Rise of the Creative Class* (2002) illustrated that every single human being has creative potential, and discussed the economic value of such creative individuals for innovation in industry. At the industry level, "creative industries" has been the terminology to describe industries where individual creativity is systematically harnessed to achieve high levels of innovation, namely, high-tech industries with a high R&D or programming component, as well as cultural industries such as entertainment or design (Caves, 2000; Throsby, 2001; Hesmondhalgh, 2002).

Florida's research demonstrated how it may be more important what individuals work with and where they live, rather than which firm they work in, providing a useful alternate framework for measuring regional development potential over the more education-focused human capital measurement. In other words, "the creative economy" is shorthand for intimate and intricate couplings between creative jobs, industries and places (Grabher, 2002; Scott, 2002; Cooke and Lazzaretto, 2008; Pratt, 2008). Policymaking focused on creative jobs, industries and places is more in focus than ever for several reasons. With the financial crisis, manufacturing intense regions have experienced an accelerated decline and new jobs have to be created to substitute for the loss of the traditional working-class jobs. However, places with higher creative content, both in terms of jobs and industries, clearly seem to adapt more rapidly and easily to the new conditions. No wonder policymakers from around the world try to get a better understanding of what these industries are, and how they relate to jobs and qualities of place.

Understanding the couplings among creative jobs, industries and places is crucial for managers and policymakers alike, and arguably, a central research problem pertaining to the creative economy is how these different levels of analysis are *interdependent*.

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Multi-level analysis is notoriously difficult, but it is increasingly called for by economists, management scholars, as well as economic geographers (Maskell, 2001; de Leeuw and Meijer, 2007; Gupta *et al.*, 2007; Hitt *et al.*, 2007). Thus, it is appropriate that a multidisciplinary journal such as *Industry and Innovation* takes a tentative step towards such analysis of the creative economy, by presenting a special issue of papers that, using methods spanning from case studies to econometrics, analyze creative jobs, industries and places, as well as some of the important interdependencies between these levels.

The special issue's first paper, "Flexible Organizations, Innovation and Gender Equality" by Laurel Smith-Doerr, provides an insight into some interdependencies between a creative industry and the jobs it offers. The paper also reminds us that creative jobs and creative industries are far from new phenomena. We get a view of the US film industry during the early twentieth century, and the rise and fall of female film writers and the importance of flexible job assignments, professional networks and collaborative work to professional female employment. The paper shows how the transition of film writing from a craft to a more routinized and specialized collection of jobs reduced the participation of women in the profession.

The next two papers in the special issue focus on the interdependencies between creative places and the boom in a particular creative industry, the information and communications technology (ICT) industry. Even if creative industries is a mature phenomenon, it got little attention during the years when Fordist principles were considered the most efficient production procedure. Neither was the role of creativity much discussed during the decades when we experienced an increase of the more standardized service sector. The shift from *routine* to *creativity* from Fordist *specialization* back to *craft* was in part driven by the increased role of the ICT industry and the rise of Silicon Valley as the global center for this industry. While this triggered much industry cluster analysis, a strong focus of research also became the lifestyle the San Francisco Bay region offered for individuals that went to work in the region. Not only did the region provide a good climate for industries, it also offered a high quality of life for the creative class individuals who came from all around the world to work there. "Booming Bohemia?" by David S. Bieri looks at the role of the ICT industry and focuses on the impact of university R&D and the creative class on new high-technology firm formation. The paper finds that with controls for other location factors included, creativity and diversity are important drivers of the location choices of firms across a wide variety of US high-tech industries. Bieri specifically focuses on ICT firms in the San Francisco SOMA (South of Market) area. "The Dot-Com Boom and Bust in the Context of Regional and Sectoral Changes" by Cynthia A. Kroll, Diana Lee and Nadir Shams shows that various factors impacted dot-com firm start-up and relocation both of which contributed significantly to San Francisco's job growth during the period. And, while manufacturing and distribution establishments left the SOMA area and created space for new high-tech start-ups, the arts, social services and non-profits were not displaced.

The remaining three papers in the special issue all analyze how creative industries may leverage qualities of particular creative places to connect to each other in order to innovate. By the end of the 1990s the UK government, especially through work by the UK's National Endowment for Science, Technology, and the Arts (NESTA), introduced a "Creative Industry" definition to enhance the role of culture and design for an increase in the value of the production output. In "Art for Business" by Claudio Dell'Era, we see how businesses that are not traditionally a part of the creative industries can use cultural content and design

to leverage their product and increase the value added of their products (Diesel and illycaffè). These case studies show how cultural content may be used by companies in two different industries as a way to establish their brand and create competitive advantage for each company. Diesel and illycaffè pursue very different projects in different ways to reach different targets, but both are still leveraging cultural content to influence their target markets. In their paper “The Anatomy of the Creative City”, Patrick Cohendet, David Grandadam and Laurent Simon use two specific examples from the creative industries (Ubisoft and Cirque du Soleil) in a creative city (Montréal) to examine the dynamics of situated creativity. By layering the city into an “underground” and an “upperground” and by adding a locality-mediated “middleground” an understanding of the emergence and formation of creative processes is developed. The layers enable the transmission of knowledge from an informal micro-level to a formal macro-level with transit facilitated across and by the middle. “See the Sound, Hear the Style” by Atle Hauge and Brian J. Hracz provides a glimpse into the possible future of the creative economy. It shows the unique linkages across two creative industries—indie music and fashion—and their interrelation in the context of a local scene. Macroeconomic forces and the changing nature of music distribution channels have generated tremendous change and stresses for both those in the music industry and for “independent producers”. As independent producers themselves, fashion designers share concern, perspective and marketing challenges with musicians. By creating their own linkages and developing strategic trade and barter collaborations, both can compete more effectively in the contemporary landscape of cultural production and consumption. The creative place, specifically the “scene” centered in a particular place, serves the critical function of providing the linkages to allow these diverse “independent producers” to connect and jointly tap the scene-related market.

After many years of relative neglect, empirical and conceptual research on the creative economy is finally emerging (see, for example, the 2007 issue of *Journal of Organizational Behavior* on “Paradoxes of Creativity”, the 2008 special issue of *Journal of Economic Geography* on “Geography and the Cultural Economy”, the 2008 special issue of *Industry and Innovation* on “Managing Situated Creativity in Cultural Industries” and the 2009 special issue of *Human Relations* on “Managing in the Creative Industries”). Our own work also continues in this vein—looking at the role of place, both past and future, in connecting creativity and culture, industry and job, individual and organization. Every June, the University of Toronto’s Martin Prosperity Institute holds a workshop on the creative economy, gathering emerging researchers from around the world for three days to get an overview of the research frontier and where it is heading in the future. The workshops provide an opportunity for researchers with a focus on the creative economy to gather and build networks for collaborations, and attract scholars from all sorts of disciplines, presenting a wide range of studies. Some, but not all, of the papers in this issue result from the 2008 workshop, “Experience the Creative Economy”.

We hope this special issue of *Industry and Innovation* mirrors the role of creativity and our understanding of its importance at different levels of the economy, in both the past as well as in the future.

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