
Book Review

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Stuart Cunningham and Terry Flew (Eds.), *A Research Agenda for Creative Industries* (Edward Elgar Publishing, 2019). pp. 184, HB £72.00. ISBN: 9781788118566.

Stuart Cunningham, Professor of Media and Communications, Queensland University of Technology, and Terry Flew, Professor and Assistant Dean in the Creative Industries Faculty at the Queensland University of Technology, Australia, are well-known media and communications scholars. Both the scholars, who are editors of this book, have published their intellectual works in many leading journals, mostly on media and communications.

A Research Agenda for Creative Industries, edited by Professor Cunningham and Professor Flew, reports pertinent issues of creative industries. The book portrays a truly global perspective and economics of the creative industry. Moreover, this book highlights three pertinent issues, ‘How much should a research agenda for creative industries be shaped by a policy and industry orientation?’, ‘How effective is the “triple bottom line” rationale for creative industries?’, and ‘What research agenda can be developed from studying the embedding of creative industries approaches and concepts into education, curriculum, pedagogy, promotion, and alumni tracking?’. Overall, this book has 10 chapters from 14 contributors who are academicians, leading scholars, policy experts, and industry specialists.

Why Research Agenda for Creative Industries?

‘Creative Industries uses an individual’s creativity, skill and talent for job and wealth creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property’ (International Trade Centre)¹, for instance, it includes cinema, performing arts, music, animation, visual effects, publishing, architectural designs, museums, galleries, heritage, crafts and design, gaming, radio, photography, advertising, etc. Of late, the creative industry has emerged as one of the important industries to support the cultural or creative economy. As per Newbigin (2010), ‘cultural industries are as old as the world is or as old as the human civilization’, and the creative economy is derived from the cultural economy. The fundamental prerequisite of the development of the creative economy is respecting intellectual property right (IPR) protection (Krawiec & Noga, 2017), and thus, it becomes more relevant for researchers to decide the research agenda for creative industries.

In the book by John Newbigin, the first chapter highlights the possible future of the creative economy. Further, he summarises that there are two different constituents of the economy in the twenty-first century, and they are, ‘Machine Economy’ and ‘Creative Economy’. In the second chapter of this book, Hasan Bakshi outlines various steps taken by the British Government in order to keep creative industries at the centre of policy formulation. The third chapter by Roberta Comunian talks about how complexity thinking can help to connect creative industries’ research. Further, the author highlights that ‘the complexity perspective is relevant in relation to the creative industries while looking at an interaction at various levels, viz. local clusters, creative products, and their global markets’.

Terry Flew, who is the author of the fourth chapter, attempts to explore the relationship between creative industries, cultural economics, and cultural studies. Further, he summarises that ‘culture has become more important to contemporary economies than ever before’, and it is getting more specific in public policy deliberations. The fifth chapter by John Davis emphasises the use of advanced data analysis techniques in interpreting the statistics, as the creative industry sector is growing. The advanced techniques and tools of research generally help researchers to understand the sector well; also, it gives huge opportunities to researchers and policymakers in deriving inferences. Further, the author highlights the research output in the forms of ‘Digital Format’ for better use and consumption. Digital formats like ‘data visualization’ allow greater flexibility to a policymaker in order to understand the technology, trend,

position, and prospects. In creative industries, ‘the technologies that facilitate greater personalisation, enhanced user interaction, user engagement, and immersion, in nutshell, the technology is an enabler for creative industries and its appropriate use is urged by scholars in the past (Abbasi et al., 2017)’.

‘How blockchains are reshaping business models’ is highlighted by Jason Potts and Ellie Rennie in their chapter. Authors use cases (Ujo Music, CryptoKitties, dad.nyc, and Cellarous) to put forth their agenda. They further discuss ‘What are blockchains all about?’ and ‘How blockchains are reshaping economic infrastructure?’ which is supportive of creative industries. The seventh chapter by Ruth Bridgstock provides the perspective of higher education and creative industries. The author discusses ‘What should we teach in creative degree programmes?’ in order to create a creative human resource that is employable and creative. In the eighth chapter 8, Paul Stepan highlights key factors, namely the subsidy, copyright, and incentives, which are very much pertinent in the creative industries. The author takes a European perspective on the film industry to discuss ‘how these factors shape the cultural field and welfare economy’. Further, the author says that copyright impacts the demand side of business, whereas subsidy reduces the risk of the investor, and both help the industry in achieving sustainability.

In the ninth and tenth chapters provide a scenario of the creative industries worldwide including China. Digital creative industries have started exploring business opportunities outside their periphery, though language is one of the major barriers. Of late, it has been observed that Chinese creative firms have planned their resources in such a manner that they could participate in fulfilling creative industries’ demand across the globe. Also, the authors highlight the impact of regional variations in shaping creative industries in big ways.

In sum, this book highlights the impact of major government initiatives and public policies on creative industries, cultural industries, and cultural economy. Authors provide critical analyses of various contexts of creative industries including the role of policy research related to the domain. Moreover, this book aims at portraying the role of public policy in order to strengthen the local cultural economy and how it promotes developing support systems required for creative industries to evolve. Overall, I find this book useful for policymakers, researchers, entrepreneurs, and key government officials. Also, this is a must-read for a doctoral scholar who is building his/her research framework in the areas of ‘Creative Industries’, ‘Cultural Industries’, and ‘Cultural Economy’.

Note

1. See <https://www.intracen.org/itc/sectors/creative-industries/>

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