What's the Use of Culture?

By Tom O'Dell

Abstract

Like it or not, cultural theorists are increasingly finding themselves challenged to answer a very short but profound question: What's the use of cultural research? Within the academy the question of the usefulness of cultural research has provoked a wide array of responses, ranging from feelings of resentment or the fear of losing one's intellectual freedom to those of approval (often reinforced by a sense that one can in some way help society, or those less empowered) – and an endless number of positions in between. This article places the question of the usefulness of cultural research in relation to issues of the historical and cultural context in which it has appeared over the better part of the past century. Its point of departure rises from the author's own academic background in American cultural anthropology and Swedish ethnology, as well as the work the author has conducted on tourism and the experience economy in Sweden.

   The article begins by briefly discussing the different roles applied anthropology has previously played in both Britain and the United States. This section emphasizes a need to understand the question of "usefulness" as being contextually bound. The text then moves on to consider the role culture is playing in contemporary economic life (exemplified here by the field of tourism) and to reflect upon some of the consequences the cultural economy is having in everyday life. Following this the text concludes with a section focusing upon the research challenges and needs coming from the tourism industry. This final section of the paper works to both illuminate and problematize the need which exists at present for the development of different forms of cultural research.

Keywords: Applied cultural research, cultural economy, tourism, sector research, higher education

What's the Use of Culture?

Like it or not, cultural theorists are increasingly finding themselves challenged to answer a very short but profound question: What's the use of cultural research? The question itself can take different forms, and be heard emanating from a diverse array of actors. Research councils, for example, not only expect an explanation of how proposed projects relate to, and will advance, our theoretical knowledge of whatever particular subject it is that we are interested in studying, but on a growing scale they even expect a clear and concise explanation of how that work will be of relevance to society. And in the classroom students are more eager than ever to know how the subject matter they are being taught will be of relevance to them outside of academia. Indeed, before even enrolling in courses an increasing number of them want to know what they will *become* if they study a particular subject or enrol in a specific program (O'Dell 2008). Politicians for their part, rarely decry the value of knowledge, but are prepared more than ever to support research that leads to patents, new services, economic development, regional growth, and a directly measurable expansion of employment opportunities while paying much less attention to (or at least investing comparatively smaller resources in) research directed towards more abstract non-profit oriented cultural and social phenomenon.

Within the academy the question of the usefulness of cultural research has also provoked a wide array of responses, ranging from feelings of resentment or the fear of losing one's intellectual freedom to those of approval (often reinforced by a sense that one can in some way help society, or those less empowered) – and an endless number of positions in between (cf. Kedia 2008; Rider 2008, Wright 2008: 28). This, however, is not the first time that these types of questions have been posed to cultural theorists and spurred debate. American and British anthropologists, as I shall discuss below engaged questions of applicability and usefulness throughout larger portions of the 20th century (Bennett 1996), and continue to do so. But even if the question of usefulness has a longer history, it's important to bear in mind the fact that its cultural framing has changed with the historical context.

In what follows, I want to place the question of the usefulness of cultural research in relation to the issue of the historical and cultural context in which this question has appeared. I will primarily focus my discussion to issues of applied research although in doing this, as I shall point out in the latter portion of the text, my intention is not to reify the practice/theory divide which has fuelled so much debate in anthropology in the past. To the contrary I shall argue for a need to better understand the manner in which issues of practice and theory have to be better understood as implicated in one another. My point of departure rises from both

my academic background in American cultural anthropology and Swedish ethnology, as well as from my work on tourism and the experience economy in Sweden. In this regard it is heavily inspired by observations I have made from the border between academia and the practical realities of those working in the experience economy. And while the perspective from which I address this border is influenced by the anthropological and ethnological angle from which I am viewing it – and the fact that I am viewing this juncture from an anthropologically oriented perspective should be borne in mind – I am quite certain that the analysis and discussion presented below will be readily recognizable, even if differently tinted, to cultural analysts working in a wide array of fields beyond anthropology and ethnology.

I shall begin briefly by placing applied cultural research in a historical context. The text then moves on to consider the role culture is playing in economic life (exemplified here by the field of tourism) and to reflect upon some of the consequences the cultural economy is having in everyday life. Following this, the text concludes with a section focusing upon the research challenges and needs coming from the tourism industry. This final section of the paper works to both illuminate and problematize the need which exists at present for the development of different forms of cultural research.

The Shifting Context

In a time in which cultural researchers are increasingly being asked to explicate the social, economic, or political relevance of their research, it is interesting to take a step back and gaze upon the very same question as it has come to expression in other cultural and historic contexts. Within the context of British social anthropology, for example, one finds a rather long history of disciplinary debate and tension. Exemplifying this, Edmund Leach endeavoured in 1946 to block the entry of anyone but "pure" anthropologists into the Association of Social Anthropologists – clearly seeing the academy as the home of the "pure" (Wright 2006: 30), and Malinowski is reported to have very clearly reported his position on the practice/theory divide by stating, "Applied anthropology is for the half-baked" (quoted in Wright 2006: 30).

Nonetheless, British Anthropology simultaneously found itself implicated in a rather vague borderland (that of the colonial/empire border) in which practice and theory lived in association with one another, and not so seldom, in dependence of one another. Scholars such as Evans-Pritchard, for example were conducting work of relevance for colonial authorities (and funded by them), but still had very clear academic intentions. There existed here a complex matrix of scholarly ambitions, political desires, and calculated perceptions of opportunity calling. Colonial governments needed knowledge, and funding organizations such as the Colonial So-

cial Science Research Council (1944-1962) were established to support applied research that could be of governmental service (Pink 2006: 4). By the 1980s and 1990s, as the number of people possessing Ph.D.s in anthropology swelled far beyond the number of positions available within the academy, the movement of scholars into the realms of policy, practice and business became unavoidable. However, the legitimacy of this work as "real" anthropology often remained a touchy issue, and attempts to gain legitimacy through the establishment of professional organizations proved to be less than effective as these organizations tended to suffer from rather short life lengths (Sillitoe 2007: 149; Wright 2006).

The situation in the United States was equally complicated, although while the British context of applied anthropology has been characterised as one of "serial ambivalence" (Mills 2006: 56), the situation in the US has been more continuous, if nonetheless, equally contested. While Britain had it colonies, American anthropologists had indigenous groups closer to home that they could focus their attention upon. As early as the 1930s policies such as the Indian Reorganization Act drew anthropologists into the world of policy and practice as they worked under the auspices of such organizations as the Indian Bureau of Affairs to restore tribal governance, participate in land reclamation procedures, and study the shifting context of economic development, social organization and reservation life encountered by Native Americans in the pursuing decades (Partridge & Eddy 1987: 25pp.).

Over the course of World War II anthropologists found themselves increasingly working together with the American government. Among other things, anthropological research addressed issues of how national morale could be affected in times of war, and how cultural differences might be understood to affect the processes at work here. Anthropologists such as Ralph Linton and George P. Murdock worked to train American Military personnel for duties abroad, and others participated in the development of separate and uniquely different conditions for the surrender and occupation of Nazi Germany and Japan based upon understandings of the cultural differences between the nations. And in the immediate post-war era anthropologists were similarly involved as advisors in the development and implementation of foreign policies. In this context, participation in applied contexts was far less controversial than it would become in subsequent years, as most anthropologists saw their work as a way of countering racism and participating in the attempt to defeat Nazi Germany (Ibid.: 31pp.; Wax 1987: 4-5).

Understanding culture, and working in terms of it was clearly deemed to be useful by many – the manner in which applied work was viewed in terms of ethics would, however, soon change. Much of this change would take root in the mid 1960s and early 1970s in the wake of the controversies surrounding Project Camelot and some of the work being conducted by anthropologists in South East Asia in conjunction with the Vietnam War (cf. Hill 1987: 11pp.). In the case of Camelot the American Military planned on expending millions of dollars funding social

scientific research devoted, in essence, to the study of processes of social change in Chile (Horowitz 1967). The political implications of this work, coupled with the fact that it was to be conducted under the auspices of the Department of Defence, sparked a firestorm of ethical debate within the American Anthropological Association, which only intensified when it was learned that in South East Asia anthropologists had been working with both the American Military and Royal Thai government conducting research which would benefit those countries' counterinsurgency programs. (Hill 1987; Jorgensen 1971). Among other things, anthropologists debated where the limits of "free research" should and could be set, whether political implications should be taken into consideration when conducting research, or whether "the advancement of science" was a cause worthy of pursuing in and of itself regardless of potential political consequences, and the degree to which scholars had (or did not have) an ethical responsibility to protect their informants' well-being or their discipline's reputation. The details of the debates sparked by these incidents have been covered by others (Jorgensen 1971; Partridge & Eddy 1987: 46), so I will not dwell further upon them here, but it should be noted that even if this was not the first time ethical issues had been discussed within anthropology, these incidents did push the question of ethics to the fore of anthropological attention. And even if the discussions provoked by the incidents of the 1960s have changed over time, the issue of ethics has remained a topic of debate and reflection within anthropology in a very different manner than had been the case previously. But in light of the question of ethics, it can be interesting to reflect briefly upon the context out which a research project such as Camelot could arise.

As Mark Solovey (2001) has argued, the immediate post World War II period was a time of some difficulty for scholars in the humanities and social sciences who were generally regarded as scholars of junior calibre in comparison to those operating in the natural sciences. This was the period in which the National Science Foundation (NSF) was established and its scientific boards predominantly filled by scholars from the natural sciences. It was also a time in which political conservatives viewed much of the work being done in the social sciences with deep scepticism, seeing it as an extension of New Deal liberalism. These types of political forces worked to further marginalize social scientists in NSF contexts. Under McCarthyism attitudes hardened even further and a great number of scholars opted to redefine themselves as "behavioural scientists" rather than social scientists (the former title sounded more positivist in nature, and simultaneously took the word "social" – and possible associations to "socialist" – out of the picture). Linkages to the military could work advantageously in this context to take the edge off, or avoid entirely, McCarthyist inspired attacks upon one's work, reputation, and political sympathies (Solovey 2001: 174pp.). At the time, Project Camelot would have been one of the largest social science projects ever funded in the US. It was never initiated and died while still in the planning stages, but if some

scholars found the prospects of this research project appealing, part of the explanation may lie in the circumstances of the times. Economic and political realities worked together here, as well as in the previous contexts I have discussed, to define the realm of possibilities and impossibilities, but the border between applied and non-applied perspectives, as it turns out, has not always been crystal clear.

As I am arguing, the realm of the cultural has long had the uneasy characteristics of a "force field" (cf. Amin & Thrift 2007: 152) – a source of energy and tension – deriving a special kind of power from its ability to attract and link the attention of academic, political and economic interests. But force fields tend to be somewhat unstable, pulsing entities whose characteristics and orientation can change to meet the needs, demands, and risks of new situations. This becomes particularly evident as we move our discussion forward in time to the years around the new millennium. Where the military had once stood as a viable funding alternative for some, the "free market" now seems to have partially taken its place, offering a wide array of opportunities as businesses and governments increasingly come to identify the realm of the cultural (defined in terms of identity, creativity and the general desire to mobilize the ephemeral) as a significant source of potential economic growth. But now we are moving once again into yet another new context – a context which scholars are increasingly referring to as the cultural economy.

Transformation in the Blur

As other scholars have pointed out, the cultural economy is a context in which entrepreneurs are ever borrowing concepts once anchored in disciplines such as anthropology and sociology and freely invoking them to their own advantage as they sell products, and services through appeals to culture, lifestyle, identity, aura, and authenticity (Aronsson 2007: 16pp.; Löfgren & Willim 2005: 12). But as they appropriate these concepts and fashion them to their own needs, they change (or perhaps one could say, "translate") them in the process.

Take culture, in the context of tourism today, for example. As a commodity of tourism, "culture" is constantly being packaged and sold to us in terms of such things as difference, otherness, heritage, song, dance, food, music, and art (cf. Craik 1997; Clifford 1997; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998; Macdonald 1997). More often than not, the processes of commoditization at work here involve parallel processes of delimitation, segmentation, and enclosure as culture is reified as a thing – a "local culture", an alteric experience of food, art, another way of life, a particular interpretation of the past, etc. Rather than being understood as a process, it is handled as an object. To some extent, this is an inevitable outcome of the market process. In order to sell products marketers have to be able to convince consumers of the manner in which the commodities they are selling are different

from those being sold by others (cf. Callon, Méadel & Raberharisoa 2002). The processes of reification that are at work here make it possible for place marketers to create an aura around specific places, and to brand cities. They work to form and affect tourist expectations (Ooi 2005), and provide locals with a ready made story or image in relation to which they can (in the best of cases) position themselves and their products.

Culture, in this context is often understood as something highly positive, benignly pleasant, entertaining, and interesting. However, the cultural economy of tourism also involves less pleasant processes. As John Hannigan has argued (1998) urban renewal projects designed to attract tourists and turn cities into more exciting places of entertainment and cultural consumption, have an overwhelming tendency to marginalize politically and economically weaker groups in those cities. This point was brought home by comments made to me by a leading strategist from one of Copenhangen's largest and most influential tourist organizations. From the perspective of his organization, the attractiveness of Copenhagen as a destination would be increased if youths and immigrants could be moved out of the center of town where tourists tended to congregate. These segments of the local population simply did not fit in with the image of Copenhagen that his organization was trying to create. As a consequence, it was with great approval that he watched as plans were drawn up to convert one of the larger arcades and entertainment centers in downtown Copenhagen (a place in which youths and immigrants tended to congregate) into an expensive luxury hotel.

Similar processes could be found at work in Österlen (a rural geographic portion of southeastern Sweden) in the early years of the new millennium as members of a local village council discussed plans to create new job opportunities and the possibility for economic growth in their local community through investments in the tourists industry. In this case, it was the people of Kåseberga who, together with local politicians and other "experts" (myself included) discussed plans to develop *Ales stenar* (an archaeological site comprised of a 67 meter long Stone Henge-like ship barrow constructed around 600 AD) into a larger year-round attraction. An architectural competition was started to find an appropriate design for a potential museum dedicated to *Ales stenar*. Amongst the three finalists was a spectacular three story glass building to be built into the hillside on the backside of the village. It was to include a permanent exhibition over *Ales stenar*, an auditorium that could be used to accommodate school classes and other lecture functions, a space for temporary art exhibitions, a new modern restaurant intended to serve gourmet foods on the top floor, and from the restaurant an exit leading directly out to the *Ales stenar*. While some saw the possibility of using such a monumental building as a possible flagship that could help position Kåseberga as a site of central importance for tourism in the region, others, including a local retired fisherman whose house would neighbor this new glass flagship were more critical and wondered if such an extravagant building would help Kåseberga, or

only function as an out of place eyesore detracting from what they saw as the charm of an otherwise simple Scanian harbor and village.

The examples of Copenhagen and Kåseberga illuminate some of the classical problems generated out of attempts to delineate culture and package it as a commodity for touristic purposes. They concern the manner in which borders of inclusion and exclusion are drawn up, and the effects they have for all parties involved. But they also wake questions of how the power to define those borders is distributed through society. As the situation in Copenhagen illustrates, when culture is reified it can readily be mobilized and positioned to the advantage of those who are already empowered. Events need not always turn out this way, but as pressure mounts upon place marketers, regional and urban planners, as well as smaller interests groups in local communities (to name just a few among the plethora of other actors in the cultural economy) to convert culture into profit bearing capital, then there is reason to critically reflect upon the question of what happens to the silenced voices of those who are not empowered. As culture is invoked to turn a profit, what are the consequences of this movement, and for whom? And what, if any role might cultural analysts be able to play (or be expected to play) in these processes at present and in the future?

In the case of Kåseberga debates concerned, among other things, competing ideals over the physical and social arrangement of the local community, but they even concerned issues of economic sustainability and the central question of how large an investment that community could risk bearing. The case may be that "the market" is dependent upon processes of reification in its endeavor to package and sell culture, but when culture (understood as the ephemeral process that it is) is both everywhere and nowhere at the same time, then how can one truly be sure that any investments in this economy will have bearing? The answer may be "careful market analysis" in the case of large scale projects, but as the scale of those projects diminish along with their research and analysis budgets, then what types of safety nets still exist? As Hannigan points out (1998) investments in the cultural economy of tourism and experience production have a tendency to bear a great deal of risk with them. Consequently, as the people of Kåseberga weigh their options, one is struck by the fact that there is a need for knowledge here. And this brings me to the border (which I think is all too often fetishized in an unproductive manner as a border of radical alterity) between academics and practitioners in the cultural economy.

Borders of Rigidity in Academia and Business

The years around the new millennium saw the publication of two important documents outlining strategies for the development and growth of the tourist industry in Sweden: *Turismforskning 2005: Nationellt forsknings- och utveckling-*

sprogram (1999)[1] (Tourism Research 2005: A National Research and Developmental Program), and *Framtidsprogrammet: Strategier för tillväxt I den svenska rese- och turistindustrin* (2001)[2] (Program for the Future: Strategies for Growth in the Swedish Travel and Tourism Industry). Both documents pointed to the important role tourism played for the Swedish economy, but they also argued for the need to intensify the level of sector oriented research being conducted. However, as the authors of these documents pointed out, a number of hindrances lay in the way for such a development. Among the problems cited was the fact that the level of education in the field needed to be raised and adapted to better meet the needs of the industry. The study of tourism was a relatively new area of research interest suffering from a low academic status. These two problems were themselves compounded by the fact that the field lacked professors holding research positions who could focus their work upon issues of importance for the industry. And all of this ultimately inhibited the flow of research finances to the field of tourism.

Nearly a decade later the situation has changed slightly. Tourism has become increasingly institutionalized through the establishment and development of a growing number of university programs and degrees. In conjunction with this growth it has been intellectually fortified by an expanding cadre of scholars devoting their efforts to the study of tourism and related phenomena. And in recent years it has seen the establishment of a Scandinavian based international journal through which scholars have been able to share and spread their findings. The subject is maturing, but the ability of scholars to conduct research in this area of study remains hampered by several factors. A number of the problems cited in the 1999 report remain intact, including a lack of representation by senior researchers on the evaluation boards of Sweden's largest and most important research funds. The situation is further complicated by the fact that, with a few exceptions, the branch is dominated by a relatively large number of small businesses with limited resources. This structural dimension of the tourism industry has impaired the development of sector financed scholarship.

Despite this structural problem, however, attempts have been made to begin to establish a broader sector based platform for tourism research. One of the more recent and notable movements in this directions was undertaken by VINNOVA (The Swedish Governmental Agency for Innovation Systems) and a few other key branch actors in the spring of 2007. A limited number of businesses and organizations working with tourism were invited to join VINNOVA and design four to five new and innovatively oriented research projects which they deemed to be of utmost importance.[3] The tone for the work that would follow was set at the first meeting of branch representatives in which it was emphatically pointed out that the one thing the branch did not need was academic research producing abstract results and theories. As one representative pointed out, he had to produce quarterly reports defining how his company's resources were being used, and he therefore needed to see concrete measurable results within a half year or so. Others

concurred and the projects that were launched tended to be more oriented towards the development and implementation of concrete services and products than the undertaking of actual research.

I describe this case at length here because it tends to point to a number of problems that are currently facing scholars and practitioners in the field of tourism, and while the example focuses upon tourism specifically, I suspect that the situation is not dramatically different in many other areas of the cultural economy.

The problem here is that, on the one hand, efforts that would lead to increasing the academic status of the field of tourism (and that would facilitate the flow of research funding into that field of study from existing established financiers such as the Swedish Research Council and The Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation) require a high degree of free scholarly research. The argument often put forward by tourism scholars is that such research ultimately leads to the promotion of more scholars to the level of professor who in turn can give the branch both the knowledge it needs specific to the Swedish context, and a weight of legitimacy when arguing for the branch in political contexts. On the other hand, actors in the industry are eager to receive practical hands on information that addresses their particular problems now or in the very near future. They frequently do not find the connection between abstract theories and practical utility as immediately apparent.

It would be simple to say that the distinction between these two research objectives need not be exclusionary, and indeed, they are not. However, as we approach the ten year mark since the publication of *Turismforskning 2005: Nationellt forsknings- och utvecklingsprogram*, there is reason to pause and reflect upon the fact that tourism is one segment of the cultural economy in need of different types of research. Quick and short term projects may work well to satisfy the immediate needs of particular actors, but longer term projects are better suited for providing the broader theoretical knowledge needed as a base for these smaller projects. The branch at present, for structural and cultural reasons, seems unprepared to take long term initiatives. The question then is, to what extent are scholars within the academy prepared and willing to engage themselves in small consultant-like projects in which they are intellectually steered and economically dependent upon the businesses or organization funding the research. Phrased somewhat differently, one can wonder to what extent the cultural economy may be considered as not only an arena of current scholarly interest and study, but even a potential site of work for cultural analysts.

Cultural Analysis Beyond the University

A review of the literature shows that a great deal of effort has been expended over the course of the past decade studying aspects of the cultural economy.[4] Scholars in the humanities and social sciences have a great deal to say here, but as student

enrolments decline, and those young people who do decide to go on to higher education increasingly consider issues of employability when choosing an education, it may be appropriate to reflect upon the manner in which the skills and knowledge that cultural analysts have won through the study of culture and economy might be better adapted to the classroom. Some work in this direction is already underway within anthropology. Terry Redding (2008: 30) has for example pointed to a handful of programs working in this direction in the United States, the situation in Britain is less developed (Pink 2006: 20) and in Scandinavia Umeå University offers degrees in Cultural Analysis and Cultural Entrepreneurship, while the Departments of Ethnology in Lund and Copenhagen offer a joint International Masters in Applied Cultural Analysis.

Movement in this direction is interesting and challenging as it once again blurs the culture/economy border, repositioning the academic, moving her/him from the role of the independent observer to that of the employed practitioner or entrepreneur. And once again, as in the case with the concept of culture as it moves from one field of knowledge – and the practice of knowledge – to another (as discussed above) the dynamic processes laden in borders and border crossings bear with them the powers of transformation. In this case, they involve the transformation of how we view and understand the knowledge that we produce from our diverse disciplinary points of departure. It is a movement which forces us to ponder the ethics of our work and the ethical boundaries in which we are willing (or are not willing) to conduct that work. Here it is interesting to note that while applied anthropologists have long lived in the shadow of similar issues, rather than simply selling their souls to the market, applied anthropologists have led some of the most critical and nuanced discussions of what it ethically means to work in the market (see Cassell & Jacobs 1987; Kedia 2008: 25; Marvin 2006; Partridge & Eddy 1987).

But beyond ethics, this is a movement which pushes us methodologically. What does it mean to conduct cultural analysis in a modern society such as the United States, Britain, or Sweden? When time is of the essence, what types of strategies for the conducting of "quick ethnography" (Handwerker 2001) might we be able to develop? And here it should be noted that it is not just a cross section of anthropologists who are working with quick forms of ethnography. Ethnologists working within their own national cultural settings have long worked with serially organized forms of short-term fieldwork – moving repeatedly between the field and the desk in an attempt to distance themselves from, and gain perspective on, the materials they have collected. And in a similar manner other scholars from fields such as cultural sociology and media studies regularly find themselves conducting smaller studies of contemporary phenomenon – analyzing on-going events in modern society, bracketed in rather specific and narrow time frames.

Nonetheless, with a few exceptions (Czarniawska 2007; Sunderland & Denny 2007) there is strikingly very little written about the methods and techniques re-

quired to do quick ethnography, and conduct cultural analyses under tight time constraints in modern societies (Sillitoe 2007: 155f.). Applied anthropology has a head start here, but much of the work conducted in this field concerns work in relation to governmental policy questions, development issues, and work in non-western contexts (cf. Pink 2006). Moving towards the border of applied cultural analysis bears risks and problems with it, but it can also force us to hone our debates, methods, and theoretical perspectives.

My intention here is not to argue for the development of an applied cultural analysis over and above existing forms of cultural analysis or cultural studies. There can be no form of applied cultural analysis if there does not exist a strong theoretical base upon which it can rest. Without our theories and the development of those theories we would rapidly lose our significance, relevance, and "usefulness" to society (as well as our "value" as applied analysts). My ambition here has rather been to point to some of the ways in which we might increasingly find that we are implicated in the cultural economy, and to point to the fact that we do face a series of opportunities and challenges in the future which we can either confront or embrace (or both). But these will be opportunities and challenges which will be increasingly difficult to ignore or sweep under the carpet.

Cultural theorists have long been highly sceptical of market forces and the effects those forces might have upon research conducted under their auspices. In other times and other contexts working in conjunction with the military or colonial governments seemed, to at least some anthropologists, like as a golden opportunity. Today, most scholars would be highly dubious of such associations. But as we increasingly turn towards the market it is important to remember the lessons of the past. The concerns of those who are wary of the market are not unfounded and we must continue to discuss and address the problems of conducting applied research in market contexts. However, the question is if we can turn our backs to these contemporary contexts entirely. As we increasingly come to understand the ways in which the borders between culture and economy are entangled in one another, we, as cultural analysts, may find that we not only possess unique and important perspectives from which to understand the culture/economy nexus, but even skills, critical insights, and theoretical approaches that are needed in the labor force and diverse segments of the cultural sector, which are of deep social relevance and can help our students find employment opportunities.

To be sure, engagement with the market bears the risk of complicity – or what some will see as the means to capitalizing on the market. But it can also be seen as a way of affecting the market, confronting it, and changing aspects of it – the fact that our knowledge may be "useful" does not necessarily mean that it has to be complicit. And in an age in which fewer and fewer of our students will ever have the opportunity to find careers within the university system, I would argue that we have the responsibility to help them understand how the knowledge we imbue upon them can be used in the labor market. As I have argued above, actors in the

cultural economy are in need of knowledge, and it is here that we have the potential of better equipping our students (and ourselves) for a life after/beyond the university. And while such a movement may raise uneasy ethical questions, the challenge before us is that of confronting those issues and integrating them into our lessons. The border between the university and the market will long prove to be a treacherous and difficult territory to navigate, but the question is, how much longer can we avoid confronting that border more fully than we have to date? And for how much longer can disciplines interested in the study of culture attract students and thereby survive as intact departments without more fully addressing student concerns of employability, or considering the needs of the labor market when planning university courses, or without more thoroughly reflecting upon and communicating the social relevance of the knowledge they disseminate? These may be difficult and unsettling questions, but the answer to them does not lie in avoiding them.

Tom O'Dell is a professor of ethnology in the Department of Service Management, Lund University, Campus Helsingborg. Previously he has published *Culture Unbound: Americanization and Everyday Life in Sweden* (Nordic Academic Press, 1997), and is in the process of publishing *Spas: The Cultural Economy of Hospitality, Magic and the Senses*. In addition to these works he has also published extensively, and edited several volumes on tourism and the experience economy including, *Experiencescapes: Tourism, Culture, and Economy* (Copenhagen Business School Press, 2005, together with Peter Billing).

Notes

1 Turistdelegationen Svenska Rese- och Turistindustrins Samarbetsorganisation – RTS. (1999)
2 Näringsdepartementet & den svenska rese- och turistindustrin (2001)
3 The research project was designed – in line with VINNOVA's general policy – such that those participating in the project invested their own resources in the work to be done, and VINNOVA countered in turn by matching those investments.
4 A growing body of work is (and has been) in the process of developing which helps explain the many ways in which culture and economy are entwined in one another (du Gay & Pryke 2002; Lash & Urry 1994; Ray & Sayer 1999). Anthropologists, sociologists and other social scientists have, for example, turned their attention to the realms of business, work and economy, examining arenas of activity ranging from advertising (McFall 2002), IT companies (Willim 2002), the performative strategies of middle level corporate managers (Thrift 2000), and the introduction of New Age philosophies to management theory (Heelas 2002; Goldschmidt Salamon 2005) to the packaging of events (Ristilammi 2002), experiences (Christersdotter 2005; O'Dell 2005), feelings (Thrift 2004), and aesthetics in business contexts (Pine & Gilmore 1999). Nonetheless, as I am arguing here, there is room here to more thoroughly consider the manner in which the knowledge that has been won here might be used and further developed in applied contexts.

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