

## **Exploring Definitions of the Cultural and Creative Industries Through an Examination of Primary Purpose**

### **Introduction**

Why an industry exists, or its primary purpose, is far from holding an objective answer, especially in the context of the cultural and creative industries (CCIs). Social theorists, private organizations, and government agencies all author and enact, through policy, these definitions/models<sup>1</sup>. It is the distinct nature of primary purpose that each definition is constructed on is a useful point of inquiry. This essay investigates three definitions of the CCIs using a teleological approach (Gardiner, 2015). As will be defined more in-depth later, a teleological approach investigates the purpose of a concept, in this case, CCIs, as a strategy to understand that concept as a whole (Gardiner, 2015). The diverse models of David Hesmondhalgh, the World Intellectual Property Organization, and the Department of Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport provide initial texts for discussion.

After a brief explication of the theoretical approach to this essay, each definition will be analysed with the aim of proposing a possible primary purpose. Directly following each definition's analysis, food as an industry will be used to demonstrate how a teleological approach might be utilized in an argument for the inclusion or exclusion of an industry into that specific definition.

### **A Teleological Approach**

A teleological approach bases conceptual analysis around the questions, "What is the purpose of the concept? [and] What role has it played in the past?" (Gardiner, 31). Notable works in the field of defining, modelling, and developing related policy in the CCIs tend to approach their work asking, "What do the CCIs do?". This approach reflects priorities of the CCIs as a product of the information age and a place for economic potential; what a company does and how they do it can largely be quantified where questions of "Why?", yield little data

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<sup>1</sup> The terms definition and model are interchangeable in the context of the essay with an understanding that a CCIs model is a physical representation of a definition of the CCIs.

or economic advantage (O'Connor, 51). This essay suggests an alternative perspective of CCI's definition evaluation by expanding upon Hesmondhalgh's consideration of purpose in his book *The Cultural Industries* (2018). The goal is to shift, even slightly, the way CCIs are evaluated to consider the role of industry purpose.

It is necessary to note that this approach may be far from the quantitative economic output-focused evaluation of the CCI. By no means are the suggested primary purposes of a CCI identified here a definite or singular conclusion. Instead, the consideration of the CCI from a theoretical nature may reintroduce the culture and creativity to the industry of CCIs and address as O'Connor puts it, "the abuse" of judging a cultural industry largely on economic outputs (2007, p. 68).

### **Hesmondhalgh Definition**

As a professor in media and communication, David Hesmondhalgh's definition of the cultural industries is shaped by his background in sociological and cultural studies (AHS, 2021). In *The Cultural Industries*, Hesmondhalgh defines the cultural industries by first defining culture as, "the signifying system through which... a social order is communicated, reproduced, experienced and explored" (William qtd. Hesmondhalgh, 2019, p. 14). Utilizing this definition, he then defines the cultural industries as, "those institutions that are most directly involved in the production of social meaning" (Hesmondhalgh, 2019, p.14 ). It is clear from both definitions, and the field the author operates in, that a model built on Hesmondhalgh's work could be identified as academic and cultural consumption focused.

Of the definitions discussed in this essay, Hesmondhalgh is the only one that directly considers and explicitly states the purpose in its formation. In a similar fashion to this essay using food, Hesmondhalgh's explores purpose as an indicator of CCI's inclusion with an example of cars. He acknowledges that cars have the *ability* to signify meaning but that the primary purpose is to be a tool for transportation (Hesmondhalgh, 2019). Unlike the definitions forthcoming, Hesmondhalgh explicitly states that CCIs, in his definition, are those industries whose "primary aim is to communicate to an audience" (Hesmondhalgh, 2019, p. 14). The use

of primary does suggest that there is a binary between inclusion and exclusion; however, Hesmondhalgh addresses this implication.

Hesmondhalgh's definition acknowledges that there is a negotiated balance between functionality and communicability and how that impacts an industry's consideration for CCI inclusion. What would happen if an industry was judged to be 55% functional and 45% communication-driven? (Hesmondhalgh, 2019, p. 14). This threshold between functionality and communicability and how this could determine an industry's inclusion is set by an author's understanding of the CCI's purpose. While Hesmondhalgh does not present his argument about where that defining line or the grey area between inclusion and exclusion is, his definition can still be explored further in the argument of food.

In a very academic manner, Hesmondhalgh provides room to present arguments for an industry's inclusion or exclusion. Like cars, food can be perceived, at the point of creation, as a tool to accomplish a function. If the outcomes of goods of food are identified as the raw materials that exist to be consumed for energy, there exists a strong argument for its exclusion as it was not produced to communicate meaning through its dissemination.

On the other side of the argument, works in the field of tourism studies could act as evidence for food as having a largely communicative component. Montero, in her essay on tourism and food consumption in the Caribbean, aptly connects the "demonstrations of authenticity", such as food tours and general "local" food available, with the government policy that acts to construct its own culture (Montero, 2014). In the realm of tourism where food can act as an act of physical and symbolic consumption, food could be included because the intention of distribution may lean more to its communicability. The following definitions represent a much more delineated and less theoretical approach to establishing definitions of the CCIs.

### **World Intellectual Property Organization Definition**

The model put forward by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO, n.d.) is fairly transparent in its authorship and motivations. Founded in 1967, the WIPO, in association with the United Nations exists to, "lead the development of a balanced and effective

international IP [intellectual property] system” (WIPO, n.d.). Their definition of the CCI minimizes the significance of creativity, shaping how their primary purpose may be defined.

The WIPO model includes industries that have economic potential through the distribution of copyrighted material (Throsby, 2008). This includes advertising, music, and software in the “core copyright industries” (Throsby, 2008, p. 222). Structurally, the WIPO model interconnects industries in how they support the production of intellectual property with the core being intellectual property as the product itself (Throsby, 2008, p. 221). The key in the WIPO model is the emphasis on product. Where Hesmondalgh discusses text as a product placed in the CCI the WIPO model is shaped by an economic output paradigm (Hesmondalgh, 2019.)

This economic output approach is exhibited in the WIPO’s *Guide on Surveying the Economic Contribution of the Copyright Industries’* section on the characteristics of the “creative market” (WIPO, 2015). Creativity is only mentioned as an ingredient, an input that enables the existence of intellectual property and its assembly into an economic output (WIPO, 2015). The saturation of creativity, or culture, of an industry, has little importance to the WIPO model. The organizational purpose filters directly into the primary purpose of an industry that can be included in their CCI definition.

Therefore, for WIPO, the primary purpose of CCI here is defined as, ‘to increase the copyrighted material in the economy’. If an industry can disseminate intellectual property, provides goods/tools for that dissemination, the WIPO is more likely to consider it a CCI.

Intellectual property and the difficulty of its use to protect and profit the chefs, restaurants, and others is a debate that goes beyond the realm of the industry’s consideration as a CCI. Véronique Chossat, an economics professor with a focus on the economy of gastronomy and food, suggests luxury gastronomic experiences could be eligible as intellectual property when looking at the food experience as a cultural product (also using Throsby’s work). Her essay also argues that the creativity that produces such an ephemeral work as a dish or the presentation of that dish is difficult to protect under copyright and therefore for the WIPO would not be an included industry (Chossat, 2009). For the sake of the argument here, a cookbook or a famous chef’s branded cookware would be included as they all can be

disseminated with part of the economic profit coming from intellectual property, copyright, or non-produced intellectual property, like trademarks (Copyright.gov n.d., WIPO 2003).<sup>2</sup>

The WIPO's definition of a CCI makes it difficult for CCIs with an emphasis on the meaning of its output to be considered as it is so rigid about the purpose it sees as that of a CCI.

### **Department of Digital, Culture, Media & Sport Definition**

If the Hesmondhalgh's CCIs primary purpose represents a theoretical approach and the WIPO model an emphasis on ownership and economic advantage, the influential definition established by the Department of Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport (DCMS) embodies a veiled economic model.

The CCIs model can be described as veiled because the organizational actions and development reveal a primary purpose for a CCI to further the DMCS economic agenda. Does an industry assist in the purpose to "help to give the UK a unique advantage on the global stage, striving for economic success" (*About Us*, Uk.gov, n.d.)? If so there is an argument for its inclusion in the CCIs.

Authorship is key in understanding the DCMS model. The 2005 inclusion of software in the creative industries and the 2017 addition of "digital" to its moniker suggest a shift away from arts and culture motivated policy to economic policy whose results could be measured (Pratt, 2005). This is reflected in the critique of the inclusion as an effort by the DCMS to include software to present increased positive employment statistics to the Treasury (O'Connor, 2007, p. 51).

Additionally, the organization's guiding objectives support an institutional purpose for economic development. The Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport's objectives in a 2019 Department Plan are as follows:

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<sup>2</sup> While not a model used as an example here, the work of Daniel Mato, is a good example of a polar opposite of WIPO. Mato's claims that all industries are cultural flys in the face of a model like WIPO that is driven by economic profitability (Mato, 2009). It is amusing to imagine Mato's model as the porous line encapsulating all other models of industry and any future industries.

1. Global: Drive international trade, attract investment and promote shared values around the world – promoting the UK as a great place to live, work and visit
2. Growth: Grow an economy that is creative, innovative and works for everyone
3. Digital Connectivity: Drive the UK's connectivity, telecommunications and digital sectors
4. Participation: Maximise social action, cultural, sporting and physical activity participation
5. Society: Make our society safe, fair and informed
6. EU Exit: Help deliver a successful outcome to Brexit
7. Agile & Efficient: Ensure DCMS is fit for the future with the right skills, culture and connections to realise our vision and live our values as "One DCMS" (*DCMS: Single Departmental Plan, 2019*)

It is worth listing all of these because of the seven organizational objectives that shape strategy, action, and resource allocation, one mentions supporting engagement with culture. This and the historical context of the organization support the identification of primary purpose of a CCI as an industry's ability to align with and further the organizational agenda.

If food as an industry was presented to the DCMS review board, an argument for inclusion would hinge on the participation section of their objectives. Cultural forms of engagement through food, such as cooking courses around heritage, or international food festivals would align with an organizational purpose. The argument against food's continued exclusion is stronger given the six other organizational objectives that it has difficulty embodying. Additionally, the DCMS made a conscious choice to distance itself from the term culture and establishing a workable definition of culture, in reference to food, that could support its inclusion may just as easily fall into the arts and culture "industry" that the DCMS sought to cast off (O'Connor, 2007, 51). The goal in any of these arguments is to take a different view of an industry to pick out a way it aligns with the purpose identified by the author.

## **Conclusion**

This essay has examined three different models or definitions of the CCIs with a teleological approach; focusing on what each author may define as the primary purpose of a CCI. The goal was to step away from an output or effect-driven perspective of the CCIs and instead identify the purpose of each industry to elucidate the CCIs definition construction as a whole.

These three models presented CCI purposes to be communication driven, intellectual property essential, and directly motivated by governmental and organizational purposes. With the Hesmondhalgh definition, the key takeaway is that even within a singular definition there is still subjective judgements that are made to include or exclude an industry. Both primary CCI purposes in the eyes of WIPO and DCMS reflect the agendas of their organizations. The many definitions of the CCIs have an understanding and are structured by, even if not explicitly stated, how they identify the purpose of a CCI. In the end, purpose as a point of inquiry has hopefully been shown as a method for gaining a different understanding of a phenomenon than a more practical cause and effect approach may have.

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