Graeme Turner

SURRENDERING THE SPACE

Convergence culture, Cultural Studies and the curriculum

This essay tests the claims made by some versions of convergence culture to be the next step forward for Cultural Studies. It does this by examining the teaching programmes that have been generated by various formations of convergence culture: programmes in new media studies, creative industries and digital media studies. The results of this examination are cause for concern: most of these programmes appear to have surrendered the space won for Cultural Studies in the university curriculum in favour of an instrumentalist focus on the training, rather than the education, of personnel to work in the emerging media industries. The essay argues therefore that while such developments may represent themselves as emerging from within Cultural Studies, in practice they have turned out to have very little to do with Cultural Studies at all.

Keywords   teaching Cultural Studies; curriculum; new media studies; creative industries; digital media studies

Introduction

Reservations about the hype around what we have come to call convergence culture are not new. Back in 2003, media historian Jeffery Sconce, bouncing off an account of a pre-modern example of popular hype, 'tulipmania',[1] had this to say about the early warning signs from what was then called 'digital culture':

> I think most of us would be hard-pressed to think of a discipline in which more pages have been printed about things that haven't happened yet (and may never) and phenomena that in the long run are simply not very important (Jennicam, anyone?). Of course, only an idiot would claim that digital media are not worthy of analysis, an assertion that would sadly replicate the hostility towards film and television studies encountered in the last century. No-one doubts the importance of digital media as a new form of distribution for the culture industries or as a new mode of

> telecommunication for bored office workers The place of digital media in both the political and cultural economies of the future is certain. But, generally, this isn't really what new media scholars are interested in studying. Academic 'tulipmania' can be found in the seemingly endless claims that the internet, MUDS, avatars, virtual reality, TiVO, Palm-pilots and whatnot have led to radical definitions of identity, race, gender, narrative, subjectivity, community, democracy, the body and so on.
>
> (Sconce 2003, p.180)

Nothing much seems to have changed in the object of criticism here. It is still the case that convergence culture is home to many examples of 'revolutionary discourse' (Sconce, p. 181) which proclaim that the take-up of digital technology constitutes a major social change 'as if the major structural problems confronting our democracy were merely technical shortcomings' (Drew 1996, p. 72; cited in Sconce, p. 181).

Just to make this clear, it is the excessiveness of these claims, their sheer implausibility, that is the problem. I do not think anyone denies that the convergence of media and communications technologies is actually happening. Convergence *culture*,[2] on the other hand, looks to me to be about 20 percent fact and 80 percent speculative fiction. The claims made for its significance are as dramatic as they are unconvincing. The danger of generalizing from the behaviour of specific markets is one of the most obvious problems. This is not yet (and may never be) a global phenomenon, for a start. Around 50 percent of the world's population would dearly love to experience converging media platforms but would probably settle for access to a telephone first. Even in the heartland of the rhetoric of convergence culture, the United States, something between 14 and 20 million citizens have no access to broadband and do not look like getting it anytime soon, according to the FCC's most recent report on broadband deployment (2010). While virtually all the claims for the democratizing effects of the blogosphere are anecdotal (and drawn with wearying predictability from the same short menu of examples), we actually do have empirical evidence that seriously challenges such claims (such as Hindman 2009).

Elsewhere (Turner 2010) I have discussed the limits to the claims made about user-generated content, and I am not going back over that material again here. Rather, in this essay, I want to explore a much less widely canvassed issue: I want to discuss how the discourse of convergence culture has informed the development of curricula in higher education in recent years, and in particular how has this affected cultural and media studies programmes. I want to argue that while these developments customarily represent themselves as emerging from within Cultural Studies, and indeed often present themselves as the next step forward for the field, in practice they have turned out to have very little to do with Cultural Studies at all.

The provocation for focusing on this issue is the gradual but, I would suggest, significant rise in the number of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes and of university research centres dealing with the technologies central to convergence culture. This has been going on for some time. While many of these programmes first emerged as specializations within media and Cultural Studies programmes, they are now appearing as stand-alone programmes in their own right. Their nomenclature varies but most of these degrees in multimedia, digital media, new media and creative industries derive from, if not directly at least in close relation to, the discourses of convergence culture. By and large, and even though so much of their content has to do with understanding the capacities of digital media and communications technologies, these programmes are not hosted by computing or information technology departments (although some certainly are), but by arts and social science faculties: in schools of media studies, communications and Cultural Studies, or as majors in the creative arts or media production. Their expansion has been driven by their success in the market for undergraduate students. That market appeal is built upon the perception that the converging new media are 'cool', that they will provide job opportunities in the future, and that these programmes provide training for those opportunities. Consequently, in just about every case I have come across, the undergraduate curriculum is dominated by hands-on training in the use of the relevant technologies.

However, if the training is overwhelmingly technical, the positioning of new media is not. While they are certainly hailed as products of a major technological shift, the new media industries are attributed with a social and cultural significance that most new industries would not ordinarily enjoy. This is where convergence culture comes in, helping to attract a student clientele which is actually not especially technocratic. Indeed, just like many of the students who have flocked into Cultural Studies programmes since they began, these students are oriented more towards the media, popular culture and the 'alternative' end of the creative arts. Where Cultural Studies was so successful in attracting these students was through its interest in their own experience of popular culture – in the markers of 'youth culture' that included, for instance, non-mainstream genres of popular music, zines and cult television. Although an identification between youth culture and convergence culture does not necessarily accurately reflect the evidence about the changing patterns of use, youth and new media have been articulated in similar ways, through a focus on the practices of social networking, user-generated content, viral video, and so on. The attraction of these practices for the prospective student is reflected in the designing of the programmes and their subsequent marketing.

Among the tenets of convergence culture that are implicated in the successful market positioning of these programmes are the following:

- the fracturing of the production/consumption binary and thus the distinction between producer and consumer, with the consequent framing of small media enterprises as grassroots, creative responses to mainstream media oligopolies;
- the attribution of a politics of democratic empowerment which spreads a romantic, 'alternative', sheen over small scale media enterprises, cleansing them of their association with the interests of capital;
- and the overarching idea that the new media industries constitute a new domain of popular and participatory creativity (what McGuigan 2006, calls 'cool capitalism') that has been carved out of a space hitherto conceived as hopelessly corporatized, unresponsive to the consumer and venally commercial.

Within this domain, 'creativity' is newly valorized as the product of the interactive capacities released for the participatory 'produser' or 'prosumer'. The new media, then, are intrinsically creative, vernacular, democratic and consumerist – not only technically but also ideologically: thus their politics are the antithesis of what the 'old' media represent.

   The most remarkable thing about the development I am describing, given its origins in cultural and media studies, is how wholeheartedly these applications of convergence culture have articulated humanities' knowledges to what are in significant part business degrees,[3] aimed at assisting the development of the so-called 'new economy'. Units dealing with management, marketing and media business are far more common presences in these programmes than units dealing with any aspect of Cultural Studies. The commitment to 'engage' with media industries (Jenkins 2004, p. 42) – in principle a perfectly appropriate ancillary activity for cultural and media studies – expands to the point where, for instance, some formations of the creative industries model in particular have come to *define* themselves through (admittedly, among other things) a commitment to supporting the economic development of these enterprises. The choice of such a strategy is substantially legitimated by what Justin O'Connor describes as the 'association of ''alternative lifestyles'' with entrepreneurial innovation' which he locates in the 'new economy' discourse symbolized by *Wired* magazine, itself a significant anchor point for the rhetorics of convergence culture (O'Connor 2009). The end result, in my view, is that convergence culture effectively sets aside Cultural Studies' long-standing commitment to the applied critique of the social and political effects of a market economy, as if this foundational stance was just a passing concern – a phase that Cultural Studies should now just get over. Especially when located in the context of the performance of that market economy over the last few years, at a time when arguably the need for a structural, political and ethical critique of business has never been greater, this, certainly in its most uncompromising representations (such as Hartley

2008), constitutes a staggering surrender of the politics of Cultural Studies to the interests of the market.

Notwithstanding such criticism, these programmes, and convergence culture in general, still describe themselves as emerging from Cultural Studies; indeed, it is characteristic for them to claim 'centre stage as Cultural Studies enters the 21st century' (Jenkins 2004, p. 42). The existing models of Cultural Studies, though, are no longer what is required. It is routine, within the manifestos written for digital media, new media studies and creative industries, to argue that an outdated theoretical model developed to deal with 'traditional' (or 'legacy' or 'heritage') media must now give way to an entirely new explanatory approach.[4] Some have put this principle into practice. In a number of universities in (at least) the UK and Australia, the morphing of cultural and media studies (occasionally, cultural policy studies) into new media studies or creative industries has taken an institutional form with the rebranding or restructuring of whole disciplines, schools and even faculties. Although, in practice, these rebranded programmes end up either displacing Cultural Studies programmes in their own institutions, or competing with Cultural Studies programmes elsewhere, their choice to locate themselves within a history of Cultural Studies helps to disavow that competition while positioning their particular take on media and culture at what they then argue is the cutting edge of the field. Of course, it is not only those in the creative industries or digital media who have argued for a rethinking of traditional media theory in the light of changes in the media industries and their audiences over the last decade, but there are many others who have been doing this as well (e.g. Couldry 2000, McGuigan 2006, Turner 2010). However, it is only those in the creative industries and the digital media fields who have argued that they now constitute *the* new theoretical paradigm for our fields of study.

What do we find if we test such a claim against the actual content of the undergraduate programmes now in place? I have spent some time in examining examples of these from the UK and Australia.[5] They vary considerably in content and approach; the creative industries programmes, for instance, include some that are still focused primarily on the cultural industries and appear to be making use of the creative industries label as a means of marketing themselves rather than taking on the strategic focus outlined above. Digital media programmes include some which are largely concerned with the visual arts and the technical capacities that digital media provide to the producers of multimedia arts; others focus on the core territory of convergence culture – new platforms for television, user-generated content, blogging and so on. Overall, however, it would be true of virtually the full range of these programmes that intellectually, academically, conceptually, they are far from the cutting edge of our fields of study. What is most immediately noticeable is, on the one hand, their overwhelmingly technical orientation – training is explicitly their focus – and, on the other hand, the thinness of the academic context provided. Clearly, when technical training is required, its provision

eats up a lot of the content of the course. Typically, the convergence culture paradigm sets up a small number of core subjects (from 1 to 4, usually, and so, effectively no more than a semester in total) which carry the burden of providing the academic content; these may provide an introduction to a body of relevant academic work (this is usually what happens in the digital media courses), or they may lay out a manifesto for the approach being taken (this is usually what happens in the creative industries). Even though the core courses are likely to have some theoretical content drawn from media history, cultural policy studies, political economy, and so on (rarely Cultural Studies, interestingly), there is usually no more than a passing attempt to enable the students' engagement with an intellectual field as a means of developing a distinct mode of knowledge or academic expertise. Rather, the aim is thoroughly instrumental: to demonstrate to students that this degree, unlike other degrees in the liberal arts and humanities, has a training and vocational focus that will properly equip them for employment in what the publicity for one university in Australia calls 'the real world' (which must be one of the rare instances where a university chooses to align itself with those who think that universities are basically useless). The professional majors are the real point of these degrees – in journalism, public relations, advertising, multimedia, digital media production, film and television and so on.

I should make it perfectly clear that I have no fundamental objection to the existence of such programmes; I want to emphasize that I am *not* saying that the university does not have a legitimate interest in training its students for employment. What I *am* saying, first and as a relatively modest general point, is that restricting the university to serving only that function dramatically underestimates what the institution can achieve. Second and more specifically, and notwithstanding the narratives used to justify the claims for their academic significance, these courses could not be further from providing us with a new theoretical paradigm for the development of Cultural Studies. Indeed, there is a minimal engagement with any theoretical tradition, there is only a secondary interest in addressing academic educational objectives, and the focus is on the production of technical skills and capabilities rather than the generation of knowledge or the practices of analysis. If these programmes are to replace Cultural Studies, and this is what I am suggesting may be their long-term effect, then a great deal stands to be lost.

Two stories

Should Cultural Studies worry about this? I think it should, and to indicate why, let me outline two narratives from the development of Cultural Studies in Australia, both of which lead to the establishment of a particular version of creative industries as the most full-blooded and institutionally successful

iteration of convergence culture in Australia. The first narrative begins with the development of cultural policy studies in Australia. Emerging directly from a long-standing policy orientation in Australian Cultural Studies, cultural policy studies was particularly successful from the early 1990s. It established itself as a powerful academic paradigm[6] through the work of Tony Bennett, Stuart Cunningham, and Tom O'Regan in particular; it also enjoyed considerable access to government departments and agencies. The Australian government at the time was a reformist left-of-centre administration, traditionally the colour of government most interested in securing policy advice. The establishment of the Key Centre for Cultural Policy Studies (a consortium of Griffith University, the University of Queensland, and the Queensland University of Technology (QUT)), was only the second humanities and social science research centre to be funded through the Australian Research Council's peak programme and so this constituted a significant institutional achievement for Cultural Studies as a whole. While there was a strong Foucauldian focus to the work of its Director, Tony Bennett, the Key Centre nonetheless took on a theoretical character that was consistent with the key elements in the practice of Cultural Studies in Australia at the time. As a development within Cultural Studies, however, cultural policy studies was far from uncontested,[7] and partly for reasons that will be familiar: it, too, like convergence culture, presented manifestos about its importance which claimed that it should be the centre of Cultural Studies practice in the future. By some, this was seen as simply hubristic; and for others, the proponents of cultural policy studies overvalued the importance of 'talking to the ISAs' (Bennett 1989) and compromised the intellectual and political independence of Cultural Studies research.

With the replacement of the reformist Labour administration in 1996 by a conservative government relatively uninterested in the cultural industries, the market for cultural policy advice declined. During the Howard government's period in office (it lost power in 2007), the term of the Key Centre's funding expired and the host universities declined to provide any further support. By then, Tony Bennett had returned to the UK to take up Stuart Hall's chair in sociology at the Open University. Cultural Studies' credentials as a source of policy research and advice remained relatively intact, nonetheless, even though the federal and state governments now had a little interest in seeking outside advice. Industry, particularly the cultural industries, remained interested in principle, but in practice they were reluctant to invest in collaborative research, and so the possibilities there were limited. Cultural policy studies as a named research field (it had never been a major undergraduate area) lost both its novelty and much of its momentum over the next decade. In general, it would have to be said that while cultural policy studies continues to be a significant field it would not now be located in the vanguard of international developments in Cultural Studies. Its important role as an incubator of Australian Cultural Studies research projects— a direct consequence of its Key

Centre funding – became less significant over the early 2000s, as many Cultural Studies researchers learnt how to secure funding through the Australian Research Council. Success in this context provided researchers with greater freedom to determine the focus and character of their research projects; once they were less dependent on developing policy-oriented projects to secure funding, the range and variety of projects and approaches expanded. At the same time, and perhaps as a consequence of this, Australian Cultural Studies continued to build the credibility of its research within the sector, as well as its international profile.

It is in this context that the Australian version of the creative industries brand emerges – initially through the reframing of some teaching programmes in the liberal arts and humanities. Borrowed from the Blair government's (1998)[8] strategy for rebranding its cultural industries development policy in ways that emphasized their commercial and service dimensions, the rebranding of the QUT's Arts Faculty as the Faculty of Creative Industries was a pioneering move. It should be noted that this Arts Faculty was in very poor shape, depleted by years of under-funding, and littered with dismembered bodies left over from successive mergers and restructures. It was probably understandable if it seemed that little would be lost by giving the dead a decent burial and embedding the survivors in the popular communications and performing arts programmes under the rubric of the creative industries. Initially keen to maintain its identification with the humanities' disciplines, over time the QUT Creative Industries Faculty brand has become more fundamentally identified with its instrumental role: that of training students for employment in the industries concerned. When QUT's Stuart Cunningham led a consortium of universities in an application for peak research centre status (resulting in the ARC Centre of Excellence in Creative Industries and Innovation – the CCI), an alignment with industry was central to the application's rationale. Over time, that has increased to the point where now the core concern of the CCI is the provision of information and research services for the development of small to medium sized enterprises in the creative industries. What remains of any broader social agenda is tied to a convergence culture rhetoric that attributes to creativity, the network culture, and digital media the kind of social, cultural and political importance I described earlier as implausible.[9]

The point of this narrative is to highlight a significant change in what Cultural Studies has been called on to do, over time, through these two instances. As I say, the cultural policy studies agenda was largely in accord with the core activity of Cultural Studies, what McGuigan has called 'critique in the public interest' (2006), in that it had its eyes firmly fixed on the public good – this, understood as distinct from the political objectives of governments or the commercial objectives of the cultural industries. There was no doubt about what the point of cultural policy studies was. The transition from cultural policy studies to the creative industries takes us towards quite different

objectives even though there is some continuity in the personnel involved (Stuart Cunningham, for instance, is a vehicle for that transition; Cunningham 2004). The move from cultural policy studies to creative industries is, among other things, a move from the nation-state – the location of regulatory and developmental interests in the culture industries – to the global market, the desired location of commercializable convergent enterprises. The beneficiary of the earlier project is the nation, the citizen and, typically, the state-subsidized cultural organization. The beneficiary of the later project is the entrepreneur, the commercial industry and, possibly, the consumer. The move from cultural policy studies to creative industries is also, most definitively, a retreat from a commitment to the public good and its replacement by a belief in the social utility of a market outcome, reflecting the classic neo-liberal view that commercial success or 'wealth creation' for the enterprises concerned in itself constitutes a public good. Where the former was directly engaged with developing its potential as a social, political, cultural and theoretical project, the latter is primarily focused upon economic and market-development objectives as themselves enablers of other kinds of social progress. Finally, in contrast to cultural policy studies, and while many articles have been published outlining this particular formation of the creative industries agenda, in my view, it is yet to develop a credible theoretical literature.

The second narrative approaches this territory from a slightly different perspective in order to reveal other aspects of the same concerns. Within the Australian university system over the last decade or two, in a context in which the government investment in university budgets has declined from something like 80 percent of their operating funds to less than 50 percent, the pressure upon universities to invest in activities which will earn external funds has increased. At the same time as the total numbers of students have grown, funding per student has plummeted. Over this period, however, the allocation of funding to government research agencies has increased significantly, as well as the number of strategic funding programmes aimed at supporting particular research areas. Although the humanities, broadly conceived,[10] continue to attract the largest number of student enrolments across the country, it is often denied access to these strategic research funds. (For example, a 5-year national research infrastructure programme charged with distributing over \$500 million across the sector spent none of that money on infrastructure for the humanities, and negligible amounts on the social sciences.[11]) This has knock-on effects in the overall funding environment for these disciplines which is, in complicated ways, influenced by success in earning external research dollars. In addition, successive governments have justified their cuts to university budgets through a utilitarian and vocational rhetoric that has had the effect of undermining the principle that a university education is intrinsically valuable. Any erosion of such principled support for a university education disproportionately impacts on programmes with a liberal arts or humanities orientation; as a result, even though such programmes have

continued to attract students they have had to pay close attention to the vocational preferences of the market and to the restricted pools of strategic research funds to which they can apply. While some large, well endowed universities have been able to protect themselves from these pressures, most universities have had to redesign their offerings to attract students and to be highly strategic in their research activities. No matter how cannily this is done, the arts and the humanities remain at the bottom of the funding food chain, collecting whatever crumbs fall off the table while the sciences are tucking in.

This concerns more than just the fields of Cultural Studies, creative industries, new media and so on; these pressures have had a transformative effect on the make-up of the whole of the humanities and social science research fields in Australia over the last twenty years. One of the lifelines humanities researchers have taken up is a stream of industry-based collaborative research funding (Australian Research Council Linkage Grants) which, notwithstanding the complicated issues involved in setting up partnerships and managing the intellectual property they generate, has particularly benefited researchers working on new media[12] because of their relative success in accessing industry funding. There is an argument, though, which suggests that the ready availability of Linkage funding has skewed research activity in these areas until now it is too far away from 'blue-sky' or curiosity driven research and too close to industry imperatives or government agency agendas. As a result of the pressures I have outlined, researchers have been forced to reinvent themselves so that their work is more palatable to employers and more useful to industry or government. Consequently, the QUT rebranding is far from unique in closing down whole disciplines in order to reposition its offerings in the market. Now, it is only at the large metropolitan universities, the so-called Group of Eight or 'sandstones',[13] where a comprehensive range of disciplines have been maintained; everywhere else that has proven too difficult in a situation where there are a declining number of incentives to do so.

Usually, there are compelling local reasons for each strategy for survival and so they are always understandable if not necessarily inevitable. As an aggregated outcome of national funding regimes, however, this is having a devastating effect on the state of the humanities in Australia. Among the casualties are departments and offerings in foreign languages, classics, English and history. Of course, Cultural Studies, over its history, has defined itself in ways that have emphasized its opposition to the traditional dispositions of the humanities disciplines, and so perhaps it is not surprising that it has been among the beneficiaries of the shifts which have weakened disciplines such as English. Like some other initiatives in the so-called 'new humanities', cultural and media studies programmes are attractive to students, they are usually connected with an industry training major, and they have been one of the areas where Australian research has been attracting the most international attention. To some extent, then, cultural and media studies are well equipped to survive

the new environment. However, notwithstanding Cultural Studies' foundational resistance to the elitism and exclusivity of the traditional humanities disciplines, and therefore its positioning as a modernizing and interdisciplinary alternative to them, there remain some important continuities between the Cultural Studies project and aspects of the traditional humanities disciplines. Largely, what I am thinking of is a shared critical and analytic tradition that has always informed the practice of Cultural Studies and remains a key component of what a humanities education, in its various guises, can offer (Turner 2006). This practice does not seem to have survived the shift to convergence culture.

What this second narrative emphasizes is the widespread effect of these external pressures. My primary concern is not only with the specific disciplinary casualties, although they are worrying enough. I am also concerned that the distinctiveness of a critical, analytic and academic education has been displaced by such an uncomplicatedly instrumental and training agenda. And what seems most distinctive to me about so many of the convergence culture degree programmes is their ready complicity with this new agenda; it goes well beyond the reluctant but pragmatic accommodation visible in so much of the rest of the sector.

Conclusion

The convergence culture degree programmes now compete with and sometimes displace generalist Arts degrees. If such a trend were to increase, it is possible that they will also displace the Cultural Studies programmes that tend to reside in these generalist degrees – even though they do none of the things a Cultural Studies programme does. While they represent themselves as continuous with Cultural Studies approaches, they are not. As I noted earlier, the content of the degree programmes themselves make this abundantly clear. In the dozen or so programmes I examined in the UK and Australia, I only came across a tiny handful of course units which even mentioned Cultural Studies, let alone situated it as an enabling or core discipline.

The other thing I want to say about this situation is to highlight how different it is, in its very nature, to the way that Cultural Studies began. Cultural studies has resisted calling itself a discipline (and this is another story to be dealt with elsewhere), but it has always had the capacity to become one: it has a rich and deep intellectual tradition, it has now a history of research practices and methodologies (albeit not necessarily exclusively their own), and it has an unfolding theoretical, political and ethical rationale that motivates its prosecution no matter what the institutional or governmental context in which it finds itself. Convergence culture has none of this. Indeed, in its most of its formations, it is simply a brand, used to position each degree programme as 'cool' and contemporary. Brands have limited life cycles and so it is reasonable

to expect this one to lose its effectiveness in time – maybe, quite soon. What worries me, given the brand's claim to share an intellectual genealogy with Cultural Studies, is the danger that it might take Cultural Studies with it. Its relation to the history of Cultural Studies could end up being the demarcation of the vanishing point.

Convergence culture's optimistic engagement with a sector of the market they see as innovative, alternative and democratic certainly has its share of defenders – hence the need for the reconsideration of its impact and importance that is the focus of this special issue. Even in that context, however, and notwithstanding the criticisms to be made, it is appropriate to acknowledge that convergence culture is an idea with its heart in the right place: it seeks empowerment for the individual, it welcomes what it sees as the democratizing potential of new media, and it is sufficiently idealistic to hope that the new media enterprises that attract their interest will achieve something more socially useful than commercial success. The criticism I have to make of them is not to do with the attractiveness of their ideals. However, I think we need to consider the possibility that the shift in higher education in which I argue they are so directly implicated, when viewed from the vantage point of their origins in Cultural Studies, constitutes an unnecessarily comprehensive form of surrender.[14] And look at what it surrenders: a set of ethical, moral and progressive academic objectives and an important intellectual tradition that is mature, dynamic and productive. It does this in order to cater to a market that has convinced them of an alignment between their interests. I think that this alignment is exaggerated at best and spurious at worst, and that we have little to gain from investing in it to the extent we have. I think that this also gives up on the value of a critical intellectual project. Even though universities these days talk of themselves ceaselessly as businesses, there are many ways in which, even now and despite their best efforts, this is just not true. One of these is the extent to which the university remains a privileged and productive space for reflection, for theoretical development, for analysis and critique. Cultural Studies exemplifies what possibilities can flourish within that space. My fear is that to have surrendered that space as if it no longer mattered, and for so little in terms of what we gain in return, will turn out to have been a mistake from which there will be no recovery.

Notes

1   This refers to the inflation of the price of tulips shortly after their introduction to Western Europe in the seventeenth century, when tulips became, briefly, the flimsy foundation for a new speculative economy.

2   Henry Jenkins (2006) book is a reference point for this phrase, of course, but as the editors' framing of this issue indicates, convergence culture is

more widespread, influential and a little more diverse than an exclusive focus on Jenkins' nonetheless significant book would allow.

3   Why notice this? One of the interesting distinctions between the adjacent fields of communications studies and Cultural Studies is that until recently it was seen as virtually impossible to conceive of Cultural Studies being located within a business programme. While it is not unusual for communications to be housed there, Cultural Studies was regarded as antithetical to the professional orientation of a business programme.

4   The content of these can vary quite widely, from the Media Studies 2.0 advanced by David Gauntlett (2007) to the 'cultural science' model proposed by John Hartley (2008). The politics of these two examples are also very different.

5   Due to the range of nomenclature used, and to the fact that while a school or department might call itself creative industries without actually offering a degree programme of that name, it is quite hard to be confident that one's search for these programmes is comprehensive. However, I have looked at all the programmes I could locate in both countries and so I am confident that they constitute at least a representative sample.

6   Tony Bennett's contribution to the Grossberg, Nelson and Treichler anthology (1992) is arguably the point at which this becomes a paradigm of international significance.

7   Stuart Cunningham's (1992) *Framing Culture* was particularly contentious in its claims to replace the critical tradition in Cultural Studies; debates about this book and indeed what came to be called 'the policy moment', were sufficiently important that there was an issue of the journal *Media Information Australia* devoted to discussing it (Flew *et al.* 1994).

8   This was the UK Government's Department of Culture, Media and Sport's policy framework, *The Creative Industries Mapping Document* (DCMS 1998); there does also seem to be a link with the Australian government's *Creative Nation* (1994) policy but this was very much a cultural industries rather than a creative industries approach.

9   I do not want to get involved in a discussion of this research agenda as part of this essay; my critique of it is complicated and demands more space than I could give it here. It will, however, be part of a book that is currently in progress, with the working title of *What's Become of Cultural Studies?* to be published by Sage in late 2011. In the meantime, there is Justin O'Connor's (2009) extremely thoughtful and useful critique of the QUT Creative Industries research agenda.

10   That is, if we think of this as encompassing both the traditional disciplines such as history and philosophy as well as the so-called 'new humanities', such as Cultural Studies, gender studies and media studies.

11   This was the National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy (NCRIS).

12   Success rates for these are more than double those for the 'basic research'
      programme, the Discovery grants. It is, therefore, the place for early career
      researchers to go, and those with a limited track record, with some hope for
      success. Concentrating efforts here, then, certainly increases income if that
      is all one wants to do. For those with strong industry connections, such as
      the creative industries, it has proven a successful approach.
13   These are the Universities of Adelaide, Sydney, Melbourne, Queensland,
      Western Australia, Monash and the University of New South Wales.
14   I should acknowledge that this formulation was raised in a conversation with
      me by my colleague Mark Andrejevic.

Notes on contributor

Graeme Turner is ARC Federation Fellow, Professor of Cultural Studies,
and Director of the Centre for Critical and Cultural Studies at the University
of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia. He has published widely on film,
television, media and popular culture. His most recent books are *Ordinary
People and the Media: The Demotic Turn* (2010) and *What's Become of Cultural
Studies?* (forthcoming, 2011).

References

Bennett, T. (1989) 'Culture: theory and policy', *Culture and Policy*, vol. 1, pp.
      5–8.
Bennett, T. (1992) 'Putting policy into cultural studies', in *Cultural Studies*, eds
      L. Grossberg, C. Nelson & P. Treichler, London and New York, Routledge.
Couldry, N. (2000) *Inside Culture: Re-imagining the Method of Cultural Studies*,
      London, Sage.
Cunningham, S. (1992) *Framing Culture*, Sydney, Allen and Unwin.
Cunningham, S. (2002) 'From cultural to creative industries: theory, industry and
      policy implications', *Media International Australia*, vol. 102, pp. 54–65.
Drew, J. (1996) 'Media activism and radical democracy', in *Virtual Realities and
      their Discontents*, ed. R. Markley, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press.
Federal Communications Commission (2010) *Sixth Broadband Deployment Report,*
      June 20, Washington, DC.
Flew, T., Hawkins, G., & Jacka, E. (1994) 'The policy moment', a special issue of
      Media Information Australia, no. 73, August.
Gauntlett, D. (2007) 'Media Studies 2.0', *Theory.org*, 24 February. Available at:
      www.theory.org.uk/mediastudies2-print.htm (accessed 16 December
      2008).

Hartley, J. (2008) 'The future is an open future: cultural studies at the end of the ''long twentieth century'' and the beginning of the ''Chinese century''', *Cultural Science*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 1−21.

Hindman, M. (2009) *The Myth of Digital Democracy*, Princeton and Oxford, Princeton University Press.

Jenkins, H. (2004) 'The cultural logic of media convergence', *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, vol. 7, no. 1, pp. 33−44.

Jenkins, H. (2006) *Convergence Culture: Where old and new media collide*, New York, New York University Press.

McGuigan, J. (2006) 'The politics of cultural studies and cool capitalism', *Cultural Politics*, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 137−158.

O'Connor, J. (2009) 'Creative industries: a new direction?', *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, vol. 15, no. 4, pp. 387−402.

Sconce, J. (2003) 'Tulip theory', in *New Media: Theories and Practices of Digitextuality*, eds. J. T. Caldwell & A. Everett, New York and London, Routledge, pp. 179−193.

Turner, G. (2006) 'Informing the public: is there a place for a critical humanities?', in *Proceedings 2005*, Canberra, Australian Academy of the Humanities, pp. 131−141.

Turner, G. (2010) *Ordinary People and the Media: The Demotic Turn*, London, Sage.