

1. Introduction

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Cultural economics has grown over the last 50 or so years from being a niche subject studied by a few economists with a personal interest in the arts to being a much broader field that now embraces a wide selection of creative and performing arts and the cultural industries that market their work. Interest on the part of teachers wishing to offer courses in cultural economics, who may or may not be in an economics department or business school, has led to this book, which is edited by economists who have been teaching cultural economics for some time. It is often the case that teachers from other specializations are asked or would like to offer courses in cultural economics or, indeed, just to add a few examples from cultural economics to their broader course material. That is the situation envisaged by the contributors to this book. Along similar lines, students taking courses in cultural economics may or may not have a rigorous background in economics and, accordingly, the book offers suggestions for teaching material ranging from the simple to the sophisticated. Most of the contributions are from authors who are active teachers of cultural economics and their chapters offer tested teaching material.

STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

The first five chapters are introductory essays on the editors' and other leading contributors' views and experience of teaching and researching cultural economics. We represent different countries' institutional settings and cultural organizations and, undoubtedly, they have influenced our thinking. Moreover, we each specialize in different areas of cultural economics, as reflected in the way the book is organized. Other authors come from a wider range of backgrounds and outlook and we therefore hope there is something for all here. The book is specifically addressed to teachers and is divided into parts, each of which was curated by one of the three editors, as follows:

- Part I Economics of public support for arts and cultural organizations
- Part II Financing cultural production
- Part III Artists' labour markets
- Part IV Consumer behaviour in the cultural sector

Part V Digitization and copyright

Part VI Topics in economics of cultural and creative industries

Parts I and IV have been curated by Trine Bille; Part II by Anna Mignosa; Parts III and V by Ruth Towse; and Part VI is jointly curated by all three editors. Some chapters review literature on a specific topic, while others have a more empirical bent. Suggestions for further reading, classroom exercises and test or examination questions are also included.

HOW TO USE THE BOOK

In principle, a course could be constructed using every chapter of the book but, in practice, teachers will choose in accordance with the time allocated to the course and the prior understanding of economics on the part of the students. Some of the chapters are suitable for undergraduates with little prior knowledge who could be assigned reading from a textbook to assist their understanding of the topic, while others require a basic knowledge of microeconomics and welfare economics.

READING RECOMMENDATIONS

For general sources, there are two textbooks in cultural economics in English: an older one by Heilbrun and Gray, *The Economics of Art and Culture* (2001) and *A Textbook of Cultural Economics*, 2nd edition by Ruth Towse (2019), both published by Cambridge University Press. A shorter text is Ruth Towse (2014), *Advanced Introduction to Cultural Economics*, published by Edward Elgar Publishing. *A Handbook of Cultural Economics*, 2nd edition, also published by Edward Elgar Publishing, has 60 short chapters by many different authors specializing in cultural economics, edited by Ruth Towse (2013). For a textbook in French, see the book by Françoise Benhamou (2017), *L'économie de la culture*, Paris, La Découverte, in its 8th edition.