REPORT ON THE 3RD WORKSHOP OF THE RSA RESEARCH NETWORK ON EXPERIENCE ECONOMY AND SPATIAL STRATEGIES

Gernot Grabher a & Hugues Jeannerat b

a Research Unit Urban and Regional Economic Studies, Hafen City University Hamburg (HCU), Germany E-mail:
b University of Neuchâtel, Research Group on Territorial Economy (GRET), E-mail:


To cite this article: Gernot Grabher & Hugues Jeannerat (2012): REPORT ON THE 3RD WORKSHOP OF THE RSA RESEARCH NETWORK ON EXPERIENCE ECONOMY AND SPATIAL STRATEGIES, Regions Magazine, 287:1, 23-24

To link to this article: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13673882.2012.10554279

The Regional Studies Association (http://www.regional-studies-assoc.ac.uk) has licensed the Taylor & Francis Group to publish this article and other materials. To join the Regional Studies Association please visit http://www.regionalstudies.org/join/benefits.asp.

View the Regional Studies Association Disclaimer (http://www.regional-studies-assoc.ac.uk/disclaimer.asp)

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

Full terms and conditions of use: http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions. For articles published as an Open Select article please note Part II. Intellectual property and access and license types, § 11. (c) Open Access Content.

For articles published as Open Select articles, please note that the use of these articles for commercial purposes is strictly prohibited.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The accuracy of any instructions, formulae, and drug doses should be independently verified with primary sources. The publisher shall not be liable for any loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand, or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.
REPORT ON THE 3RD WORKSHOP OF THE RSA RESEARCH NETWORK 
ON EXPERIENCE ECONOMY AND SPATIAL STRATEGIES
'Theorizing the Experience Economy: Toward a future agenda?,” 3rd-4th November 2011, HafenCity University, Hamburg, Germany
Gernot Grabher and Hugues Jeannerat, HafenCity Universtity Hamburg (HCU), Germany

After already two successful events held in 2009 (Neuchâtel) and in 2010 (Aalborg), the third workshop of the research network Experience Economy and Spatial Strategies took place on 3rd–4th November 2011 in Hamburg. Organized by the research group Urban and Regional Economic Studies at the HafenCity University Hamburg (Gernot Grabher), the workshop proposed to reflect on the general question of ‘Theorizing the experience economy: Towards a future agenda?’

This workshop aimed at discussing the scope and limits of the experience economy perspective for regional studies as well as stimulating new interdisciplinary perspectives on economic valuation (Gernot Grabher, Hamburg). On the one hand, participants were invited to overcome more traditional technology-centered approaches by reflecting on the role of immaterial innovation and of symbolic consumption in territorial development. On the other hand, common fields of interest between regional studies and economic sociology around the social construction of market value were identified. More than forty researchers and students from eight countries took part in the workshop, and eighteen presentations were given by junior and senior scholars. The presentations were organized in three thematic sessions and highlighted central scientific challenges posed by the experience economy perspective.

The first session provided a reflection on the way that the experience economy spatially organizes in particular forms of stage-setting. For Philip Crang (Royal Holloway London), four particular types of experiential stages can be identified (the Theatre, the Crowd, the Interface and the Collection). Each represents different spatial and social configurations that intertwine with everyday social and economic practices. At a firm level, stage-setting does not only contribute to offering experiences directly to end-consumers, but also contributes to the valuation of authentic products or sustainable technologies, for example (Hugues Jeannerat and Olivier Crevoisier, University of Neuchâtel). In this sense, experiences are increasingly instrumental in branding processes, and shops have become strategic stages in which consumers engage in the valuation of branded products, as is the case in the fragrance industry (Bodo Kubartz, Passion and Consulting). At a territorial level, experiential stage-setting is increasingly perceived as a strategic resource for urban or regional planning. Major German cities, for instance, are increasingly aware of their night-time economy and advertise themselves as attractive stages for night-life experiences (Jakob Schmid, HafenCity University). Also, staging experiences have in some Nordic municipalities become a resource to promote the active participation of citizens in planning processes (Line Hvingel, Lise Schroeder and Hans Peter Therkildsen, Aalborg University).

The second session explored key challenges for regional studies and economic geography induced by the experience economy perspective. For Andy Pratt (King’s College London), the rise of the experience economy leads to new ontological questions that are not only related to the production and consumption of experiential products. It also implies considering new work hierarchies and inequalities that are embedded in economic and extra-economic processes. While the cultural or creative economy have mostly been addressed in productionist terms and mostly been designated as a specific set of particular industries, the experience economy directs attention to consumption-based activities occurring across sectors and industries (Anne Lorentzen, Aalborg University). Consequently, attempts of an unequivocal distinction between the experience economy and the cultural economy, for example, appear highly problematic and complicate the development of dedicated policy support (Berit Therese Nilsen and Britt Dale, Norwegian University of Science and Technology). The promotion of consumers’ experiences enables the launch of regional-specific products, for instance the ‘Nordic Cuisine’ that cannot be certified and protected in traditional industrial ways (Jon Sundbo, Roskilde University). In this sense, experiences are not necessarily what is directly sold, but are inextricably interwoven with the valuation of local social and economic activities at large (Sarah Kennedy, Queen’s University, Belfast). The latter entail private and collective rationalities entangled in local communities, which appears particularly significant for the development of rural areas (Jesper Manniche, Line Hvingel, Tage Peterson and Karin Larsen, Centre for Regional and Tourism Research, Bornholmi).

The third session addressed interdisciplinary approaches to market valuation in the experience economy. For Patrik Aspers (Stockholm University), the valuation of experience goods involves particular market structures.
REPORT ON THE THIRD RESEARCH SEMINAR OF THE RSA RESEARCH NETWORK ON CREATIVE REGIONS

Creative Regions in Europe: Challenges and Opportunities, 18-19th April 2012, University of Copenhagen, Denmark.

Lars Winther and Hogni Hansen, University of Copenhagen, Denmark

The third research seminar took place in Copenhagen at the Department of Geography and Geology, University of Copenhagen, with a focus on the role of local and regional policies and policy frameworks for creative regions. Of particular interest were best practice and lessons emerging in different European contexts and the challenges and opportunities for the development of creative regions in Northern Europe. More than 30 people attended the seminar and 18 papers were presented over the two days reflecting the interests above in different contexts and from different perspectives. The main conclusion of the two days is that creativity matters for urban and regional development but the event also revealed that the impact of creativity in terms of creative and cultural industries, creative people, highly skilled workers and bohemians, institutions and regional and local policies varies by geographical contexts including the potential for more peripheral regions and medium-sized cities outside the main growth regions. Several studies combined various perspectives and emphasised the interrelationships between creative and cultural industries, labour and institutions in making creative regions.

The first day was the PhD and young researchers’