

## FROM the editor

### Economies of Knowledge: Production and Distribution of Knowledge in the Network Society

Issue 2

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Recent changes in the mode of production and dissemination of knowledge have often been described in the context of what has been fashionably termed as 'knowledge economy'. Manuel Castells in *The Rise of the Network Society*, (1996) points to the change in the ways technological processes are organised - from a mode of development focussed on economic growth and surplus-value (industrialism) to one based on the pursuit of knowledge and increased levels of complexity of information (informationalism).

In this way, new technologies have enhanced the effectiveness of global capitalism, enabling it to become more flexible, adaptable, faster, efficient and pervasive. Culture, too, and indeed the education system, has become integrated in the process of the creation of capital, with cultural regeneration and a link between research and enterprise as an example of capital's renewal. In this context it is clear that art and art education follow economic imperatives for the most part but do they also offer the possibility of influencing it? To what extent can the spaces of determination be creatively reclaimed? And how might network technologies support or counter-act this process?

*Technological tools have indeed facilitated the access to information, and the image of an <information net> visualizes in a stronger way the potentially dynamic character of knowledge – as opposed to the historical library, for example. However, it remains an open question, in how far those technologies have fundamentally added new aspects to the way in which knowledge is socially and culturally constituted (Peter Spillmann, *The Sourcebook*, 6th Werkleitz Biennale, 2004).*

### Economising Knowledge: Critical Responses

Marion von Osten: [SUCH VIEWS MISS THE DECISIVE POINT... THE DILEMMA OF KNOWLEDGE-BASED ECONOMY AND ITS OPPONENTS](#)

Nick Dyer-Witthford: [COGNITIVE CAPITAL AND THE CONTESTED CAMPUS](#)

Lucy Kimbell: [MAKING A DIFFERENCE](#)

William Bowles: [THE MACINTOSH COMPUTER: ARCHETYPAL CAPITALIST MACHINE?](#)

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### Information Commons: Intellectual Democracy, Free Information Movement

Armin Medosch: [SOCIETY IN AD-HOC MODE: DECENTRALISED, SELF-ORGANISING, MOBILE](#)

Brian Holmes: [THREE PROPOSALS FOR A REAL DEMOCRACY. INFORMATION SHARING TO A DIFFERENT TUNE](#)

Jamie King: [THE DISSOLVING FORTRESS](#)

Alan Toner: [UNZIPPING THE WORLD SUMMIT ON THE INFORMATION SOCIETY](#)

CUKT: [\(ANTI\) DISSEMINATION OF TECHNICAL CULTURE?](#)

This issue of the EJHAE attempts to unravel some of the mechanisms and contradictions inherent in knowledge production and distribution, and the limitations and hierarchies offered under the so-called knowledge economy. It does this in relation to the following themes:

- Economising Knowledge
- Information Commons / Intellectual Property, Democracy, Free Information Movement
- Knowledge Transfer / Cognitive Capitalism and its Resistance

The first section 'Economising Knowledge' provides critical responses to the process of the economisation of knowledge in relation to recent neo-liberal policies, often described in this context under the term 'cognitive capitalism'; it discusses the apparent 'dilemma of knowledge-based economy' - knowledge as common property versus copyrighting and monopolisation of knowledge (Marion von Osten); privatisation and standardisation of education (Nick Dyer-Witheford, William Bowles); and contests its corporatisation, the so-called enterprise agendas and third leg funding (Marion von Osten, Lucy Kimbell).

Contributions to 'Information Commons' section discuss issues around the economisation and copyrighting of information and its resistance; the monopolisation and tightening of Intellectual Property copyrighting in relation to State and corporate control of access on the one hand (Alan Toner, Jamie King, WIPO, WSIS) and ideas around the Free Information Movement, Free Networks, Information as Common Property and democracy based on free exchange on the other hand (Armin Medosch, Brian Holmes, C.U.K.T).

The third section 'Knowledge Transfer' considers mechanisms of knowledge transfer in cognitive capitalism and presents new models that resist economisation and monopolisation of knowledge and information in general. This is best exemplified by the recent appearance of self-instituted educational projects such as kuda.org or University of Openness; emergence of open source and free software based tools for knowledge gathering and dissemination (semantic web, wikipedia and distributed library project); and finally experimental ideas in teaching at mainstream educational institutions that incorporate the latest digital technologies (Mark Amerika, Julian Malins & Ian Pirie, Gianni Corino et al).

The currency of addressing the current relationship between knowledge, economy and technology is further reinforced by a number of recent projects, events and publications on this theme. The 'FOUND and LINKED / WEB SPECIALS' section highlights some of these

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## Knowlede Transfer: Cognitive Capitalism and its Resistance

Faculty of Cartography, University of Openness:  
**FORTRESS EUROPE**

Harry Potter: **FROM OPEN ENCYCLOPAEDIA TO DISTRIBUTED LIBRARY PROJECT**

**KUDA INTERVIEWED BY TREBOR SCHOLZ:**

kuda.org.

Mark Amerika: **TEACHING HIGH TECHNE**

Julian Malins, Ian Pirie: **DEVELOPING A VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT FOR ART AND DESIGN. A CONSTRUCTIVIST APPROACH**

Gianni Corino, Tatiana Mazali, Sara Monaci, Gabriella Taddeo: **COMMUNICO CASE STUDY: E-LEARNING COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT**

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## Found and Linked/Web Specials

**MUTE:** culture and politics after the net

**WERKLEITZ BIENNALE**

**UNIVERITY OF OPENNESS**

**WSIS:** World Summit on the Information Society

**WIPO:** The World Intellectual Property Organisation

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**NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS**

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projects, in particular the most recent issue of MUTE magazine (UK and online, The 6th Werkleitz Biennale and The Halle School of Common Property (Germany and online).

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*Joasia Krysa*

Editor, issues 2 of EJHAE.

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