Delimiting leisure and culture: Towards a new definition of leisure property

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Abstract
This paper argues that, while leisure has gained increasing recognition as a property sector, the definition of this sector has been narrowed to such an extent that it is now hard to distinguish from the retail sector. Using Pratt's cultural production model allied to the Standard Industrial Classification system, the paper suggests that, unlike retail, leisure activity represents a nexus between production, distribution, reproduction and consumption that is currently not reflected by common understandings of 'leisure property'.

Keywords:
leisure property, cultural production, industrial classification

INTRODUCTION

In its relatively short existence, the *Journal of Retail and Leisure Property* (and before it the *Journal of Leisure Property*) has helped establish the legitimacy of leisure, in particular, as an accepted subject for property research. While there certainly was research into leisure property prior to the publication of the Journal[1] it tended not to appear in property research journals,[2] or to appear as a specialist application of more general research.[3] But, despite its increasing pedigree as a subject for research, little attempt has yet been made to determine the stance from which leisure is understood

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as a potential occupier of space.[4] As a consequence, little attention has been paid to defining the boundaries of 'leisure property', or how these relate to associated property types, such as culture, sport and, of course, retail.

Leisure property

Rather than attempt such a definitional project, it is apparent that the Journal describes leisure as a category of property in an inclusive manner, little distinguished from retail. For example, in the aims and scope of the Journal, specific reference is made to 'all types of retail and leisure property and the processes applied to them, including mixed-use developments, shopping centres, warehouse retailing, pubs, bars and restaurants, department stores, hotels, foodstore retailing, high street and retail parks ...'.

In noting the dominance of retail uses in this list, it is apparent that 'leisure property' is regarded mainly as a mix of accommodation, food and beverage outlets, and as an adjunct or context for retail activities. With some notable exceptions, this is very much the territory within which leisure is understood, predicated broadly on outmoded classifications such as the Use Classes Order.[5] This raises questions about the appropriateness of the term 'leisure', given that accommodation is conventionally understood as an element of tourism, while not all food and beverage outlets are necessarily understood to be a core part of a leisure offer. It also suggests that a question must be raised about the extent to which there exists a recognisable and meaningful understanding of the category 'leisure property', or whether it is largely a term coined loosely to represent 'unconventional' uses of (in this case mainly retail) property. This paper seeks to address this question, first by reviewing the construct of leisure and its relevance for describing property types, and then by proposing a broad (delimited) construct of leisure that might usefully be used to determine the boundaries of 'leisure property'.

LEISURE, CULTURE AND THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

The concept of leisure

Concomitant with 'leisure' becoming a recognised sector of property activity, its forms of organisation have become increasingly hybridised, such that the traditional demarcation between activity types (sport, recreation, the arts etc) and providers (public, private and voluntary) is becoming less evident.[6] This has been reflected in government, with the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) now having a remit covering sport, recreation, the arts, media and gambling. As such, the term 'leisure' has lost currency in favour of more inclusive terms, particularly 'culture'. This is particularly the case with regional development agencies and local government, which have increasingly sought to align themselves with the remit of the DCMS under the banner of cultural and creative industries.[7] Apart from bureaucratic hygiene this signals an important conceptual difference between 'leisure'—broadly understood as an individually inspired consumptive activity—and culture, which has a much stronger connection to

production and the use of space and resources. Thus, as alluded to in the aims of the Journal, the conceptual connection between retail and leisure property is understood to be much more associated with consumption and consumptive activities than it is with broader and inclusive definitions of either term. It also implies a rather strategic understanding of consumptive activities, such that they are separated from any form of production or other industrial process.

Consumptive activities

While this description and understanding of leisure property may sit well with the interests of commercial property investors and managers, it effectively excludes much property and associated activity also commonly understood to have connections with leisure. Perhaps the prime example is outdoor recreation, with its very different constructs of property,[8] although it could equally be extended to urban open space, or to the more sporting activities associated with gymnasia, swimming pools and other such provisions. It also rather avoids property associated with the development and exploitation of intellectual property rights and other forms of creativity.

In contrast to the narrow, commercially driven consumption focus of 'leisure property', the productivist construct of cultural and creative industries offers a broader and more inclusive, if not necessarily less contested, means of defining property related to leisure activity and usage. The UNESCO (United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) definition of the cultural industries offers a starting point:

Defining the cultural and creative industries

> **'those industries that combine the creation, production and commercialisation of contents which are intangible and cultural in nature. These contents are typically protected by copyright and they can take the form of goods or services.'[9]**

This is conceptually akin to the definition adopted by the Cultural Industries Task Force (CITF):

> **'Those activities which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property.'[10]**

Both definitions proceed to list a series of industries which relate to these broad categories, including printing, publishing and multimedia, audio-visual, phonographic and cinematographic productions, crafts and design, architecture, visual and performing arts, sports, manufacturing of musical instruments, advertising and cultural tourism. In developing such a definitional approach, both UNESCO and the CITF are tacitly subscribing to a 'cultural production' model of leisure and associated activity. A similar focus can be found elsewhere, in the implied 'value of culture' model used by the Learning and Skills Council,[11] for example. While being less

concerned with production (or consumption) *per se*, its focus on economic activity reflects a broader remit than that related to consumption alone.

Industrial classifications

Both the cultural production and value of culture approaches are based on the identification of enterprises and economic activity according to the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) used by the Office for National Statistics. Unfortunately, while reflecting the development of industrial and manufacturing enterprises in the UK, through a meticulously separated list of manufacturing roles and occupations, the SIC has failed to grasp the increasing diversity and complexity of service and cultural occupations. As a result, the SIC is an inadequate tool for separating and describing the functions related to the cultural and creative industries. Despite their limitations, however, many attempts have been made to utilise the SIC codes, largely on the basis that there is currently little viable alternative.[12] Andy Pratt, for example, has usefully divided up the codes according to a value chain, which focuses upon the economic features of cultural and creative activity along the continuum of production—distribution—consumption.[13] This approach has been labelled the 'cultural industries production system', although it might equally be referred to as the 'cultural industries value chain'. It is illustrated in Figure 1.[14]

Cultural industries production system

Included on the production side are forms of individual and collective creative activity that utilise talents and skills often characterised by their innovation and originality. In many cases these activities lead to the creation of intellectual property in the form of copyright. This includes forms of performance and their management (editing and production) and the creation (or preservation) of designs, sounds, images and texts. The model then includes a group of businesses responsible for the 'production of the means of production', which takes into account manufacturing

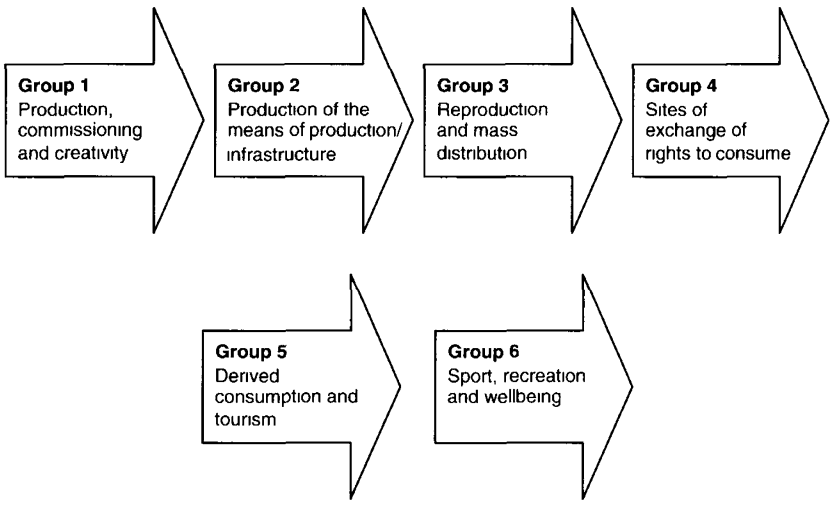

Figure 1: Pratt's 'cultural industries production system'

inputs in relation to the production of cultural goods. 'Reproduction and mass distribution' are also included, which take account of a large swathe of the cultural industries, from printing to publishing. 'Sites of exchange of rights to consume' is included as a necessary category to take account of the market/audience end of the cultural industries value chain (and the set of activities housed in what is conventionally understood as leisure property). Pratt also includes other parts of the cultural industry, including sport, recreation and wellbeing, and derived consumption and tourism (including restaurants, cafés, visitor attractions and accommodation).

Employment in the cultural industries

Pratt has applied this chain to his categorisation of employment types for the cultural industries, drawn from the SIC 1992. Utilising this approach, this paper proposes a more comprehensive and contemporary breakdown using the 2003 two-digit and four-digit SIC codes (see Table 1[15]).

Table 1: Standard Industrial Classifications of the cultural industries

SIC (2003) industry description	SIC (2003)	SIC 80
Group 1 Production: Original production, commissioning and directing		
Manufacture of knitted and crocheted hosiery	17.71	4363
Manufacture of knitted and crocheted pullovers, cardigans etc	17.72	4363
Manufacture of leather goods	18.10	4532
		4533
Manufacture of workwear	18.21	4352
		4533
		4534
		4536
Manufacture of other outerwear	18.22	4531
		4532
		4533
		4536
Manufacture of underwear	18.23	4533
		4535
		4536
		4539
Manufacture of other wearing apparel and accessories	18.24	4363
		4537
		4538
		4539
		4560
		4563
Dressing and dyeing of fur; manufacture of articles of fur	18.30	4560
		4410
Manufacture of footwear	19.30	4510
Letting of conference and exhibition centres	70.20/1	8500
Computer games design	72.22	8394
Architectural engineering activities and related technical consultancy	74.20	8370
Advertising	74.40	8380
Photographic activities	74.81	9890
Speciality design activities	74.87	9760
		4510
		4395
Activities of exhibition and fair organisers	74.87/3	8395
Activities of conference organisers	74.87/4	8395
Other business activities NEC (including fashion artist and literary and theatrical agents)	74.87/9	8395
Technical and vocational secondary education (covering performing and visual arts teachers)	80.22	9330

Table 1: Continued

SIC (2003) industry description	SIC (2003)	SIC 80
Motion picture and video production	92.11	9711
Motion picture and video distribution	92.12	9711
Motion picture projection	92.13	9711
Radio and television activities	92.20	9741
Live theatrical presentations	92 31/1	9741
		9760
Artistic and literary creation and interpretation	92.31/9	9760
Operation of arts facilities	92.32	9741
		9791
Other entertainment activities NEC	92.34	9791
News agency activities	92.40	8395
Motion picture, television and other theatrical casting	92 72/1	9791
Group 2 Infrastructure: Production of the means of production		
Hardware consultancy	72.10	8394
Software consultancy and supply	72.20	8394
Other software consultancy and supply	72.22	8394
Data processing	72.30	8394
		8395
Database activities	72.40	8394
Other computer-related activities	72.60	8394
Printing ink	24.30/2	2552
Photographic materials and chemicals	26.64	2591
Printing, bookbinding and paper-goods machinery	29.56	3276
Radio and electronic capital goods	33.20	3443
Active components, subassemblies and components mainly for consumer goods	32.20	3453
Electronic consumer goods, other electronic equipment NEC	32.10	3454
Photographic and cinematographic equipment	33.40/3	3733
Musical instruments	36.30	4920
Photographic processing laboratories	74.81/4	4930
Group 3 Distribution: Reproduction and mass distribution		
Publishing of books	22 11	4753
		4754
Publishing of newspapers	22.12	4751
Publishing of journals and periodicals	22.13	4752
Publishing of sound recordings	22.14	3452
		4754
		3276
Other publishing	22.15	4754
Printing of newspapers	22.21	4751
Printing NEC	22.22	4753
		4754
		4723
Bookbinding	22.23	4754
Pre-press activities	22.24	4754
		4734
		3276
Ancillary operations related to printing	22.25	4754
Reproduction of sound recording	22.31	3452
Reproduction of video recording	22.32	3452
Reproduction of computer media	22.33	3452
Publishing of software	72.21	8394
Group 4 Consumption: Sites of exchange of rights to consume		
Retail of electrical household appliances and radio and TV goods	52.45	6480
Retail sales in commercial art galleries	52.48/6	6480
Other retail sales in specialised stores	52.48/9	6540
		6480
Retail sales of antiques, including antique books in stores	52.50/1	6480
Retail sales of second-hand goods in stores	52.50	6540
Library and archives activities	92.51	9770
Museum activities	92.52/1	9770

Table 1: Continued

SIC (2003) industry description	SIC (2003)	SIC 80
Group 5 Derived consumption and tourism		
Hotels and motels	55.10	6650
Youth hostels and mountain refuges	55.21	6670
Camping sites, including caravan sites	55.22	6670
Holiday centres and holiday villages	55.23/1	6670
Other self-catering holiday accommodation	55.23/2	6670
Other tourist or short-stay accommodation	55.23/9	6670
Licensed restaurants	55.30/1	6611
Unlicensed restaurants and cafés	55.30/2	6611
Take-away food shops	55.30/3	6612
Licensed clubs	55.40/1	6630
Independent public houses and bars	55.40/2	6620
Tenanted public houses and bars	55.40/3	6620
Managed public houses and bars	53.40/4	6620
Activities of travel agents	66 30/2	6620
Activities of tour guides	66.30/3	6620
Other tourist assistance activities	66.30/9	6620
Business and management consultancy activities NEC (including tourism development consultancy)	74.14/9	8395
Group 6 Sport, recreation and wellbeing		
Primary education (playwork)	80.10	9320
Activities of other membership organisations NEC (eg associations that cover the pursuit of cultural activity or hobbies and youth groups)	91.33	9690
Fair and amusement park activities (including preservation of old railways)	92.33	9791
Dance halls, discotheques and dance instructor services	92.34/1	9791
Preservation of historical sites and buildings	92.52/2	9770
		9690
Botanical and zoological gardens and nature reserve activities	92.53	9770
Operation of ice rinks and roller-skating rinks	92.61/1	9791
Operation of other sports arenas and stadiums NEC	92.61/9	9791
Activities of racehorse owners	92.62/1	9791
Other sporting activities NEC	92.62/9	9791
Other recreational activities, including gambling and betting activities	92.70	9791
		9111
Physical wellbeing activities	93.04	9820
Other service activities NEC (eg artists' model, master of ceremonies, pavement artist, tattooist, toast master)	93 05	9890

NEC: not elsewhere classified.

Breadth of activities

While demonstrating the breadth of activities in the cultural and creative industries sector, Table 1 does highlight the relative importance of those subsectors conventionally related to leisure activity (groups 4–6, where there is a direct relationship between audience and performance).[16] Many of these subsectors have property requirements that are addressed by what is conventionally understood as 'leisure property'. Table 1 also implies that the cultural industries can be placed along a continuum where, on the one side, the audience or market comes to the content (the cultural products and services) through sites of consumption and outlets for cultural activity and, on the other, a large section of the cultural industries works to deliver content to the market, through distribution and reproduction (see Figure 2).[17]

From Figure 2 it is apparent that the primary relationship

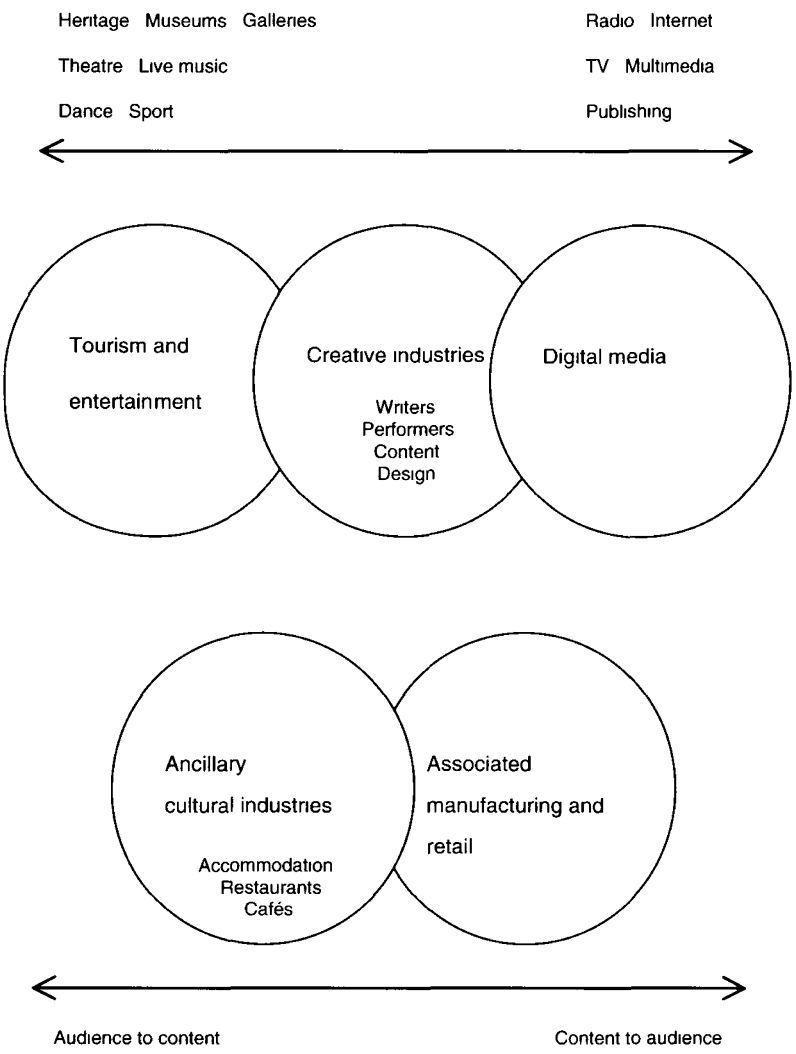

Figure 2: The cultural industries

between culture/leisure and its property requirements is the value flow (audience/consumer to content, or content to audience/consumer). Under this construct, 'leisure property' extends far beyond hotels, catering, clubs and the like, to encompass a much broader and more diverse sector linked directly through its relationship between production and consumption. This reflects work conducted by Bob Stebbins, in which he has distinguished between the constructs of serious and casual leisure.[18] For Stebbins, casual leisure is largely consumption-oriented, being immediately intrinsically rewarding and requiring little preparation and training. As such it is consistent with narrow commercial understandings of leisure and its property requirements. In contrast, serious leisure 'is the systematic pursuit of an ... activity that participants find so substantial and interesting that ... they launch themselves on a career centred on acquiring and expressing its special skills, knowledge and experience'.[19]

Serious and casual leisure

Essentially, the division between production and consumption is set out in Figure 2. Under this construct, conventional understandings of leisure property relate primarily to casual consumerist activities in which instant gratification is paramount. In contrast, the broader field of cultural production encompassed in serious leisure maintains the consumerist focus while introducing both production and distribution, and — by implication at least — the ensuing property requirements.

DISCUSSION

The contention at the start of this paper was that conventional understandings of 'leisure property' fail to convey the full breadth of occupier requirements for property in which leisure-related activities take place. This reflects a narrow and increasingly outmoded understanding of 'leisure' and an equally narrow association of leisure activity with consumptive activities dominated by retailing. While there is some validity in both these arguments, they fail to reflect a more contemporary — and bureaucratic — understanding of leisure activity as part of a bigger and increasingly significant cultural and creative sector. While certainly encompassing the activities conventionally understood as 'leisure', this sector connects consumption with production, distribution and reproduction in a value chain recognisably similar to that found in other industrial sectors.

Value chain

There is thus a case for arguing that current constructs of leisure property are too parochial and restricted by their limitation to consumptive activities. It is here that the links made between leisure and retail are misleading. While retail outlets are part of a value chain ostensibly similar to the one described for leisure and culture, it is commonly accepted that retail is but one way in which goods reach consumers. It is thus a subsector of a larger supply (value) chain related to the manufacture, supply and distribution of goods. In contrast, leisure/culture reflects the entire value chain.

In conclusion, therefore, there is a clear need to rethink the definition of leisure property to ensure that it reflects the full range of property requirements of those working in the industry. There is also a need for caution in attempting to make linkages between different property forms. Most leisure-related activity reflects a nexus between production, reproduction, distribution and consumption, such that many sites fulfil multiple functions. For example, some sites of production (craft workshops, for example) are also sites of consumption, while sports stadia incorporate production, reproduction and consumption. Of course, consumption activity in leisure has many connections to similar activities in the wider sphere of retail — and indeed may be indistinguishable from retail. Yet the argument remains that leisure, as a category of human activity, has property requirements that extend far beyond consumption and, thus, retail.

Looking beyond retail

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