

“Don’t Sow, Grow Offshoots!” Proposing a Rhizomatic Agenda for Research in the Intersection of Arts, Culture, and Entrepreneurship

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ABSTRACT

This paper considers the intersection of arts, culture, and entrepreneurship (ACE) through a novel lens, drawing on Deleuze and Guattari’s dichotomy of arboreal and rhizomatic knowledge structures. First, existing literature reviews on cultural entrepreneurship and arts entrepreneurship are critically explored. This exploration highlights the predominance of arboreal (tree-like, hierarchical, and genealogical) thinking in current ACE research as well as in conventional practices of doing and presenting literature reviews. As a challenge to this norm, a rhizomatically inspired research agenda for the intersection of ACE is proposed. By discussing the challenges of doing research in a transdisciplinary and intersectional research context, the paper ultimately considers how scholars and practitioners can understand this complexity by embracing Deleuze and Guattari’s rhizomatic principles in future research.

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Introduction

The intersection of arts, culture, and entrepreneurship (ACE) has become a topic of growing interest to academics and practitioners alike. This interest partly springs from the changes observed in professional practice as cultural workers’ employment conditions become more precarious and artists more frequently adopt career self-management strategies or engage in enterprising out of necessity (Ellmeier, 2003; Kolsteeg, 2013). Policymakers have also addressed the connections between entrepreneurship and culture, increasingly recognizing culture as “*a competitive and resilient economic sector in its own right as well as having broader impacts: for*

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example, as an attractor of creative talent and a catalyst for economic, technological, and social innovation and change” (Monalto et al., 2018, p. 32). Research communities have also expressed and organized a shared interest in the intersection of ACE, and specialized research journals with a cross-disciplinary orientation (e.g., *Artivate: a Journal of Entrepreneurship in the Arts*) have often published articles addressing this junction. The launch of *Art, Culture & Entrepreneurship* this year also signals how this intersection is sparking research interest in multiple disciplines and mobilizing them as well as bringing them together into joint research conversations.

Among the scholarly reviews of the literature situated in and/or addressing the intersection of ACE (e.g., Essig, 2017; Wyszomirski and Goldberg-Miller, 2015; Hausmann and Heinze, 2016; Bürger and Volkmann, 2020; Callander and Cummings, 2021), two distinct research streams have been identified: *arts entrepreneurship* (AE) and *cultural entrepreneurship* (CE). To a large extent, these streams have similar research agendas, generally situated somewhere between (1) the empirical context of ‘the arts’ or ‘the cultural field’ and (2) entrepreneurship theory and practice. This framing encompasses multiple economic, sociological, and artistic concerns. Recurring problems raised in the literature include the relation between economic and cultural values (Leadbeater and Oakley, 1999; Scott, 2012), the often-assumed antagonistic relation between artistic integrity and commercial success (Bridgstock, 2013), and explorations of the similarities between ‘artists’ and ‘entrepreneurs’ as discursive subjects traditionally ascribed with the qualities of creativity, novelty-seeking, rule-breaking, and provocation (Hjorth and Holt, 2016).

Yet, as noted by Callander and Cummings (2021), entrepreneurship theories and research practices have markedly influenced the expanding scholarly community contributing empirically, theoretically, and conceptually to the literature situated at the ACE intersection. Indeed, researchers seeking to understand or explain entrepreneurship in an arts and culture context commonly adopt such concepts and issues as “*new venture creation*” (Lindkvist and Hjorth, 2015), “*effectuation*” (Gangi, 2017), “*bricolage*” (Preece, 2014), “*innovation*” (Woronkowicz, 2021), “*self-employment*” (Essig, 2015), and “*opportunity-recognition*” (Scherdin and Zander, 2011).

Although some contributions approach entrepreneurship through the lens of the arts and humanities, Callander and Cummings (2021) contended that scholars predominantly equate entrepreneurship with profit-making and therefore view entrepreneurial practices more narrowly as general business or commercial activities. Callander and Cummings (2021) further noted that few journals targeted at an arts and humanities audience (i.e., *Theatre Journal*, *Cinema Journal*) publish articles where entrepreneurship is conceptualized as a process of reorganization, renewal, emancipation, or social change (Steyaert and Katz, 2004; Calás et al., 2009). In essence, current research in the ACE intersection seems to be constrained in its ability to integrate diverse, nuanced, and profound insights from intersecting disciplines and research domains. In this paper I seek to ease this constraint.

Some are concerned that the emerging research on AE and CE may be commandeered by researchers whose work rests on entrepreneurship theories. These researchers could also be epistemologically attached to frameworks and methods that might deter contributions from scholars unfamiliar with, or skeptical of, the normative assumptions in so-called mainstream entrepreneurship research. Such a trend could prevent research in the intersection of ACE from developing into a genuinely multi-, inter-, and transdisciplinary scholarly community—a vision previously and recently articulated by several scholars, including Beckmann (2014), Klamer (2017), White (2021), and Jordan (2023).

Against this backdrop, in this paper I set out to probe the intersection of ACE and critically engage with how scholarship at this juncture is viewed, in the process considering how to develop this intersection in harmony with a vision of ACE as a transdisciplinary, collaborative, scholarly

domain. Specifically, I aim to disentangle how the ACE juncture serves as a *locus for empirical research* ('studies about ACE') while simultaneously representing a *convergence of distinct/overlapping communities of researchers* (what I refer to as 'ACE research'). Methodologically, I lean heavily on prior literature reviews concerning AE and CE, focusing special attention on understanding the genesis of AE and CE, discerning the disciplines and research fields from which they have emerged, and outlining the broader research contexts that have shaped their formation. I also shed light on how scholars engaging with this literary corpus have tried to distinguish AE and CE from each other, and map their conceptual trajectories over time—despite (or perhaps due to) both being considered as in their nascency.

In the first section of this paper I sketch a theoretical outline of current research streams populating the intersection of ACE. Next, I assemble a conceptual scaffold for making sense of how the intersection of ACE has been construed in previous literature reviews. To this end, I borrow the concepts of “arborescent” and “rhizomatic” knowledge structures from the philosophical work of Deleuze and Guattari (1987/2020; 1994). I will elaborate on these concepts later, but for now suffice it to think of arborescent structures as “traditional” models of knowledge and organization, which, like a tree, extend from a main stem. In other words, they have a central foundation from which all else originates. In contrast, rhizomatic structures are non-hierarchical and non-linear, with multiple entry and exit points. These qualities make for a more fluid, decentralized model of knowledge and organization, where connections and relationships are multiplicitous. In the paper’s final section, I consider rhizomatic qualities as a prospective base on which to build a research agenda for ACE research.

Background: Research Streams in the Intersection of ACE

The intersection of ACE has attracted the attention of researchers from many academic backgrounds and research domains (e.g., cultural economics, sociology of culture, media studies). However, I focus my discussion on two main research streams that have emerged: CE and AE. This section therefore provides a brief background of these streams, based on the insights of previous CE and AE literature reviews (Chang and Wyszomirski, 2015; Wyszomirski and Goldberg-Miller, 2015; Hausmann and Heinze, 2016; Gehman and Soublière, 2017; Essig, 2017; Pret and Cogan, 2018; Strøm et al., 2019; Dobрева and Ivanov, 2020; Bürger and Volkman, 2020; Callander and Cummings, 2021), which are understandably few in view of these streams’ nascency. However, the available reviews span a 10-year period from which coherent narratives emerge to account for each research stream’s origin, preliminary framing, and conceptual development.

Cultural Entrepreneurship

As a recurring theme, researchers reviewing CE literature (e.g., Gehman and Soublière, 2017; Essig, 2017; Pret and Cogan, 2018; Dobрева and Ivanov, 2020) have traced the label ‘cultural entrepreneurship’ to the seminal works of Paul DiMaggio (1982a; 1982b). In his two-part article series DiMaggio offered a historical analysis concerning the establishment of the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the Boston Museum of Art in the 19th century, discussing the formation of cultural institutions as a way of reinforcing social boundaries around ‘high culture’ and distinguishing it from ‘popular culture’. However, as Gehman and Soublière noted, (2017), DiMaggio only used the term CE in the article title and one subheading. Moreover, instead of portraying ‘the cultural entrepreneur’, he elected to invent another character: ‘the cultural capitalist’. Drawing on the sociological framework of Pierre Bourdieu, DiMaggio called attention

to how those responsible for erecting new cultural institutions did so not just for the social good but also because they “*were collectors of what Bourdieu has called ‘cultural capital,’ knowledge and familiarity with styles and genres that are socially valued and that confer prestige upon those who have mastered them*” (DiMaggio, 1982a, p. 35).

In 1982, when DiMaggio’s articles were published, the still young area of entrepreneurship had yet to be widely accepted as an academic field in its own right (Landström, 2020). Notably, DiMaggio’s notion of CE remained dormant in the literature until the turn of millennium. Kuhlke et al. (2015, p. 8) mentioned that, prior to 2000, if one searched “*for the concept of cultural entrepreneurship in scholarly articles, archives, or in the popular media, you likely would have ended up with only a handful of references.*” However, as interest in ‘the creative economy’ (Howkins, 2001) grew, CE resurfaced as a concept important to understanding how culture, creativity, and enterprising are becoming interwoven in an increasingly global and digital society (Bürger and Volkmann, 2020). CE was later picked up by multiple research fields, including cultural policy, entrepreneurship, and cultural economics – an expansion that led to numerous suggestions for its definition and scope (Lounsbury and Glynn, 2001; Swedberg, 2006; Haagort, 2007; Klamer, 2011).

Providing a comprehensive examination of how ‘cultural entrepreneurs’ are described in the literature, Strøm et al. (2020) highlighted how CE research spans multiple disciplines, including management, economics, entrepreneurship, and cultural studies. They illustrated how annual publications on CE remained relatively low before 2010 (<5 per year) and increased in the following years (5 to 13 per year until 2020). They also described how most mentions of CE were made in journals addressing management, cultural and creative industries, entrepreneurship, and innovation (Strøm et al., 2020, p. 67). They also brought up how the article authors’ geographical affiliations pointed to origins in English-speaking countries: Half of all the publications reviewed came from scholars situated in the U.S., the U.K., and Australia. Beyond providing these descriptives, Strøm et al. (2020) set out to identify the managerial, entrepreneurial, and innovation- and network-related tensions surrounding cultural entrepreneurs. Interestingly, they concluded that these tensions clearly relate to distinct academic disciplines, but also that cultural entrepreneurs operate in contexts where multiple competing logics converge. As such, single disciplines fail to consider the deeper complexities of their practices.

Gehman and Soublière (2017) distinguished between three related research streams that have appropriated the concept of CE in distinct ways. They called the streams “*CE 1.0*”, “*2.0*”, and “*3.0*” as an allusion to an evolutionary progression between them. They ascribed the slogan “*making culture*” to research organized under the CE 1.0 label. The slogan refers to how scholars have adopted CE when referring to the creation of cultural organizations, such as opera houses (Johnson, 2007; Ericsson, 2018), museums (Lindkvist and Hjorth, 2015), film festivals (Acheson et al., 1996), and theatres (Konrad, 2013). Gehman and Soublière (2017) suggested that the second stream, CE 2.0, originated in strategic management and organization theory, therefore ascribing the slogan “*deploying culture*” to it. However, this stream appears to interpret what ‘culture’ refers to in relation to entrepreneurship radically differently, seeking to understand entrepreneurship through a more cultural lens (cf. Albinsson, 2017; Hjorth, 2022) rather than referring to it in the empirical proximity of the *cultural field*. What Gehman and Soublière (2017) called CE 2.0 is thus intended to re-envision entrepreneurship in potentially any context by emphasizing it as culturally performed and mediated. This other vision calls to mind studies on processes of storytelling, narratives, legitimacy, and capital acquisition. Gehman and Soublière (2017, p. 65) argued that “*whereas CE 1.0 has become an evocative label for theorizing change agents in the arts and cultural industries, CE 2.0 has gained currency among management and organization*

scholars interested in new venture creations.” The third and final research stream identified by Gehman and Soublière (2017) was CE 3.0, for which they suggested the slogan “*cultural making*”. This refers to a less distinct category of research outside the two preceding categories and thus in need of a category of its own. When describing CE 3.0, they still emphasized processes of storytelling and future-making, but rearticulated them as ‘collectively’, ‘socially’, and ‘temporally’ distributed pursuits. Notably, these pursuits are not necessarily related to the arts or cultural fields. Only their predecessor CE 1.0 implies a strong empirical connection to ACE.

In contrast to Gehman and Soublière, other scholars reviewing the literature have concluded that CE is often defined in ways inseparable from the area of culture. This empirical context is referenced in various terms often used interchangeably, such as “*the arts*” “*the creative economy*”, “*the cultural and creative industries*”, and “*the cultural field*” (Hausmann and Heinze, 2016). In turn, a few of these labels are so broad and equivocal as to bundle multiple art disciplines with a wide range of economic activities related to creativity, innovation, and cultural production (e.g., performance art, media, architecture, and software development). If the conditions for entrepreneurial action are assumed to look different in these various areas, it remains problematic to generalize across various contexts comprised by the CE label. However, attempting to designate the general qualities of CE, Swedberg (2006) formulated a preliminary definition stemming from the theoretical legacy of Weber and Schumpeter:

Economic entrepreneurship primarily aims at creating something new (and profitable) in the area of the economy, while cultural entrepreneurship aims at creating something new (and appreciated) in the area of culture. While moneymaking is often a crucial component of cultural entrepreneurship, it does not constitute its primary focus. (Swedberg, 2006, p. 260)

Here, Swedberg (2006) primarily aimed to differentiate CE from conventional and mainstream conceptions of entrepreneurship within the understanding of economic rationalism, suggesting that CE differs in scope and teleology: Cultural entrepreneurs address a different crowd and have different objectives than those that traditional, business-oriented perspectives assume entrepreneurs to have. Applying this idea, scholars reviewing the literature (Hausmann and Heinze, 2016; Naudin, 2017) have suggested that CE has also developed in tandem with other movements in entrepreneurship studies seeking to theorize and investigate the socio-cultural factors associated with entrepreneurial change or to approach entrepreneurship as a phenomenon going beyond positive economic activity (e.g., Calás et al., 2009).

Finally, CE is commonly linked to regional development (Bürger and Volkmann, 2020; Dobreva and Ivanov, 2020), where cultural entrepreneurs are conceptualized as local/regional change agents who take responsibility for actualizing cultural investments in local or regional areas. Scholars in this strand of research thus consider the outcomes of these investments and entrepreneurial actions as both boosting economic activity and engendering other positive effects in the regions concerned (e.g., growing appeal, higher quality of life, a new identity or image).

To recapitulate, previous literature reviews have depicted the growing traction of research into CE within several academic disciplines, including management, economics, and cultural studies. Many assume this multiplicity will negatively impact a burgeoning research stream seeking to define its own agenda (e.g., Lounsbury and Glynn, 2019; Bürger and Volkmann, 2020; Strøm et al., 2020), because such variety can, for example, lead to fragmentation or a more diffuse focus. This lack of clarity has also come up in literature reviews discussing the multifarious empirical contexts and cases only loosely bound under labels such as ‘the creative and cultural sector’ (Hausmann and Heinze, 2016). Despite attempts to define CE by differentiating it from economic

entrepreneurship (Swedberg, 2006), how to interpret and understand what the ‘cultural’ in CE refers to (Gehman and Soublière, 2017; Albinsson, 2017) remains contentious.

Would resolving these issues make everything better? Could scholars then neatly sort and conceptualize CE in the ways academic disciplines and paradigmatic assumptions cater to? Is it naïve to assume that ‘a right way to organize’ knowledge on CE exists, that it is out there to be discovered and thereby halt concerns of fragmentation or aimlessness if only it were? One way of finding out lies in Strøm et al.’s (2020) suggestion that, although distinct academic disciplines may be good for dissecting the individual tensions that permeate cultural entrepreneurs’ practice, researchers need to mobilize multiple disciplines in order to explore and better understand the complexity of the competing logics that apparently characterize entrepreneurship in the arts and culture area. What remains to be resolved, then, is how to accommodate this complexity in the pursuit of knowledge about CE.

Arts Entrepreneurship

Researchers doing literature reviews on AE (e.g., Chang and Wyszomirski, 2015; Essig, 2017; Rivetti and Migliaccio, 2018) have commonly discussed its relatively recent emergence, pointing out how its “*boundaries, definitions, scope, and goals*” as a research stream are still in flux (Callander and Cummings, 2021, p. 739). In contrast to views on CE, those on AE agree that ‘the arts’ in AE refers to artistic practices and disciplines situated in “*Art Worlds*” (Becker, 1982/2008) or “*cultural fields*” (Bourdieu, 1983). As with CE, however, delineating, and contextualizing AE is a recurring theme in the literature, frequently explicated in articles seeking to introduce new definitions, theoretical frameworks, or research directions for AE (e.g., Preece, 2011; Beckman and Essig, 2012; Beckman, 2014; White, 2015; Woronkowicz, 2021). AE can be situated at the crossroads of arts management, arts education, cultural policy, and entrepreneurship studies (Chang and Wyszomirski, 2015). This emphasis on educational contexts extends from its wide adoption in arts education curricula and inclusion in many scholarly and professional conference programs long before entrepreneurship scholars became conceptually attracted to it (Chang and Wyszomirski, 2015; Essig, 2017).

Chang and Wyszomirski (2015, p. 12), who studied the development of AE in 2003-2013 saw that AE appeared in a cluster of “*leading arts management journals at the very beginning of the decade, likely reflecting the emergence of arts entrepreneurs in practice*”. This appearance reflects the aforementioned interest in “the creative economy” (Howkins, 2001) as well as Ellmeier’s (2003) concurrent observations about the changing relationship between the arts, culture, and employment. Ellmeier (2003, p. 3) pointed out how European welfare state systems were shifting, with “*previously typical patterns of full-time professions*” being ousted through the increasing “*marketization*” of culture and a “*culturalization*” of the market. High culture has thereby been growing increasingly commercial, which in turn has shaped the conditions of cultural production. Kolsteeg (2013) and Naudin (2017) also noted this development, which they connected to a diminishing government responsibility and financial support for the arts that have prompted cultural workers to engage in enterprising practices. Although AE “*imports theories from more ‘mainstream’ entrepreneurship [research]*”, such as effectuation, the individual-opportunity nexus, or bricolage, and “*addresses topics that are familiar to entrepreneurship scholars*” (Callander and Cummings, 2021, p. 740), scholars reviewing the literature have noted that entrepreneurship journals scarcely mention the notion of AE until 2010.

According to Essig (2015; 2017), understanding entrepreneurial activity in the arts and culture sector also requires consideration of the differences between European welfare state models vis-à-vis the North American context. Historically, the attitudes of those on either side of the Atlantic

have differed with regard to entrepreneurial behavior and philanthropic giving in relation to the arts. Other scholars reaffirm this issue, pointing out how funding patterns in the non-profit sector of the U.S. differ from those of continental Europe, where “*the share of market and gift support for the arts in the US equals the share of government support in continental Europe*” (Klamer and Zuidhof, 2007, p. 233). This also relates to historical differences concerning the large extent to which Europe’s cultural heritage has been generated through non-market arrangements, that is, through dominant and enduring institutions such as churches, royal courts, patronage, and the bourgeoisie (Klamer and Zuidhof, 2007).

When comparing AE and CE in the context of higher education, Essig (2017) noted that, in Europe, courses and syllabi employing the concept of CE emerged from established business schools and were grounded in management and cultural economics. In contrast, the notion of AE occurred far more frequently in a U.S. educational context, where self-employment or career self-management are often seen as integral to a successful career as an artist or cultural worker (Essig, 2017). Essig also concluded that strategy, management, and leadership skills at the organizational or institutional level of the arts and culture sector is more prevalent in Europe and Australia: “*In the US, the focus is more on ‘on-the-ground’ skills that individual artists can use to be more entrepreneurial in their practice. They include, for example, how to build a website, or undertake small business accounting*” (Essig, 2017, p. 134).

Literature reviews on AE consistently indicate a significant focus on higher education and pedagogy (e.g., Chang and Wyszomirski, 2015; Essig, 2015; Rivetti and Migliaccio, 2018), thereby grounding AE in a more pragmatic understanding and imposing a narrower interpretation of entrepreneurship as being tied to commercial business practices. This focus thus diverges from the alternative perspectives on entrepreneurship advocated by scholars who champion a broader treatment of it (Steyaert and Hjorth, 2003) or aim to reconnect it with a science of imagination (Gartner, 2007). A narrower or broader understanding of entrepreneurship may, of course, influence how scholars think of and envision the intersection of ACE. In other words, they may see it as more closely related to *business in the arts* or view entrepreneurship as a source of *social transformation through the arts* (Hjorth and Holt, 2016). Among others, Steyaert and Katz (2004) have advocated understanding entrepreneurship as a societal rather than strictly an economic phenomenon. As such, they have strived to see innovation and creativity as not solely subservient to economic goals and thus to approach entrepreneurship as a creative element of society that manifests itself in other forms than financial value.

Lastly, in the interest of this paper’s purpose, I examine Beckman and Essig’s (2012) suggested perspectives on ways of imagining the relationship between ‘art disciplines’ and ‘entrepreneurship’ under the AE label. They proposed two models for framing AE (see Figure 1): The first is called “*Entrepreneurship in Arts Disciplines*” and the second “*Arts Entrepreneurship as a Transdiscipline*”. Model 1 conceives of the arts as encompassing a subset of individual artistic disciplines in which entrepreneurship could be correspondingly situated as a perspective or distinct practice. For example, this model includes early contributions to the AE field, such as Preece (2011), who proposed a research agenda specifically for ‘performing arts entrepreneurship’, which he envisioned as a distinct subset of entrepreneurship under an arts discipline. Although such a conception of entrepreneurship in the arts could cause fragmentation, it holds the potential to accommodate and recognize the unique conditions characterizing different arts disciplines. However, Beckman and Essig (2012) introduced an alternative conception of AE, viewing it as a broader concept and research field overarching several contexts in the art world. Thus, Model 2 assumes that there are entrepreneurial practices and theories of arts entrepreneurship that are meaningful to consider on a more general level across multiple arts disciplines.

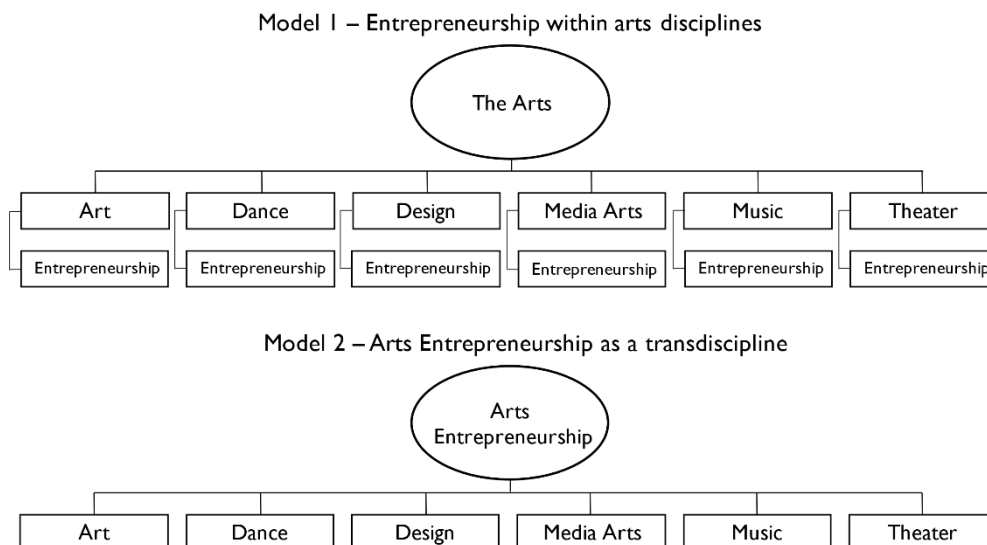


Figure 1: Two models for conceptualizing the field, originally presented by Beckman and Essig (2012, p. 4) as two separate figures.

Callander and Cummings (2021) have considered a third potential literature stream that could be included among research communities in the ACE intersection. Their review explored the treatment of ‘art’ in entrepreneurship journals addressing the field of entrepreneurship (e.g., *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development; Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*) versus the treatment of ‘entrepreneurship’ in journals covering the arts field (e.g., *Cinema Journal; Theatre Journal; Popular Music & Society*). On the one hand, they found that the scholarship in one field tends to take ‘traditionalist’ views of the other, with many entrepreneurship papers “*treating art as just another industry or context*” or “*conceptualiz[ing] art as an instrument or tool of provocation and a challenge to the cultural, socio-economic, or political status quo*” (Callander and Cummings, 2021, p. 748). They further suggested that entrepreneurship is often reduced to an overly celebrated vehicle for wealth generation and profit-making, ideologically entrenched in capitalistic market structures. However, Callander and Cummings (2021, p. 748) also argued that some of the literature embraces a broader understanding of entrepreneurship as a vehicle for emancipation and resistance to market-driven hegemonic tendencies.

In sum, previous literature has described how a research interest in AE has emerged from arts management, arts education, cultural policy, and entrepreneurship studies. Apart from a relatively strong influence from higher education and curricula, these influences mimic the origins of CE. As one exception, however, the conceptual development of AE has been noted to emerge within practitioner and educational contexts, whereas CE has been traced back to a neologism belonging to DiMaggio. Yet, although CE is empirically broader and AE more concisely situated in the context of ‘the arts’, the immense repertoire of artistic disciplines still appears to present researchers and practitioners with unique conditions and logics.

Juxtaposing Scholarships in the Intersection of ACE

Building on the assumption that scholarships in the intersection of ACE have developed in neighboring research streams, I will now juxtapose these streams with regards to their points of origin and empirical areas of interest (see Figure 2). First, such a juxtaposition offers a potential way of disclosing how research in the ACE intersection is currently organized. Second, this organization calls attention to a set of unidirectional movements, whereby one or more disciplines (typically representing one or a bundle of scholarly vistas) approach a distinct empirical context or phenomenon of interest. To better develop this juxtaposition, I draw on the accounts presented in previous literature reviews. In these reviews, for example, researchers studying CE were noted to operate in certain research domains and thus to put frameworks or established theories from these domains to work when studying cultural fields. Put differently, researchers of ‘E’ were looking at ‘C’ or ‘A’ in relation to the abbreviation ACE and its intersection.

Similarly, Chang and Wyszomirski (2015) and Essig (2017) note that literature on AE primarily considers processes related to arts entrepreneurship pedagogy and processes whereby cultural workers create artistic, economic, and social values. They further noted that AE research draws from arts management, arts education, cultural policy, and entrepreneurship studies. In relation to CE, AE was suggested to have a narrower area of interest, as researchers in this field seek either to understand entrepreneurial practices in close relationship to specific art disciplines (Preece, 2011; Beckman and Essig, 2012) or, less narrowly, to understand art value exchange and innovation in Art Worlds. Nonetheless, in AE literature, the predominant relation entails ‘E’ looking at ‘A’, which is situated in the broader context of ‘C’.

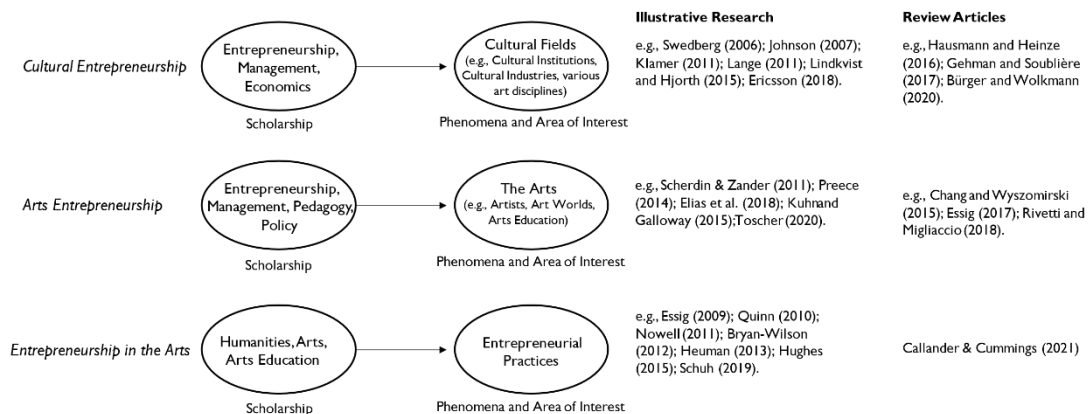


Figure 2: Juxtaposition and genealogy of scholarships in the intersection of ACE.

One similarity between CE and AE is, of course, that both draw from entrepreneurship frameworks to enrich scholars’ understanding of what goes on in arts and culture. This similarity should be remembered if one sees entrepreneurship as strongly connotated with the “*conjuring of economic prosperity, interpersonal fulfilment, and even societal progress*” (Gehman and Soublière, 2017, p. 69) or in other ways conceptualized from ideas such as understanding the discovery, evaluation, and exploitation of commercial business opportunities in the cultural and creative industries (Hausmann and Heinze, 2016, p. 17). My suggestion is that when ‘E’ looks at ‘A’ or ‘C’, this examination helps foster distinct epistemic research cultures and subordinates ‘A’ and ‘C’ as prefixes to and thus mere contexts for ‘E’ in AE and CE. This unidirectional relation serves to reinforce concerns that the current spaces where ACE research is organized may not align with the goal of a multi- and transdisciplinary research community.

Figure 2 also includes what Callander and Cummings (2021) have considered an additional conflation between art and entrepreneurship arising from the way entrepreneurship is evoked in scholarly journals in the arts and humanities. Such literature is correspondingly grounded in a scholarly context whereby disciplines contrasting with the phenomenon studied (entrepreneurial processes and practices) approach it in a transdisciplinary manner. Notably, this research seems to prosper without (or outside) the conceptual attractor of AE, which could lead one to question the success of AE and CE, not as research streams per se, but as attempts to organize research(ers).

Figure 2 also provides a selection of illustrative research that can be identified in each research stream and, more importantly for the methodology of this paper, that exemplifies review articles that contribute to many of the distinctions drawn upon above. I chose not to include the anthropological understanding of CE (what Gehman and Soublière referred to as 2.0 and 3.0) in Figure 2 because its underpinning assumption about culture opposes the notion of culture used in this paper to refer to the intersection of ACE. Interestingly, although distinguishing two radically different uses and meanings of CE is important for conceptual clarity, their potential complementarity must be recognized. Keeping these conceptual understandings and theoretical applications of CE in mind, an anthropological approach (i.e., viewing entrepreneurship as culturally enacted and situated in social practice) remains a potential avenue for approaching the question of what goes on in the intersection of ACE. While this issue calls for further attention and clarification in relation to ACE research, this paper is not ultimately aimed to suggest new ways of defining the empirical foci of ACE research but rather to reflect upon the assumptions about ACE research in the context of scholarly practice. Accordingly, the next section introduces concepts to help accomplish just that.

Arboreal and Rhizomatic Knowledge Structures

In *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987/2020), Deleuze and Guattari contrasted the possibilities of *arboreal* and *rhizomatic* knowledge structures, using these botanical terms to recognize two radically different principles for the formation and trajectory of any structure. Modelled on the linear progress and centralized genealogy of the tree, arboreal structures have a main trunk, from which branches and roots extend—the branches outwards to hold every leaf, and the roots downwards beneath the ground to anchor the tree and absorb water and minerals from the soil. For Deleuze and Guattari (1987/2020, p. 16), the tree presents qualities that include a series of fixed points, preestablished paths, and levels of hierarchy which combined form the logic of the tree's genealogy. These units, in relation to each other, serve “*as coordinates or localizable connections for two points, running from one point to another*” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987/2020, p. 344). Unlike trees, however, rhizomes spread horizontally in all directions and have no central nodes or centralized agency (such as main trunks or a principal root). For example, the vegetative part of a fungus, *mycelium*, is a rhizome whose mass thread-like structures spread out extensively in whatever substrate it grows—soil, wood, or some other organic material. After exploring the occurrence of arborescent and rhizomatic structures in botany, Deleuze and Guattari (1987/2020, p. 5) moved on to transpose rhizomorphic qualities to other entities: “*Rats [in their pack form] are rhizomes. Burrows are too, in all of their functions of shelter, supply, movement, evasion, and breakout.*” Following Deleuze and Guattari's lead, I will now investigate whether research communities, too, can be considered rhizomatic. How could adopting rhizomatic qualities help the endeavor to develop ACE research towards multi- and transdisciplinary ambitions? Before exploring this idea, I will first reflect on how arborescent qualities have conventionally been engrained in academic research and therefore also ACE research.

Arboreal Knowledge Structures

Deleuze and Guattari (1987/2020) invited scholars to consider how, in Western society's canonical view, traditional knowledge structures and ways of organizing information share the characteristics of arborescent structures. Like trees, much of Western knowledge builds on hierarchical structures or models of linear progress and on a series of cumulative intellectual indebtedments. Such knowledge or knowing not only lends itself to classification but also inherently contains an imperative to classify. As scholars, we are both subjects of others' attempts to classify as well as engage in classifying practices by inventing or reproducing taxonomies, matrices, dichotomies, etc. These are all examples of the classification at work in academic texts, thinking, and knowledge structures. Systems for classification can be practically commanding by virtue of the implications they entail. They can also be theoretically powerful, desirable ways of organizing and conveying knowledge contributions, even to the point of reifying knowledge, that is, of treating it as a real, tangible object. Take, for example, an organizational chart discussed as a concretization of human relations, or the parable of demarcating research streams with which researchers identify or that scholarly communities see themselves as part of. In this sense, literature reviews can be seen as classifying vehicles that typically seek to label, assort, and codify previous research and ideas. Such contributions are typically considered to enhance knowledge (structures), and an academic discourse (better off) without these systems is hard to imagine. Indeed, academic life and universities are fundamentally organized according to arborescent characteristics, demonstrated not least in how scholars and scholarly interests are arranged into several principal nodes (disciplines), branching into ancillary nodes (sub-disciplines, faculties, research fields), each with its own subset of foliage (journals, conferences, research streams).

The notion of arborescent knowledge can offer a more nuanced account of how research in the ACE intersection has formerly been conceptualized. The previous section illustrated this means of critically engaging with these conceptualizations, showcasing how arboreal knowledge structures are at work both in the review material I have drawn from as well as in the genealogical style in which I have represented it. In other words, the previous section can serve to illustrate the ways that literature reviews are engrained with an arborescent imperative: to explore lineages, trace developments, categorize, and discern themes.

Upon closer investigation, I noticed that scholars contributing literature reviews on CE and AE traced their origins separately and conceptualized them as distinct from each other (e.g., Essig, 2015; 2017; Hausmann and Heinze, 2016). On the one hand, this tracing dealt with historical differences between Europe and North America when it came to the funding climate, curricular content related to entrepreneurship, and CE's or AE's relation to academic disciplines (e.g., higher arts education versus management or business administration). On the other hand, these scholars noted that both CE and AE were still in their nascency and had relatively open research agendas, despite a rather heavy reliance on theories and concepts from (mainstream) entrepreneurship research. Prior attempts to envision CE and AE as research fields also deployed arboreal metaphors. Gehman and Soublière (2017), for instance, described CE as having progressively developed in waves (1.0-3.0), and Beckman and Essig (2012) suggested two alternative models for conceptualizing AE, both explicitly aimed to hierarchize disciplines in a tree-like chart. Similarly, Figure 2 illustrates the distinction of scholarship types, suggesting that sets of dyadic and unidirectional relationships characterize research in the intersection of ACE. For example, entrepreneurship researchers might look at fine art, or arts and humanities scholars might study entrepreneurial practices.

Indeed, research in the intersection of ACE as currently (re)viewed appears to exhibit the logic of arborescent knowledge structures in several ways. Importantly, neither these arborescent structures nor their classifying and distinguishing imperative help lessen concerns about developing distinct and disconnected epistemic communities within ACE research. In fact, they make their points by spelling out the very differences between them (which at least makes one aware of them). The distinction between conceptions of entrepreneurship as narrowly being business and enterprise or more broadly as being a source of transformation in society can also be seen to exemplify how the arborescent imperative to classify can confine or expand an understanding of the ACE intersection as more or less open to multi- and transdisciplinary research. Similarly, Callander and Cummings (2021) reminded scholars of the limits to current attempts to engage in transdisciplinary research in the intersection of ACE, as traditionalist conceptions are often imposed on components of ‘A’, ‘C’, and ‘E’ when evoked outside their respective academic domiciles.

However, this merely echoes what Deleuze and Guattari (1987/2020) would have surmised—that scholarly communities generally exhibit arborescent propensities—and that these structures are bound to confine and distinguish research interests from each other. With this in mind, I would like to consider potential trajectories for opening ACE research up in ways that can align with ambitions of its becoming a multi- and transdisciplinary research community. Before embarking on this task, however, I first need to further unravel the notion of the rhizome and the implications of rhizomatic knowledge structures.

Rhizomatic Knowledge Structures

Rhizomes have an openness to possibilities and ventures into new territories, a quality that can be epistemologically applied to knowledge structures. In this paper, they are also considered as potential qualities of research practices and for research communities working at the intersection of ACE. To explore this potential and its possible implications, in the forthcoming analysis I unpack what Deleuze and Guattari (1987/2020, p. 6-12) suggested to be six essential principles that any entity purporting to be a rhizome must meet. These principles generally relate to knowledge structures but are also considered in their capacity of potentially informing an ACE research agenda.

The first principle of the rhizome is that it must fundamentally be able to make connections and expand to connect with other structures. Unlike root systems, which operate as a base or edifice for plants or trees, rhizomes have a flexibility that allows them to stretch out horizontally and perhaps connect with a root system. However, whereas a root system can be traced to the nodes of the plants or trees they nurture, a rhizome has no principal root or node. For instance, grass is rhizomorphic in its free, expansive movement, the center or centrality of which is impossible to determine. If a group of scholars in one research community had similar connectivity capacities, they would be inherently open to connecting with other scholars in the ‘academic soil’ or any other strata holding practical, policy, leisure, or other interests—and would move to make that connection part of their research endeavor. At any intersection, in this case that of ACE, a rhizome has the capacity to connect across or beneath the principal boundaries constituting the given intersectionality and to do so without or despite impediment. As such, a rhizome can challenge what are ultimately the imagined borders of the intersection. In other words, in the genealogic framing of Figure 2, a rhizomatic research culture would *expand to connect with* and *extend through* that framing. For the researcher’s practice, the intrinsic permeability of this connective capacity could translate into various ambitions and attempts to broaden the scope of inquiry and go beyond traditional academic boundaries, thus reaching into

other/new interdisciplinary fields and contexts. Some scholars already follow this rhizomatic principle in their everyday work, for example, by instigating interdisciplinary research projects or other types of cross-sectoral collaborations. However, a rhizomatic approach has the more radical potential of enabling researchers to break new ground (at least for themselves) as they strive to engage in collaborative efforts that cut into disciplines through routes differing from those of previous collaborations. This possibility brings to mind what Fletcher (2011) described as the researcher's having 'a curiosity for contexts'—a curiosity that can materialize in autoethnographic approaches and in enactive research (e.g., Johannisson, 2020). In this sense, rhizomatic collaborations not only cut across disciplines and research cultures in ways that frankly might ignore the structures of academic institutions or prior networks, but also crisscross their corridors, perhaps even extending beyond them through researchers' active participation in the empirical contexts being studied. What is more, research in the intersection of ACE that accommodated a rhizomatic view of knowledge structures would necessarily downplay the importance (and connective capacity) of research streams like AE or CE in their suggested roles as conceptual attractors for ACE researchers—strictly because the streams would become comparable to nodes laden with the qualities of centrality around which other research efforts are expected to revolve. This does not mean that AE or CE have played out their part or need to be abandoned; rather, like any other research stream, they can become treated as assemblages of ideas only symbolically held together by these labels. Beneath these labels, however, these ideas would remain restless, ceaselessly seeking interconnections in their substrata, just as subterranean networks of *mycelium* are in the soil from which trees or plants occasionally sprawl.¹

The second principle of the rhizome is that it is necessarily heterogenous. This can be seen as an outcome of the first principle, which implies that the rhizome, being open to its own potential, connects to other systems, thus fostering heterogeneity. In *What is Philosophy?* (1994, p. 20) Deleuze and Guattari also elaborated on an example of "heterogenesis" that may help explain the implications of heterogeneity: they considered the idea of "concepts" in an epistemic sense, suggesting that concepts are heterogenic in that they are constantly reconfigured and transferable in the form of new enunciations and ways of thinking. In other words, concepts necessarily expand the world of ideas when combined across scholarly vistas—and mandate heterogenesis as a consequence of demanding connectivity. An individual researcher or a research community that abided by this principle would not only be digging tunnels through and between the institutions of their respective academic fields, but also sincerely considering the connectivity as a means of establishing "connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power, and circumstances relative to the arts, sciences, and social struggles" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987/2020, p. 6). By embracing this principle in ACE research, scholars could draw from sources outside their familiar disciplines or fields, thus actively seeking out and integrating diverse perspectives, theories, and methodologies into their own work. For example, scholars of business administration already actively set out to combine insights from the arts, such as poetry (e.g., Helin et al., 2020) or literary fiction (e.g., Nordqvist and Gartner, 2020), with traditional research methods in their field. As such, this principle champions a research ethos that is combinatory, exploratory, and innovative—or what Boncori (2023) proposed as "*researching and writing differently*".

¹ Deleuze and Guattari (1987/2020, p. 21) also refer to the dynamism of movement between ideas as "*lines of flight*" in relation to these connections. Rather than having a particular beginning or ending, relations between one idea/concept/researcher/topic within a rhizomatic research community would therefore indicate not a flight *from* or *towards* nodes, but rather a movement *between* nodes.

The third principle of the rhizome is that it embraces multiplicity and, by extension, multiplicities of identities. For Deleuze and Guattari (1987/2020, p. 8), multiplicities are “*asubjective*” and “*asignifying*”, which is to say they rely neither on fixed or stable subjects as their foundation nor on fixed meanings or signifiers to provide meaning. One way researchers could embrace multiple identities would be to adopt the position that Deleuze and Guattari pronounced for themselves in *A Thousand Plateaus*: “*The two of us wrote Anti-Oedipus together. Since each of us was several, there was already quite a crowd*” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987/2020, p. 1). Here, my interpretation and use of their argument is that researchers can take themselves to be polyvocal, that is, have multiple voices rather than singular, isolated, or fixed positions. The point to consider, though, is how individual contributors to knowledge about, or situated at, the ACE intersection may embody multiple (dis)positions and entryways to its soil. Scholars could be more reflective about this embodiment, especially since academic environments can sometimes influence scholars to streamline their research profiles, career ambitions, or individual projects. Indeed, a uniformity of ideas hardly cultivates an ability to draw from new styles, tastes, and ideas springing from a wide array of sources. Following Ericsson’s (2019) lead, a rhizomatic research community might reject the idea of a consolidated and subject-divided *university* and instead presuppose the model of a proliferous and subject-fluid *diversity*. Such multiplicity would entail some degree of ‘epistemic humility’ (Ericsson, 2019) in the face of the different and possibly clashing bases for making knowledge claims that operate in the ACE intersection.

The fourth principle of the rhizome is “*asignifying rupture*”, which relates to the rhizomatic incapability to be resolved into a singular point: “*A rhizome may be broken, shattered at a given spot, but it will start up again on one of its old lines, or on new lines*” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987/2020, p. 8). Simply put, ruptures do not destabilize or shut down the rhizome. Starlings, for example, exhibit the quality of asignifying rupture, as they sometimes engage in a form of synchronized flying called *murmuration*. This collective behavior occurs when a large number of birds, ostensibly to avoid attack from larger birds of prey, gather and fly in roughly the same direction and at the same speed but constantly reorganize and adapt to their flight in a fluid manner. In a research setting, an asignifying rupture in research communities adopting rhizomatic qualities could lead to many outcomes, one radical example of which could be acephalous (headless) modes of organizing that proliferate its “*connections with the strategic aim of undoing formations of power*” (Sauvagnargues, 2016, p. 140). For research communities, this could be interpreted as a call for mutiny in the sense of disregarding conventional roles or hierarchies of academic leadership in favor of decentralized decision-making. However, we scholars could differently use this rhizomatic principle to suggest ways of feeding knowledge in from various directions without subjecting it to hierarchical structures. In the case of ACE research, the cultural geographer’s knowledge would not override that of the arts education teacher, and the professor of poetry could work alongside the arts management scholar or a professional photographer to enrich and elicit understandings of empirical material and contribute new theories.² A less radical way of following the principle of asignifying rupture could be to preemptively organize research communities in ways that build their resilience to institutional change (in academia and elsewhere). This would enable them, for example, to withstand reworked organizational structures at universities or changing conditions such as a shift in the funding climate for the arts, research, and cultural investments or in new political agendas.

² This argument is paraphrased from Guerin (2013), who makes a similar point.

The fifth principle relates to cartography in the sense that a rhizome's trajectory is mappable but never traceable, because something traceable would be engrained with the logic of genealogy and thus somehow replicable. For instance, a structure with no discernable beginning, middle, or end could not be recreated without certain knowledge about how its pattern and sequence developed. In contrast to arborescence, Deleuze and Guattari (1987/2020, p. 11) suggested that rhizomes are strangers to the idea of deep structures or any genetic axis that serves as an objective pivotal entity upon which successive stages are organized. Something traceable would therefore not be quite as free and radical as the rhizome potentially is. If something is mappable, on the other hand, its possible trajectories become open to negotiation. In relation to research community practices, this fifth principle fundamentally challenges the aim of literature reviews, which, as previously mentioned, typically strive to systematically trace and classify research and knowledge into specific categories or areas of study. Instead, this fifth principle could be seen as an invitation for scholars to think anachronistically about the trajectories or development of specific fields or disciplines. What might constitute a rhizomatic literature review, however, is not for this paper to settle. Nonetheless, as discussed in previous sections, specific research streams (AE and CE) currently play crucial roles in organizing and identifying ACE research. A rhizomatic research agenda, however, could be considered to diminish the importance of this role, primarily because rhizomatic research communities would not necessarily prioritize defining (or uniting behind) specific research streams or concepts. This concern stems from the fact that the rhizomatic principles are indisposed to seek or establish central nodes for organizational purposes. Moreover, a rhizomatic agenda could thwart the previously raised concerns regarding unidirectional relations where, for instance, 'E' looks at 'A' or 'C' (and vice versa), and regarding the tendencies for 'E' to impose traditionalist views of 'A' (and vice versa). Still, these concerns might not be as easily spotted without classifications. On a more critical note, this raises the question of what the ahistorical and nonlinear imperative of rhizomatic assumptions might blind the researcher to. In contrast to the traditional literature review, which describes the world in another but very particular way, a rhizomatic review approach could emphasize the fluidity of knowledge, connections, and intertwinements or mapping of cross-disciplinary dialogues and methodologies, rather than focus on historicity and genealogy or seek to establish a singular, authoritative narrative or a definitive interpretation of a research field.

Finally, *the sixth principle* relates to 'decalcomania', a metaphor borrowed from printmaking and involving the transfer of images from one surface to another. For example, if a person paints a certain shape on one half of a piece of paper, then folds and presses the paper together to create a mirror transfer of the shape on the other half, the derivative shape may be somewhat distorted or different from the original. Simply put, an image transferred to a new area can transform in the process. Whereas printing or copying images might conjure an industrial notion of productivity or replication, Deleuze and Guattari (1987/2020) instead focused on the quality of 'transversality'. In relation to knowledge structures and research communities situated at intersections, transversal thinking could be thought of as one's ability to think between, despite, or beyond established categories, disciplines, and frameworks by forming connections between disparate ideas, understandings, concepts, and fields. Rather than seeking heterogenesis, this principle focuses, I suggest, on the possibility of changing both the thinker and the thinking aimed at synthesizing knowledge from different domains (e.g., Vasko, 2022). Perhaps more importantly, transversal thinking could also help ease the issue raised by Strøm et al. (2020), who called for more polyvocal and synthesizing ways to cope with the complexities of having multiple logics operate in the empirical situations where cultural entrepreneurs and, possibly, other agents traversing the ACE intersection find themselves/for cultural entrepreneurs and, possibly, other agents traversing the ACE intersection.

Advancing a Rhizomatic Agenda for ACE Research

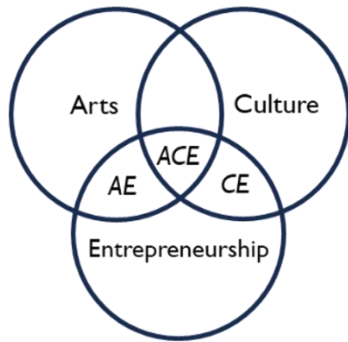
The principles of the rhizome as outlined by Deleuze and Guattari (1987/2020) equip the scholar with a useful and alternative perspective for reflecting on the nature of research communities and for discerning prevailing structures in academia. The rhizomatic metaphor also provides an alternative way of conceptualizing ‘intersections’. Having engaged with the principles individually in the previous section, in this concluding section I turn to considering how ACE research might benefit from adopting the principles as a package or otherwise drawing inspiration from the rhizome as a mode of inquiry.

First, scholars must recognize that *ACE research* can be considered a way of designating an object of inquiry as situated at the junction of arts, culture, and entrepreneurship—and coincidentally, as itself being a junction of multi- and transdisciplinary research interests and practices that interweave diverse academic approaches and perspectives into an interconnected tapestry of inquiry. Accordingly, one could identify as an ACE researcher but also enact one’s research interests by studying ACE through empirical observation, participation, or both. This distinction between identity and interest serves not to reinstate a theory/practice dichotomy between two uses of ACE, but to present a way of distinguishing between the various connotations of ACE, which shift depending on its linking to academic versus artistic practices or contexts. What is more, a scholar could identify as an ACE researcher in heterogenous and plural ways: We could belong to several different fields or contexts (e.g., scholarly, political, or artistic) in our personal and simultaneous roles or relations to the ACE intersection. Others (e.g., Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992) have suggested the possibility of having multiple, simultaneous memberships within particular fields and being invested in different fields with varied intensities or degrees of conviction. What I want to emphasize, however, is the additional possibility of one’s having multiple investments as well as assuming an identity of “being several” (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987/2020) in relation to *the same intersection* (in this case, ACE). For example, an artist and a professor at a business school could engage in a collaboration, but a scenario where the researcher might themselves be *both* an artist and a professor at a business school should also be considered (e.g., Frank, 2008). In this sense, a research community that embraces the rhizomatic principles allows researchers to have, develop, and reflect about the potential of nurturing multiple entryways to the ACE junction.

Second, to engage with a rhizomatic research agenda, scholars must closely consider what constitutes ‘the intersection’ of either way of situating or understanding ACE (as discussed above). Crucially, intersections are typically (and perhaps inherently) arborescent heuristics, in this case most easily demonstrated through a reminder of common semantical or illustrious ways of representing a threefold crossing or juncture (e.g., a triumvirate, triad, or triptych). With an arborescent approach, an intersection implies that two or more parts overlap or feature a centralized point of convergence. In the case of envisioning the intersection of ACE, or specific research streams such as AE and CE, an arboreal metaphor invites one to see ACE research as comprising intersecting areas that could be positioned in different rather than the same areas (see Figure 3)—an image aligning with the arborescent imperative to classify and impose fixed modes of organization. Rhizomatic structures, however, are non-centralized and multiplicative, which suggests not a single point of intersection, but rather multiple, scattered nodes of connections without fixed reference points. According to a rhizomatic model of understanding knowledge structures, the mutually non-exclusive conceptions of ACE (outlined above as both empirical foci and a multi- and transdisciplinary disposition among scholarly communities) necessarily relate to the threefold components of ACE (‘A’, ‘C’, and ‘E’) in a topologically and horizontally distri-

buted way rather than with each as a principal node. Rhizomatic structures can connect to other nodes rooted in the soil, similar to the connections currently made between disciplines and research fields in academia, which are often spatially and organizationally separated (e.g., at universities, at conferences, in journals). However, a rhizomatic research community necessarily extends between and through these nodes as it ceaselessly strives to make new connections. Rhizomatic research(ers) could thus be seen to operate in the spaces in-between other centralized structures or in the intermediaries between central nodes/disciplines, rather than being subservient to them. Nor does the expanding rhizome ask permission—it simply grows. In addition, the horizontal typology within which the rhizomorphic expansion can be imagined does not have to classify or bundle those empirically situated practices often referred to under labels such as the arts or the cultural field. Figure 3 illustrates this by ‘A’, ‘C’, and ‘E’ being distributed in the terrain of society rather than bounded or fenced off by spatial metaphors such as fields, spheres, or sectors, which have distinct ends and limits.

ACE research and literature streams envisioned, based on an arborescent understanding of intersections



ACE research envisioned, based on a rhizomatic understanding of intersections

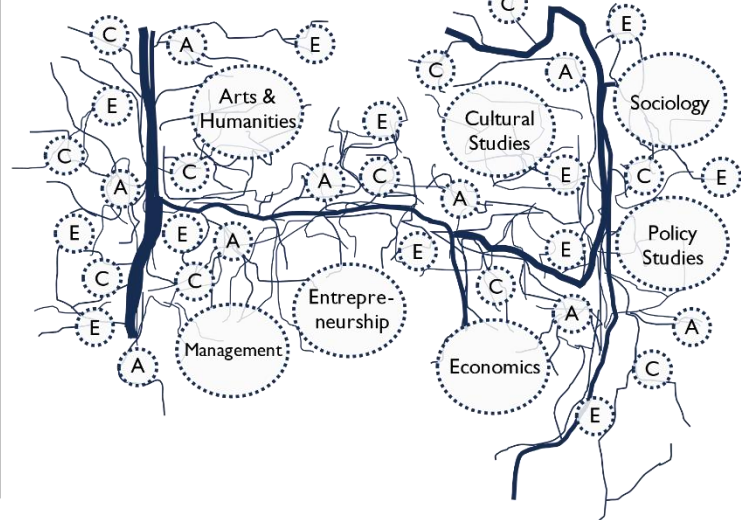


Figure 3: Arboreal vs. rhizomatic heuristics for understanding the ACE intersection as conceptual topologies.

Against this backdrop, the model of the rhizome helps one to envision—and potentially identify with—knowledge structures that comprise conflating research areas as well as the horizontal distribution of arts, culture, and entrepreneurship in society, a possibility not afforded in a model bundling these components into a ‘sector’, ‘sphere’, ‘field’, or ‘industry’). Embracing a rhizomatic and necessarily plural understanding of ‘intersections’ to illustrate ACE research into them thus allows for an infinite spreading and intertwining of concepts and scholarly practices/domains. Beyond this nontrivial shift in the heuristics of intersections, adopting rhizomatic qualities at the research community level could have some other implications deserving further reflection and a few final comments.

First, before proposing any content towards a research agenda for rhizomatic communities, scholars should be fully aware that rhizomatic communities can enter a state of murmuration, that is, a state of fluidity in which they continually respond to change and reorganization. Consequently, research agendas aimed at rhizomatic research communities risk ephemerality and go somewhat against the logic of decentralized and acephalous organizing.

Second, a rhizomatic research culture invites us scholars to become *transversal thinkers* and *transversal researchers*. Such transversality can, for example, allow us to move freely between and draw from multiple disciplines and contexts as well as to cultivate our curiosity about new empirical contexts and employ practice-based or autobiographical methods. Needless to say, a rhizomatic research agenda can thus help develop ACE research into a multi-, inter-, and transdisciplinary scholarly community articulated by other scholars (e.g., Beckmann, 2014; Klamer, 2017; White, 2021; Jordan, 2023). Perhaps rhizomatic research communities even thrive in intersections precisely because the potential to reach out, to seek heterogenesis, is near-at-hand. In the specific intersection of ACE, however, this invitation to transversality comes at a risk of setting up unrealistic ideals—in terms of both intradisciplinary research collaborations/conversations and individual researchers' inclination to broaden their repertoires of knowing and being (e.g., methodologically, artistically, and philosophically).

Third, embracing Deleuze and Guattari's (1987/2020) rhizomatic principles invites scholars to innovate new methods rather than settling for a 'preexisting toolbox' and thus constantly to reinvent and refine their methodological craft. In this paper, I have provided other examples of such movements to de-standardize methods even beyond the imperatives set out in the rhizomatic principles themselves. Notably, the rhizome's striving towards de-hierarchization could also be applied in research practice. For instance, in the article "*Museum Entrepreneurship*", Högberg and Jogmark (2021) pondered the importance of engaging with museum managers. They did so not by studying the museums or their leadership per se, but rather by approaching their research endeavor in the intersection of ACE and collaborating from the outset. For example, they jointly formulated the research questions and defined areas in need of more research.

Concluding remarks

In this paper, I have considered the intersection of ACE through the novel lens of Deleuze and Guattari's (1987/2020) dichotomy of arboreal and rhizomatic knowledge structures. This dichotomy contributed to a critical discussion about the two predominant research streams of AE and CE in ACE research. In turn, this discussion highlighted the predominant use of arboreal knowledge structures to designate the empirical junction of ACE as an object of inquiry in ACE research. Turning to scholarly reviews of the AE and CE literature, I then raised some of the issues identified concerning the current, arborescent framing of ACE. These include (1) the constraints of integrating diverse insights from intersecting disciplines and research domains, (2) tendencies to impose traditionalist views of other concepts between the arts and entrepreneurship, and (3) the tendency for the relation between the constituent parts of the ACE intersection to be unidirectional (e.g., entrepreneurship 'looking at' arts or culture).

Against this backdrop, I explored the six principles of the rhizome as introduced by Deleuze and Guattari (1987/2020; 1994), considering how each principle could foster alternative approaches to research situated at intersections, and briefly discussed how ACE research could benefit from adopting their distinct rhizomatic qualities. This discussion concerned the extent to which the principles of *connectivity*, *heterogeneity*, *multiplicity*, *asignifying rupture*, *anti-genealogy*, and *transversality* could be applied as qualities of research communities. Applying these principles, I provided some inspiration for a rhizomatic research agenda or a rhizomatic research culture that could also overcome some of the current issues in ACE research. Furthermore, by examining the rhizomatic principles, I contributed a new way of distinguishing between and making sense of ACE research as a means of designating an object of empirical

inquiry in the junction of arts, culture, and entrepreneurship—but also as itself being conceived as a junction of transdisciplinary research practices comprising scholars already contributing to ACE, AE, or CE research.

Finally, I suggested that a rhizomatic research approach invites researchers to engage in transversal thinking and research, an invitation that embraces the ability to form connections between disparate ideas, understandings, and methodologies. In particular, I argued that the benefits of a rhizomatic research approach increase in intersections like that of ACE. This final suggestion of rhizomatic expanse actually ties in well with an exhortation given by Deleuze and Guattari (1987/2020, p. 28): “*Don’t sow, grow offshoots! Don’t be one or multiple, be multiplicities*”. Perhaps, research communities, practitioners, and individual scholars inquiring about intersecting issues can also benefit from spreading into each other’s domains rather than simply fertilizing their own land. This is also reflected by the ambition in this paper to merge AE and CE research, considering them collectively under the unified label of ACE research.

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