

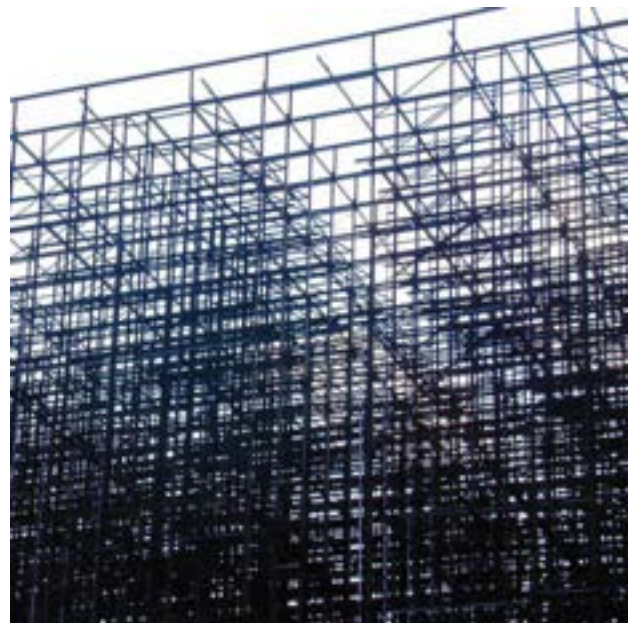
RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

The New Silk Road

Professors Brett Neilson and Ned Rossiter of the Institute for Culture and Society and the School of Humanities and Communication Arts, with international collaborators*, are examining the cultural aspects of business logistics and governance practices. This project is funded by the Australian Research Council through its Discovery Projects grant scheme.

'China is building a "new silk road"', says Professor Neilson. 'It is set to revolutionise networks of trade and production, linking Asia to Europe and Latin America. In turn, this changes Australia's regional and economic position with the growth of China-centred relations. Studies of globalisation have included very little on business logistics and conversely, business systems tend to try to control and define social actions and factors that mainly favour profit maximisation. This ignores the many forces and influences outside these systems that also affect business and labour operations, such as strikes and other social and political tensions. Logistical systems can connect firms, software systems, labour forces and cultures in highly flexible ways, posing a challenge for how both globalisation and policy discourses such as the 'Asian Century' are understood. This project investigates the cultural and social transformations introduced by this emerging economic network. We aim to advance understandings of how logistical processes manage labour forces and we aim to contribute to a deeper understanding of global governance.'

Focusing on three key infrastructural hubs in Chile, India and Greece, information from semi-structured interviews will be used to build innovative research platforms for broadening debates and research practices concerning software, labour and globalisation. A website will be developed along with an online 'serious game' to illustrate changing scenarios of work and culture along the New Silk Road.



By examining business logistics and its relationship to globalisation, this project will increase public knowledge about how material and technical processes affect our cultural and working lives. It is important for Australia to devise logistic strategies to keep pace with emerging trade routes and labour opportunities across the Asian region and beyond.

Project Title: Logistics as Global Governance: Labour, Software and Infrastructure along the New Silk Road

Funding has been set at: \$390,000

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August 2013

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