

The background of the book cover is a photograph of a blue, metallic-looking floor with dark, angular structural elements framing the top and sides. The floor has a grid pattern of lines.

OXFORD

the
performance
complex

*competition
and competitions
in social life*

edited by
DAVID STARK

Contents

<i>List of Contributors</i>	ix
1. The Performance Complex <i>David Stark</i>	1
PART I. PERFORMANCE AS COMPETITION, COMPETITIONS AS PERFORMANCES	
2. Pick the Winner, So You Can Then Choose the Reasons: Epistemic Dissonance in Architecture Competitions <i>Kristian Kreiner</i>	31
3. Competition and Consecration in the World Press Photo Awards <i>Marco Solaroli</i>	55
4. Classical Music Competitions as Complex Performances <i>Lisa McCormick</i>	78
PART II. RATING PERFORMANCES: WHERE DO I STAND IN THE RANKINGS?	
5. Formalized Evaluation: The Work That Rankings Do <i>Wendy Espeland</i>	99
6. What's Observed in a Rating? Rankings as Orientation in the Face of Uncertainty <i>Elena Esposito and David Stark</i>	123
7. Crowdsourcing Before the Smartphone: The Zagat Survey's Quantification of Everyday Life in 1980s New York <i>Will Payne</i>	144
8. Weathering Winner-Take-All: How Rankings Constitute Competition on Webcam Sex Platforms, and What Performers Can Do About It <i>Olav Velthuis and Niels van Doorn</i>	167

PART III. PERFORMANCES OF VALUE IN EVERYDAY LIFE

9. Post-Liberal Competitions? Pragmatics of Gamification and Weaponization	187
<i>William Davies</i>	
10. What Are Digital Reputation Measures Worth? The Rise and Fall of Reputation Metrics on Social Media	208
<i>Dominique Cardon</i>	
11. Merit, Morality, and Market: The Chinese Social Credit Experiment	228
<i>Jonathan Bach</i>	
12. Performing Numbers: Musicians and their Metrics	241
<i>Robert Prey</i>	
13. Business Education and Anxiety in the Performance of Value	260
<i>Fabian Muniesa</i>	
<i>Index</i>	271

List of Contributors

Jonathan Bach is Professor of Global Studies at The New School in New York. He is the author most recently of *What Remains: Everyday Encounters with the Socialist Past in Germany* (Columbia University Press, 2017), and co-editor of *Learning from Shenzhen: China's Post-Mao Experiment from Special Zone to Model City* (University of Chicago Press, 2017) and *Re-Centering the City: Global Mutations of Socialist Modernity* (University College London Press, 2020).

Dominique Cardon is Associate Professor of Sociology at Sciences Po and director of the médialab.

William Davies is Professor in Political Economy at Goldsmiths, University of London. He is author of *Nervous States* (Jonathan Cape, 2018), *The Happiness Industry* (Verso, 2015) and *The Limits of Neoliberalism* (Sage, 2016), and editor of *Economic Science Fictions* (Goldsmiths Press, 2018).

Niels van Doorn is an Assistant Professor in New Media and Digital Culture at the University of Amsterdam. He is also the Principal Investigator of the Platform Labor research project (2018-2023), funded by the European Research Council. His research examines how digital platforms are transforming how people work, create value, and secure a livelihood in post-welfare societies.

Wendy Espeland is Professor of Sociology at Northwestern University. She works on issues related to quantification. She is co-author of *Engines of Anxiety: Academic Rankings, Reputation and Accountability* (Russell Sage Foundation, 2016).

Elena Esposito is Professor of Sociology at the University Bielefeld. Working in a systems theory framework, she studies problems of time in social systems, including memory and forgetting, fashion and transience, probability calculus, fiction, and the use of time in finance. Her current research projects focus on the possibility and forms of forgetting on the web, on a sociology of algorithms, and on the proliferation of rankings and ratings for the management of information. <http://www.elena-esposito.com/>

Kristian Kreiner is Professor Emeritus in the Department of Organization at the Copenhagen Business School.

Lisa McCormick is Lecturer in Sociology in the School of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Edinburgh and a faculty fellow at the Centre for Cultural Sociology at Yale University. Her research in the sociology of music draws on her background as a conservatory-trained cellist. She is the author of *Performing Civility* (Cambridge University Press 2015), the first study analyzing the social aspects of international classical music competitions. She has also published articles in *Cultural Sociology*, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *Contemporary Social Science*, *Sociologia & Antropologia*, and the *Chopin Review*. Since 2016, she has been co-editor of the journal *Cultural Sociology*; she also serves on the editorial boards of *Sociological Theory* and the *American Journal of Cultural Sociology*.

Fabian Muniesa is a researcher at the Centre de Sociologie de l'Innovation, École des Mines de Paris (Mines ParisTech, PSL

x List of Contributors

University, CNRS UMR 9217). He studies the culture of business performance and the politics of economic expertise. He is the author of *The Provoked Economy: Economic Reality and the Performative Turn* (Routledge, 2014) and the co-author of *Capitalization: A Cultural Guide* (Presses des Mines, 2017).

Will Payne is Assistant Professor of Geographic Information Science at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy of Rutgers University. His research examines how spatial data technologies like digital maps and local reviews both illuminate and contribute to patterns of inequality in American cities. <http://willbpayne.com/>

Robert Prey is Assistant Professor at the Center for Media and Journalism Studies, University of Groningen. He researches and writes on music and cultural industries, creative labor, technology and society, and social theory.

Marco Solaroli is Assistant Professor of Sociology of Culture and Communication in the Department of the Arts at the University of Bologna. His research interests reside at

the intersection of cultural sociology, visual culture, and journalism studies, focusing in particular on cultural production, innovation, and consecration in the fields of visual journalism, digital photography, and popular music.

David Stark is Arthur Lehman Professor of Sociology at Columbia University where he directs the Center on Organizational Innovation. He is also Professor of Social Science at the University of Warwick. His book *The Sense of Dissonance: Accounts of Worth in Economic Life* (Princeton University Press, 2009) studies how organizations and their members search for what's valuable. Stark's current research is supported by a five-year Advanced Grant from the European Research Council for a project on "Diversity and Performance: Networks of Cognition in Markets and Teams."

Olav Velthuis is Professor at the Department of Sociology of the University of Amsterdam. His research interests include valuation, pricing, cultural globalization, and gift exchange. His work has focused on art markets and has recently included the rise of webcam sex platforms.