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When Institutions Haven't Been Built: Cultural Studies in the U. S.

Cultural Studies has become a part of the U.S. academy, but it is difficult to say what kind of part it is. It is only rarely represented by departments, programs, or centers. While there are several journals explicitly claiming it as their domain, these journals have not been able to establish a set of standard research practices for the field. Thus cultural studies in U.S. exists a function of those scholars who claim it, or who are classified as belonging to it by others. While there are numerous social economic factors that explain some of U.S. cultural studies' difficulties in institution building, supporters of the movement bear much responsibility for rejecting the disciplinary form. If cultural studies in the U.S. is to define itself--rather than be defined by others--it must become disciplinary.