we gotta get out of this place

popular
conservatism
and postmodern
culture

lawrence grossberg

and to bring them together. John Clarke gave me invaluable encouragement and criticism simultaneously. James Carey insightfully discussed many of the political and economic issues with me. Marty Allor, Andrew Goodwin and Harris Breslow have all offered useful criticisms of earlier versions. Ellen Wartella and Chuck Whitney have been very special friends and colleagues, who stood by me through the worst of times, and who constantly challenged me to question my own closed-mindedness.

I would also like to thank the following people: Fred Gottheil, Jennifer Slack, Simon Frith, Jan Radway, Andrew Ross, James Hay, Dick Hebdige, Tony Bennett, Marcus Breen, Angela McRobbie, Iain Chambers, Cary Nelson, Paula Treichler, Charley Stivale, Jon Crane, Jesse Delia, Henry Giroux, Howard Maclay, Catherine Hall (and Becky and Jesse), André Frankovits, and Daniel and Barbara O'Keefe. I also owe a debt of gratitude to the many wonderful graduate and undergraduate students I have been fortunate enough to work with. Some are still friends, others have disappeared into the landscape, but this book would not have been possible without them. I would also like to thank the University of Illinois Research Board and the Center for the Study of Cultural Values and Ethics for their generous support. And some more personal acknowledgments: my family (Miriam, Al, Edythe, Michael, Linda and Jeff Grossberg), Douglas and Anne Claypole White, Steve and Laurie Weidemier. And aging rockers Phil Strang, Charlie Edwards and Jon Ginoli.

I dedicate this book to my wife; to my mother and father, who gave me a reason to believe in myself; to my teachers (including Richard Taylor, Loren Baritz, Hayden White, Richard Hoggert, Stuart Hall, Jim Carey—I was fortunate indeed!); to all the people named here, and the many whose names have not been written here.

And to the memory of Saul Weiss, who, with Eva, taught me to love and respect intelligence, and to enjoy a good argument.

INTRODUCTION: THEORY, POLITICS AND PASSION

When I first began to write a book on rock and politics at the end of the 1970s, I already had a title: "Another Boring Day in Paradise." Ten years later, that title seemed too optimistic and naive. So I turned to the title of one of my favorite rock songs—"We Gotta Get out of This Place," a song by the Animals that even in the 1960s expressed an anxiety and desperation I felt but did not understand. Today, almost everyone, even George Bush, would agree with its sentiment, although they might have different ideas about where we are and where we should go. This book is about the change of titles: the transition from one form of dissatisfaction to another and its significance to our common history.

No doubt, this is a book with too many arguments and not enough evidence, but it may be forgiven in a world with too much evidence and not enough argument. It is a book which too easily embraces generalizations, but it may be forgiven in a political environment which increasingly denies their relevance. And it is a book which is too willing to gather fragments and speculate about their connections, but it may be forgiven in an academic culture which celebrates fragments and renounces speculation. Whether because we have become too fearful or too myopic, we increasingly censor the statements of our questions, thoughts and hypotheses.

The change of titles, however, signals something more than a different cultural atmosphere; it also signals a different intellectual project. I have always been interested in rock because it provided a

particularly powerful way into the relations of culture and power. My researches were part of a larger body of work which sought to explore the often sophisticated ways people use and respond to popular culture: to recognize the often pleasurable, sometimes empowering and occasionally resistant nature of their relation to popular culture.[1] This work has been criticized for substituting fandom for politics and for celebrating repressive cultural forms simply because they are popular.[2] To argue that people are often "empowered" by their relations to popular culture, that they may in fact seek such empowerment, and that such empowerment sometimes enables people to resist their subordination is not the same as arguing that all of our relations to popular culture constitute acts of resistance or that such relations are, by themselves, sufficient bases for an oppositional politics. On the contrary, it refuses to assume too quickly the political resonances of popular culture, of people's relations to it, and of its pleasures and empowering possibilities. Moreover, to argue that people are not cultural dopes is not the same as arguing that they are never duped; it merely says that the success of such efforts is never guaranteed. I do not want to give up the advances of this work: it took a long time to overcome the cultural and political elitism which condemned popular culture to be little more than the site of ideological manipulation and capitalist production.

But this is not a book about rock—that book still needs to be done—because I realized that the politics of rock in the 1980s were inseparable from a broader range of issues which seemed more pressing to me. This book, then, is about the political, economic and cultural forces which are producing a new atmosphere, a new kind of dissatisfaction, and a new conservatism in American[3] life. It is not an optimistic look at the possibilities of popular culture but a pessimistic speculation about the role that popular culture is playing in the contemporary reorganization of power in the United States. My studies of rock convinced me of the importance of passion (affect) in contemporary life.[4] This book questions the role of passion and its absence in contemporary political struggles and cultural studies. It is about the relations of theory, politics and passion: How is

culture, as both an object and source of passion, implicated in power, and how can we understand that relation?

ROCK UNDER SIEGE

Every exploration, no matter how speculative and abstract, has to find some event or landmark through which it can gain access to the labyrinths of culture and power. My attempt to map the present began with the recent explosion of attacks on rock.[5] The fact that similar attacks have appeared before does not allow us to assume that they emerge from the same political agenda, nor that they produce the same meanings and effects. The terrain of human life is too complex and contradictory to be conceived in terms of such simple relations. Something does not simply enter the field as if by magic, nor does it immediately and directly transform everything else in the same way. Events have effects but they are always complexly determined. Something happens (e.g., attacks on rock), but always in particular ways and for particular reasons; it has its effects, but they may be different (and differently experienced) at different social and cultural sites. The effects may move more quickly in certain directions, and be contradicted by other developments somewhere else.

Trying to make sense of the attacks raised a number of questions: Why now? Why in those particular forms? Why so successfully? None of them can be answered by simply uncovering the intentions of those producing the attacks, which, after all, might vary significantly. The import of these attacks can only be grasped if they are located within larger cultural fields, where they can help orient the effort to map the relations between culture, daily life and politics.[6] Such an effort involves organizing a range of cultural texts and logics around the attacks on rock, without claiming that the attacks are necessarily at the center, nor that they are the only signposts which can tell us something about the specific forms of contemporary cultural and political struggles. In fact, I quickly realized that they were but one example of the Right's (or more accurately, a new

conservative alliance's) intentionally complex and ambiguous relationship to popular culture. Another small example was provided by Colin Powell's and James Baker's visit with the troops during the Iraq war: I was at first amused and later perplexed when the two happily accepted, on national television, the gift of a large Bart Simpson doll. After all, Simpson is not only a symbol of everything the Right despises, his image is apparently something the new conservatives would like to see purged from our culture, or at least from our schools.

The ambiguity of the new conservative's relation to rock becomes visible when we identify the three different, even contradictory, forms that the attacks have taken. The first demands a complete and total rejection of rock music and culture; the second attempts to discriminate between the acceptable and the unacceptable, to police the boundary by locating rock within the relations of domestic power; the third attempts to appropriate rock and challenge "youth culture's" claim of "ownership."

Consider the following statement of the first strategy:

> Picture a thirteen-year-old boy sitting in the living room of his family home doing his math assignment while wearing his Walkman headphones or watching MTV. He enjoys the liberties hard won over centuries by the alliance of philosophic genius and political heroism, consecrated by the blood of martyrs; he is provided with comfort and leisure by the most productive economy ever known to mankind; science has penetrated the secrets of nature in order to provide him with the marvelous, lifelike electronic sound and image reproduction he is enjoying. And in what does all this progress culminate? A pubescent child whose body throbs with orgasmic rhythms; whose feelings are made articulate in hymns to the joys of onanism or the killing of parents; whose ambition is to win fame and wealth in imitating the drag-queen who makes the music. In short, life is made into a nonstop, commercially prepackaged masturbational fantasy.[7]

The passage is from Allan Bloom's *The Closing of the American Mind*, one of the few explicitly academic books (by a professor at the University of Chicago) to gain real public visibility in recent times. Bloom's attack is actually quite similar to those produced by

the Christian fundamentalist movement, and usually disseminated through their own media (including cable networks, satellites, syndicated television and radio programs, meetings, publications and mailing lists). Both Bloom and the fundamentalists see rock—the music and its culture—as responsible for a certain fall from grace, although they differ on where we have fallen from, as well as on the cure and the desired end. Bloom is part of an elitist fraction of the new conservative alliance (no populism in his book!) who would like to see a value-based education grounded in the "great books" of the Western (white, male) tradition.

Fundamentalist Christians are more populist, using the potential of televangelism to defeat the evils of secular humanism. Yet the fundamentalist vision is the source of many of the contemporary charges leveled against rock—from its obvious "sexuality" to its sublime "satanism," from subliminal messages to "backmasking" (messages recorded backwards incorporated into the music). According to the fundamentalist rhetoric, rock—"all of rock music, even the mellow sounding stuff"—is part of a "bizarre and fiendish plot designed by Satan's antichrist system" to "lull the youth of the world."[8] This has been firmly embodied in the notion that rock fans have to be monitored (according to the American Medical Association[9]) and even "deprogrammed," an idea which has been increasingly realized in the creation of centers and experts for such purposes, with the cooperation of law enforcement agencies and medical institutions.

The second strategy for attacking rock is best exemplified by the activities of the Parents' Music Resource Center. The PMRC has clear connections, not only with the PTA and the American Academy of Pediatricians, but also with such fundamentalist organizations as Focus on the Family and the American Family Association. Yet the PMRC's strategy is significantly different. It attempts to police the boundaries of rock and to place the power to define what is "proper" or "appropriate" music in the domestic authority of the parent (and, to some extent, the patriarchal government). The PMRC, founded in 1985 by four Washington wives, including those of Sen. Albert Gore and Secretary of State James Baker, has constructed a campaign designed to "educate" parents about certain

"alarming new trends" in rock music, trends which they claim add up to a sharp break, a "quantum leap," in the history of rock. The rhetoric of their attack is often predicated on a comparison of early and contemporary rock. The former, the music they grew up on, is viewed positively. By conveniently forgetting the attacks which were (and are) leveled against the music they defend, and by selectively ignoring more controversial examples of classic rock, they are able to celebrate their own youth culture while attacking its contemporary forms. The PMRC claims that "too many of today's rock artists—through radio, records, television videos, videocassettes—advocate aggressive and hostile rebellion, the abuse of drugs and alcohol, irresponsible sexuality, sexual perversions, violence and involvement in the occult."[10]

The PMRC denies that it is seeking to censor rock music and, to a certain extent, the claim must be taken seriously. For example, Tipper Gore "has praised Luther Campbell [the leader of 2 Live Crew] for his sense of responsibility in labeling his records and providing expurgated versions for sale to children."[11] The PMRC's major proposal advocated warning labels on rock albums. They negotiated an agreement in 1990 with the National Association of Record Manufacturers in which various state legislative efforts to mandate labeling were withdrawn in favor of voluntary labeling.[12] The call for labels is, the PMRC claims, merely a demand for "truth in packaging" which would inform both children and parents of what is being purchased and consumed.

The PMRC's argument is based on the fact that the average child listens to 10,462 hours of rock between the seventh and twelfth grades, more time than he or she spends in school. Although they admit that there is no statistical evidence against rock, they frequently adduce anecdotal evidence to "document" rock's evil effects. Most commonly, this involves cases of suicide or murder, often linked with occult or satanic overtones: e.g., a child listens to Blue Oyster Cult's "Don't Fear the Reaper" (or, in a recent court case, Judas Priest's "Stained Class") and then kills himself. The increasing suicide rate among adolescents (up 300% since the 1950s) is taken as proof of rock's detrimental effects, ignoring not only the impact of

other social factors but also the fact that the organizers of the PMRC themselves (like the vast majority of postwar youth) were also raised on rock.

The efforts of the PMRC have not been confined to such lobbying and proselytizing efforts; they have supported and encouraged the use of a wide range of legal weapons against rock, as documented in the valuable pamphlet *You've Got a Right to Rock*.[13] Obviously, the threat of such legal proceedings (e.g., recent cases involved the Dead Kennedys, 2 Live Crew and Judas Priest) has created an atmosphere of uncertainty for many bands, labels and distributors. The PMRC and other groups have supported the use of expanded economic and security requirements, boycotts, and political prohibitions, as well as the construction of various images of moral crisis, as part of the arsenal by which rock (especially, but not only, rap and heavy metal) can be controlled.

However, it is the third form of attack which is most insidious. For on the surface it appears to be anything but an attack on rock. Rather, it celebrates (at least certain forms of) rock, but only by significantly reconstructing its very meanings and significance. This is perhaps the ultimate affirmation of what Tom Carson described as the dilemma of having rock in the White House: "You can't associate pop with any sort of disenfranchisement when its headquarters is the White House."[14] When George Bush became president in 1989, Lee Alwater emerged as one of the most powerful political figures in the United States. As Bush's campaign manager and chairman of the Republican National Party, Atwater championed the use of popular media and marketing strategies.

Atwater claimed a special place for rock (more precisely, rhythm and blues)! He organized an inaugural party—"The Concert for Young Americans"—which was also billed as a Celebration of Rhythm and Blues. The vast majority of performers were in fact black, although a few white musicians, like Ron Wood and Delbert McClintock, were included. Imagine, if you will or can, Cheryl Ladd speaking on the history of rhythm and blues in black theaters, or Chuck Norris on the meaning of the blues. Envision the president entering and leaving to the sounds of "Soul Man," his brief appear-

ance highlighted by the gift of an electric guitar, which he obviously had no idea how to embrace. Lee Atwater was on stage, jamming with some of the greatest black musicians of our time! Following that, Atwater's rock career continued apace. He appeared on *Late Night with David Letterman*, not as a guest to be interviewed but as a guest member of Paul Schaeffer's band. He performed in various rock and blues venues, both solo and with a variety of other performers. His performances were regularly covered, or at least mentioned, by the media. And he released a "rhythm and blues" album in 1990 (which, fortunately, has flopped).

Three comments are worth making here. First, we must assume that Atwater's entrance into rock culture was planned, or at least that it was sanctioned by the image-makers and marketers of the Republican party. Second, Atwater was living out a new image of the rock fantasy: how to be rich and powerful and manipulative (and to have apparently all the wrong politics) and to be a rock star. And third, such appropriations are not confined to the Republicans: recently, Christian groups have organized tours (e.g., "Freedom Jam") which use rock to deliver their fundamentalist and conservative messages. And Pat Boone has started a campaign to have himself installed into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, presumably on the grounds that having made rock and roll "nice" was a valuable contribution.

Surprisingly, given the comparative successes of these campaigns, there has been relatively little public opposition from either the industry or fans. Many journalists and fans still deny the existence of an antirock conspiracy. In the past, such attacks were often the occasion for an increased public celebration of and self-assertion within rock culture, for they proved in a way the power of rock. Since attacks on rock have existed for most of its history[15] (and attacks on music, especially dance music, have a much longer history in the West), the question is less why the current attacks exist but why they have become so publically acceptable, even commonsensical. After all, in the past, such attacks on rock were located either in the domestic sphere—as a conflict between parents and children—or assigned to a lunatic fringe. The only exception—the Payola hearings

of the late 1950s—provides a clear example of how such popular moral outrage against rock can be appropriated into another struggle: in this case, the economic struggle between various competing interests in the music and media business.

There is something even more paradoxical about the contemporary attacks on rock: after all, rock has become a part of the dominant mainstream culture. Whether or not it has been totally "colonized" by the economic interests of capitalism, and incorporated into the routinized daily life of capitalist, patriarchal and racist relations, it is omnipresent (providing the background music for advertising, television, films and even shopping). And it is not only the classics or oldies but contemporary songs and sounds that are used. Whether or not it has become "establishment culture," it does seem that rock is losing its power to encapsulate and articulate resistance and opposition. Despite the proliferation of explicitly political performers, events and activities, it is difficult to see where and how rock is, or could be, articulated to political commitments (as more and more rockers jump onto the Right's antidrug bandwagon). But if this is the case, then how do we understand the attacks on rock? These attacks are an impassioned and urgent call to arms; but what is it they are struggling over?

Obviously, these attacks are part of a sustained movement—orchestrated in part by various fractions of the new conservative alliance (including the "New Right")[16] and winning various degrees of public support—to constrain, police and even regulate (read censor!) the production, distribution and consumption of art and popular culture in the United States.[17] There are important similarities among the various attempts at censorship (e.g., policing libraries and schools, discussions about television, limiting government spending on the arts), including: the mobilization of government support without legislative action, or at least with only the threat of such action; the use of indirect tactics (e.g., debates over funding which avoid explicit infringements of free speech); the use of commercial pressure on advertisers, retailers and corporations (e.g., boycott and publicity); framing the concerns in terms of the representation of immorality (e.g., of violence, drugs, homosexuality,

antipatriotism). But rock also provides some unique problems. Since it is difficult to maintain that the lyrics of rock are its most salient element (and its lyrics are often innocuous, ambiguous or unintelligible), its representation of specific morally suspect or antisocial activities cannot be taken as conclusive evidence of its social effects. This may explain the attention given to the claims of subliminal messages and backmasking. Rock's penetration into and dispersion throughout the social fabric has made it difficult if not impossible to locate it within simple causal equations. Consequently, the evidence used to identify and condemn the effects of its representations has rarely come from traditionally respected sources of knowledge and authority (e.g., university researchers) but from the very institutions (church, police) leading the attack.

Such efforts at censorship are clearly related to a number of important political and ideological struggles: to redefine "freedom" and reconstitute the boundaries of civil liberties; to (re)regulate sexual and gender roles (leading to the construction of ever more violent antifeminist and homophobic positions); to monitor and even isolate particular segments of the population, especially various racial and ethnic minorities who, along with women and children, make up the vast majority of the poor; and to discipline the working class (e.g., through attacks on unions) in order to (de)regulate an international consumer economy dedicated to the increasing accumulation of profit (without the apparent necessity of converting wealth into investment).

The attacks on rock are also part of a larger attempt to regulate the possibilities of pleasure and identity as the basis of political opposition and to dismantle the cultural and political field constructed in the 1960s. There is no doubt that "the autonomy of blacks, women and young people—to mention three groups whose emergence gave the 60s their distinct identity—is under siege again."[18] (We might add other groups, including gays and lesbians and Chicanos.) The field of struggle constructed by the various countermovements of the 1960s depended upon the articulation of politics and pleasure, of popular culture and social identity. Pleasure became a source of power and a political demand, enabled by the

very marginality of those struggling. The new conservatives have to regulate pleasure in order to reestablish the discipline they believe necessary for the reproduction of the social order and the production of capital (e.g., the family). But collapsing the attacks on sex, drugs, consumerism and rock into a single project fails to take account of the new conservative's rather sophisticated and strategic understanding of the place of media and culture in society.

How do we understand the relations among the three strategies? How do we understand why they have appeared at just this moment, not only in the history of rock, but of the nation as well? If we start with the fact that, taken together, the three strategies define an ambiguous relation to rock, then we have to ask how this ambiguity, originating in different social groups, with different political agendas, is effectively assembled within and connected to a larger conservative agenda. By too quickly assimilating the attacks on rock to the broad category of censorship, or to the larger struggle to discipline the population, we may in fact miss the specific strategy behind the attacks and the political struggles to which they point. Locating the attacks in the field of popular culture and daily life raises questions about their deployment and articulation. I want to suggest that they involve more than questions about contemporary musical trends and the place and power of rock in daily life. They point to one of the key strategies by which a new conservatism is being constructed in America.

DEPOLITICIZATION AND THE NEW CONSERVATISM

How we imagine the future, how we conceptualize the possibilities open to us, depends upon how we interpret our present circumstances. Too many of the stories we are telling ourselves seem to lead nowhere or to some place we would rather not go. Only if we begin to reread our own moment can we begin to rearticulate our future. If you want to change the ending, you have to tell a different story.

It is easy to tell the story of the king (Reagan or Bush), his evil

advisers (the military industrial complex) and his selfish noblemen (capitalists). It is easy to blame the media and popular culture for the apparent shifts in popular sentiment, to accuse the media of "narcotizing" or "brainwashing" the population. In both of these stories, real people disappear: not some romanticized band of authentic rebels sacrificing their lives in the name of their own sacred identity or some abstract principle. And not the amorphous and anonymous multitudes who, imprisoned by their own ignorance and stupidity, are easily manipulated. Much of the political discourse of this century continues to tell these same stories, with the same cast of characters.

Another set of stories treat the present situation as a rupture or "crisis," as if history had some inevitable trajectory which has suddenly been upset. Sometimes, they treat the present situation as if it had appeared, fully formed, ex nihilo. Certainly we live in a time when it feels that "everything solid melts into air."[19] We live in an age which refuses to give itself an identity. But it is unlikely that we are the only ones to have experienced life in these terms. Any student of U.S. history will recognize many of the features of our situation. On the surface, they seem to re-present tendencies which appear almost inherent in the "American character": a pious self-righteousness which leads people to control others' behavior and morality; and a lack of concern, not only with public affairs, but with the "facts" of public life. Acknowledging the historical precedents and continuities, however, does not mean that we can ignore what is unique and specific about the present situation. Perhaps we are living through another fin-de-siècle; perhaps it is a period of transition comparable to the end of the Middle Ages. But it is still different in some ways, and those differences have their effects.

All these stories have a common pessimistic ending which leaves no room for optimism, but their pessimism is unearned because it is not built upon an analysis of the concrete conditions and struggles. Rather than deferring judgment to the last instance, their judgments define both the beginning and the end of the story. A different story can provide some optimism only if it earns its pessimism; it has to describe the changing balance of forces, the field on which victory and defeat are measured, and the strategies by which a new conservatism is penetrating into the lives of at least significant segments of the population of the U.S. In the last instance, theory can only be judged by what it enables, by what it opens up and closes off (and any theory always does both) in the contemporary context. Theory is of little use if it does not help us imagine and then realize better futures for ourselves and future generations. I propose, then, to offer a "speculative analysis," an interpretation of the contemporary political context of the U.S. which focuses on the way a new conservatism is being constructed at the intersection of popular culture and a specific structure of daily life. It is speculative both because it does not have the comfort and security of a completion and because it does not attempt to confidently and persuasively demonstrate its legitimacy before beginning to tell the story. Following Gramsci, I want to enter into the field of popular culture where some of the battles are being fought in order to identify the contradictions.[20] But the fact that contradictions exist does not guarantee that they can be "prised open," nor that they will actually become part of a more optimistic ending to the story.

The United States is a nation caught between passion and indifference, between dogma and apathy. Perhaps it has always been that way, the result of an isolationist society whose origins are built upon a rhetoric of salvation and the end of history. Perhaps it is the result of the enormous disparity between its economic and political promise (and the occasionally real possibilities) and the rather more grim reality of so many people's lives. A society of immigrants and migrants, criminals and fanatics, caught between the need to hold on to old identities (for they are all they have), and the desire to achieve that elusive dream—of freedom, but perhaps even more of comfort—which will relieve them of the burden of their past.

This book is about a population which increasingly finds itself caught within the contradiction between its own liberal ideology and its increasingly conservative commitments. It is a population cutting across generations, class, gender and, to a lesser extent, race; that no longer expects consistency in its life; that no longer seems to care about many of the things that have traditionally motivated people.

Theory, Politics and Passion

While some might claim that I am describing the baby-boom generation, I believe it is broader, encompassing a large part of the various postwar generations: post–World War II, post-Korea, post-Cuba, post–War on Poverty, post-Vietnam, post-Nicaragua, post-Iraq (what next?). It encompasses all of those generations which have been raised in and succumbed to the rhetoric which linked the United States to war, to mobilization and ultimately to mobility. It is most clearly visible in the new middle class that emerged after the 1950s, and yet it is a population defined largely by the disintegration of that social space and of the comfortable boundaries around it. It is a population committed to comfort but living an increasingly uncomfortable life. But in the end, it may be impossible to define it ahead of time; rather, my story is an attempt to create it and to give it a common history.

There is something increasingly "conservative" about the nation, and it is affecting every aspect of people's daily lives, although it is not simply that the population has adopted a conservative ideology. It is difficult to point to directly, but its symptoms are clear enough. Not only has the center moved to the right, but the possible alternatives and directions are increasingly constrained. Large segments of the population are depoliticized, demoralized, pessimistic and indifferent. In fact, the conservatism of the nation is being built upon that pessimism and depoliticization. Somehow, regardless of their beliefs (which are as likely to be "liberal" as conservative), the same people find themselves pulled into a new conservatism. A number of questions present themselves: What sort of depoliticization is this? How is it being accomplished and to what ends? Is the contemporary organization of pessimism being actively constructed and strategically deployed as part of a larger political struggle over the future of the nation?

For the fact of the matter is that, although people may be individually and collectively outraged, they remain largely inactive. After all, even if you could organize enough people, it probably wouldn't change anything. And if you were successful, success would only corrupt you. Besides, even if you weren't corrupted, you would run into other problems and groups which impinged upon your activity and corrupted it. No where is this more visible than in the battle over abortion. Anti-abortionists have succeeded in making it more difficult for women to get an abortion,[21] not only by legal or political means, but through strategies of compulsion, harassment and terrorization aimed at doctors and patients in their daily life (often with the compliance of the state). Pro-abortionists, on the other hand, despite popular support, seem incapable of organizing any outrage against these tactics. The passion seems to belong to the Right which seems to be strategically directing and redirecting it, from economic policy to affirmative action, from the problems of a multicultural population to the crisis of political correctness.

I want to argue that the new conservatism is being put into place through cultural rather than political strategies. As Alan Wolfe has recently argued:

> Americans are increasingly oblivious to politics, but they are exceptionally sensitive to culture. What constitutes for other countries the meat and potatoes of political conflict—distribution of income among classes, regulation of industry, protectionism vs free trade, sectional antagonisms—captures in this country only the attention of the interests immediately affected. Politics in the classic sense of who gets what, when and how is carried out by a tiny elite watched over by a somewhat larger, but still infinitesimally small, audience of news followers. The attitude of the great majority of Americans to such traditional political subjects is an unstable combination of boredom, resentment, and sporadic attention. . . . Culture, on the other hand, grabs everyone's attention all of the time. . . . Because they practice politics in cultural terms, Americans cannot be understood with the tool kits developed by political scientists. . . . Unable to abolish war, they have abolished politics; the state has not withered away, but the amount of attention paid to its affairs has withered badly.[22]

But while Wolfe seems to assume that this depoliticization is a natural part of being American, I want to argue that it is being actively produced through relations of commitment rather than belief. That is why this is a book about passion, its absence (in the academy, the Left and large segments of the population) and its strategic use in the reorganization of the relations of culture and politics in the U.S.

COMING HOME TO CULTURAL STUDIES

This book is partly about what it means to do "cultural studies" at a particular moment in its history.[23] Admittedly, this question is of interest only to a small group of academic critics (and some readers may reasonably decide to skip over this discussion) but I have been trying to answer that question since I first returned to the United States after studying at the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies in England in the late 1960s. My identification with British cultural studies has always been both intentional and awkward, since I have never quite understood how one could do "British" cultural studies in America. For decades, cultural studies stood as a minoritarian critical practice, identified with a particular body of work, little known and often attacked. In the U.S., it found a grudging home primarily in departments of communication.[24] Only recently has it gained real visibility and even prominence throughout the international academic world.[25] But its success has created new problems. As it has become a global commodity, it has also become an intellectual fantasy. And like all fantasies, the more it is talked about it, the less clear it is what is being talked about.

I do not think that this situation results from cultural studies' increasing institutionalization since it has always been located within educational and even academic institutions. Nor is it the result of its increasing disciplinization since those practicing cultural studies have always had to accommodate themselves to and struggle against the demands of different disciplines and interdisciplinary committees. I think that the problem results from a misreading of the open-endedness of cultural studies which either allows anything to be cultural studies or identifies it with a "correct" paradigmatic version.

In attempting to delineate the extension of the term, it is useful, if not necessary, to come to terms with British cultural studies for two reasons. First, we have to ask why the signifier of "cultural studies" has been taken up now and I think it is empirically demonstrable that the answer has everything to do with the recent visibility, in the U.S. and elsewhere, of some of the leading figures of British cultural studies and their work. And the fact is that both personally and intellectually they represented something not widely available. This is not to say that British cultural studies is the only way to do cultural studies; on the contrary, there are a variety of national and indigenous traditions of cultural studies which have remained invisible to many of us because of the largely unidirectional circulation of cultural discourses. But, and this is the second reason, I do believe that there are important lessons to be learned from the project and practice of British cultural studies if they are taken as exemplary rather than metonymically. And further, British cultural studies does seem to be serving, if only temporarily, as a common reference point and language around which different traditions and projects are coming together.[26]

But this does not mean that British cultural studies is a singular and coherent body of thought, an orthodoxy which can be or needs to be overthrown in endless replays of the Freudian narrative of killing the father. This seems to radically misrepresent the practice and history of British cultural studies. There never was an orthodoxy of cultural studies, even within the Centre of Contemporary Cultural Studies (often identified as the mythical origin of British cultural studies); there never was a singular and homogeneous, pure and unsoiled center. Cultural studies has always encompassed different projects and practices, sometimes in contestation with each other, sometimes in different spaces, sometimes moving across each other with very serious consequences.[27] There can be no single linear history of theoretical and political progress, for cultural studies has always proceeded discontinuously and sometimes even erratically. The diversity is often only ritually acknowledged, but it is much more, for it is the very practice of cultural studies. At every moment, every practice of cultural studies is something of a hybrid, with multiple influences.[28] Every position in cultural studies is an ongoing trajectory across different theoretical and political projects. Moreover, there have always been multiple practices and sites of cultural studies in every context.[29]

If there are real stakes in the practice of representation, including the ways we represent our own intellectual practices, then we have to take seriously the struggle over the name of cultural studies. I

refuse to relinquish the gains and lessons of this specific intellectual formation, with its own history, contradictions, uneven developments, conflicts, differences and unities. But it is important to acknowledge that British cultural studies is not the only formation in which such gains can be located. I want to begin by offering a tentative description of the practice of cultural studies or, perhaps more accurately, of the affect of its practice. Then I will try to say something about the terrain on which it operates, its field of specificity. (And in Part I following this introduction, I will offer one possible way of filling in its theoretical position.)

The practice of cultural studies can be encapsulated in two assumptions. First, it does matter what cultural studies is at any place and time. Cultural studies is not a thousand points of light, and not every project and practice of "culture studies"[30] is cultural studies; this doesn't mean that cultural studies is the only valid or interesting or politically engaged or critical practice. Partly cultural studies matters because it is about "how to keep political work alive in an age of shrinking possibilities."[31] Its "will to knowledge" (according to Gramsci, the first function of the political intellectual is to know more than the other side; the second function is to share that knowledge[32]) is driven by its attempt to respond to history, to what matters in the world of political struggle. I do not mean to render history unproblematic here. But recognizing that history is always problematic, that it has its own conditions of possibility, its own discursive mediations and strategic deployments, does not mean that history is simply the product of our discourses or that it can be subordinated to them. In that sense, for cultural studies, historical context and theory are inseparable, not merely because the latter constructs the former but also because the former leads the latter. For cultural studies, there is always something at stake;[33] Actually, in any context, there may be numerous stakes, numerous practices, numerous ways of reconstructing and responding to the context. Cultural studies is always a strategic intellectual practice.

The second assumption is that it also matters that the field of cultural studies is open and unstable and contested. For cultural studies assumes that history—its shape, its seams, its outcomes—is

never guaranteed. As a result, doing cultural studies takes work, including the work of deciding what cultural studies is, of making cultural studies over again and again. Cultural studies constructs itself as it faces new questions and takes up new positions. In that sense, doing cultural studies is always risky and never totally comfortable (although it can be fun). It is fraught with inescapable tensions (as well as real pleasures). In the U.S., the rapid institutional success of cultural studies has made it all a bit too easy. Cultural studies has to be wary of anything that makes its work too easy, that erases the real battles, both theoretical and political, that have to be waged, that defines the answers before it even begins.[34]

Theory can let you off the hook, providing answers which are always known in advance or endlessly deferring any answer into the field of its endless reflections and reflexivity. Too much contemporary theoretical work renounces all intellectual authority. Recognizing that intellectual work is a form of cultural production does not mean that it is exactly the same as every other cultural practice. Intellectual work must make a claim to authority, but authority is not dogma. It need not be derived from a presumption of a privileged access to the "correct" answer. There are no correct answers in history, but it does not follow that there are not better, more useful, more progressive analyses. Authority is derived from possibilities: possibilities to respond, possibilities to change, possibilities to extend. Such an intellectual authority "relies on no objective standards or transcendental guarantees, and yet . . . does not for all that abandon all 'cognitive control.' "[35] Cultural studies recognizes that theory is always open-ended, but it chooses, in any instance, to stop the theoretical game and offer a theoretically grounded analysis of its context. That is, knowing that your position still needs further elaboration, development and even criticism, you still have to make a pragmatic commitment, for the moment, to this theoretical analysis. We may be making it up as we go along (which does not mean that we ever start from scratch) but that need not undermine its authority—specific, contextual and modest, but authority just the same.

Similarly, politics can let you off the hook if political exigencies

substitute for intellectual work. Cultural studies believes in the importance of critical theoretical work to political intervention but it does not assume that intellectual work is or can substitute for such intervention; nor can it define ahead of time the appropriate form of such intervention.[36] Cultural studies refuses to let political pressures erase the necessity of theoretical work. Yet it is always frustrated by its apparent inability to actually effect change. Still, it has to resist the temptation to measure itself against other more direct forms of activism (which are available to us as people anyway). In its effort to realize the possible political role of the intellectual, cultural studies has to avoid the temptation to demand of its own discourse what it does not, and cannot, demand of other discourses: that it have a direct, immediate and visible impact.[37] Culture does not work that way, but it does work; it does make a difference. Of course, that is just what cultural studies is about, and yet it has not and will not ever successfully answer its own question. Understanding the articulation of culture and politics is a project that is always just beyond our reach. Hall refers to this as the "necessary displacement of culture": "there is something about culture which always escapes and evades the attempt to link it, directly and immediately, with other structures."[38]

Finally, cultural studies has always refused the easy path of taking up the already agreed upon, legitimated topics of studies. It is committed to revising and expanding the agenda of critical theory and progressive politics, to questioning the taken for granted objects and issues of critical work and to taking seriously those which critical work has excluded. For example, cultural studies never argued that all politics could be treated in terms of ideology, but it did argue that the Left had ignored the power of ideological practices. It never thought that popular culture defined its project but it thought it was important enough to be put on the agenda. From its beginnings, it argued that the Left had ignored questions of racism and imperialism, and some of its most important work in the past fifteen years has been devoted to these issues. Thus, doing cultural studies is not a matter of merely continuing the work that has already been done,

staying on the same terrain, but of asking what is left off the agenda in relation to specific contexts and projects. In this book, I want to put two things onto the agenda of cultural studies: passion and capitalism. It may seem odd to suggest that we need to put capitalism onto the agenda of a field that has been powerfully shaped by Marxism. But too often capitalism is taken for granted, as if it were fixed, as if everyone already knew what it was and how it related to culture.

I can summarize this description of the practice of British cultural studies as contextualist and interventionist. Not only its object but its practice, its problematic and its specificity can only be understood in response to particular historical contexts. But context is neither background nor the "local." It cannot be accomplished as an afterthought or a footnote; it is the end rather than the beginning of our critical efforts because it is defined by our particular project. This is the sense of cultural studies' "conjuncturalism." Thus cultural studies is not a theory of the specificity of culture; it does not assume that anything, especially culture, can be explained in purely cultural terms. It does not attempt to explain everything from a cultural point of view. Instead, it locates cultural practices in complex relations with other practices which determine, enable and constrain the possibilities and effects of culture, even as they are determined, enabled and constrained by culture. Hence, cultural studies argues that much of what one requires to study culture is not cultural.

This contextualism is what drives the interdisciplinarity of cultural studies as a demand that one take the projects and questions of other disciplines seriously enough to do the work necessary to map out the connections within which culture is located, to see how they have been made and where they can be prised apart.[39] But contextualism is not relativism for cultural studies measures its theoretical adequacy in political terms. While it has no pretensions to totality or universality, it does seek to give a better understanding of where "we" are so that "we" can get somewhere better. Nor does it attempt to smooth over the complexities and tensions; it chooses instead to live with them, to see any historical struggle (and its own intervention) as

neither pure resistance nor pure domination but rather, as caught between containment and possibility. It is this tension which is embodied in cultural studies' notion of "the popular."

There are two theoretical correlates of this critical practice (which will be discussed in chapter 1). First, against visions of culture as either a reflection of or reducible to other (e.g., political or economic) realities, cultural studies sees culture as material and constitutive. Second, against positions which would reduce all of human reality and experience to culture (or textuality), cultural studies argues that different forms of material practices are also constitutive. Cultural studies is in some sense about winning people and practices to particular relations and positions, about how the links are forged in and through cultural practices.

But I find this description of cultural studies' practice unsatisfying, partly because it is so obviously too romanticized. I want to start again to define cultural studies by suggesting that it is constituted by, and sometimes must reconstitute itself by, a double articulation. Its problematic is constructed at the intersection of what I shall call, for lack of better terms, a disciplinary and a historical terrain. Of course, they cannot be so easily separated and independently defined since each leans on the other. Moreover, they are constantly rearticulated by the contingent places, the historical conjunctures, to which a specific practice of cultural studies responds.

One of the oddest things about cultural studies is that it never defines its disciplinary terrain, that which it is obviously about: "culture." Other disciplines are constantly attempting to define their object of study, even if they can never achieve consensus for more than a fleeting moment. I think there is a good reason for this: every practice of cultural studies is articulated on top of the historically and socially constructed polysemy of culture. Cultural studies always holds onto the tension between at least two different meanings or concepts of culture. This tension is in fact the source of its productivity. For example, Raymond Williams's position is constituted in the space between the community of process and the structure of feeling, or, later, between cultural practices and a whole way of life (knowable community).[40] Similarly, James Carey works with the tension be-

tween Dewey's vision of community and either Geertz's theory of symbolic forms or Innis's theory of the technological organization of spatial and temporal power.[41] Another example is provided by recent work in anthropology, which crosses into the field of cultural studies only when anthropological notions of culture, while not abandoned, are placed alongside feminist and postcolonialist critiques.[42]

The historical terrain of cultural studies can be clarified if we recognize that the various concepts of culture deployed in cultural studies are closely connected to the emergence of "the modern" in the North Atlantic region, where "the modern" is understood as a particular articulation of historical processes, structures of experience and cultural practices. Williams argued that "culture" was a peculiarly modern concept which he defined in the following terms: "The idea of culture is a general reaction to a general and major change in the condition of our common life [modernization]. Its basic element is its effort at total qualitative assessment."[43] In this "modern" vision, culture involved a double movement into and out of a historical context; it was both descriptive and normative, producing the place from which and the space into which the critic had to speak. It is not coincidental that cultural studies emerged in England at the intersection of the New Left's critique of Western societies and the continuing debates about modernization in the form of mass culture.[44] Cultural studies was a modernist response to the continuing processes of a modernization: i.e., its practice reproduced the gap between the center and the margin (e.g., the avant-garde); it continued to focus on questions of identity and consciousness, history and temporality, textuality and mediation.

We are now perhaps in a better position to understand the current situation of cultural studies, a situation in which its success seems to have arrived only with its dispersion. But perhaps dispersion is too gentle an image, for the very configuration and boundaries of cultural studies are being fought over. I prefer the image of a diaspora, for cultural studies is being relocated, not only spatially and institutionally but also in relation to a number of other discourses. And it is not always a voluntary or friendly confrontation which results.

I think this diaspora is partly the result of various postcolonialist[45] challenges to the Eurocentrism of cultural studies which have opened a critique of the *limited polysemy* of culture as it is deployed in British cultural studies. This field of meanings is encapsulated in Williams' rereading of the tradition of English moralists.[46] Williams looks for the meanings of culture in the context of an imaginary English language and history. He treats the national culture as if it were constructed entirely within the nation, the result of internal productions and conflicts alone. Consequently, cultural studies has failed to acknowledge that the "national popular" is always produced in the field of international relations (colonialism, imperialism, etc.) in the effort to appropriate, respond to, resist and control diverse "other" practices and populations (e.g., the role of the colonial empire and the various "others" it constructed in producing "English" culture).[47] Contemporary notions of culture have to begin by assenting to the fact that we are all "coerced into globality" in the contemporary world.[48] Cultural studies failed to see that culture is deployed differently, that it takes on different meanings, in other histories and in other places. (These alternate traditions have in some instances given rise to ingidenous traditions of cultural studies.)[49]

But the diaspora of cultural studies is also the product of another failure, one perhaps even more paradoxical. For while British cultural studies always recognized that the very category of culture it took up, with all of its intentional ambiguities, was a "modern" concept, that it was a modern articulation of culture, it failed to challenge that articulation. Only now is cultural studies beginning to explore the link which implicated the very category of culture in the practices of power which the "modern" put into place (including forms of colonialism, racism and sexism, disciplinization and normalization, etc.). Only recently has cultural studies reflected on how culture itself was and is articulated by and to these practices of power.[50] In that sense, cultural studies' interest in postmodernism is not a matter of accepting that the history of the modern has come to an end; it is rather that postmodernism poses a new project for cultural studies' own rearticulation: that it must critically examine and hopefully delink itself from some of its complicities with the

modern. For example, cultural studies does not reject reason but acknowledges its limits and its deployment as a structure of power. It recognizes not only the existence of different rationalities but the importance of the irrational and the arational in human life. Thus as cultural studies moves into different sites which have been irretrievably reconstructed by the violence of the various forms of colonial power, diaspora and the modern, cultural studies will also have to be irretrievably reconstructed in some very fundamental ways.

My own effort to develop a specific practice of cultural studies is not an attempt to break with some imagined history or orthodoxy but to rearticulate the gains of cultural studies and to bring them to bear upon one aspect of the contemporary political transformations taking place in the United States: the appearance of a certain structure of depoliticization which is moving the nation into a new conservatism. While my project in this book is not to offer a general model for American cultural studies, I do want to offer some reflections on the theoretical work that needs to be done to construct a place for cultural studies in America, and for America in cultural studies. I want to briefly identify two sites for such work which will be addressed more extensively in Part I: the logic of identity and difference; and the politics of space and time.[51]

Much of the history of cultural studies is dominated by the particular logic of European modernism, a metaphysical logic of identity and difference, a Hegelian logic of negativity which appropriates or incorporates the other. As Robert Young describes it, knowledge is "unable to let the other remain outside itself, outside its representation of the panorama which it surveys, in a state of singularity or separation."[52] This logic, which rejects the reality or positivity of the other by reducing it to a phenomenon within the field of experience of the knowing subject, continues into the poststructuralist vision of the other as excluded from but necessarily constitutive of the self. While we may not want to accede to Young's assertion that this logic "mimics at a conceptual level the geographic and economic absorption of the non-European world by the west,"[53] it is reasonable to assume that this logic is implicated in and closely articulated to various histories and structures of power. Challenging that link will

lead us to explore ways of acknowledging the reality or positivity of the other and to criticize a politics which privileges identity.

There is a second aspect of this logic: the process by which "the other is neutralized as a means of encompassing it" involves the construction of a temporal Totality in which "the present is sacrificed to a future which will bring forth an ultimate, objective meaning."[54] As in the logic of progress, the present is sacrificed to its as yet unrealized future. This is Hegel's model of a History in which the subject (of the West, the nation-state) comes to realize itself at history's end. Barthes finds the plenitude of signs in Japan.[55] Baudrillard finds the desert of signs in America.[56] Both reconstitute Europe as History, as the site of totalization. Young concludes:

> History . . . constitutes another form by which the other is appropriated into the same. For the other to remain other, it must not derive its meaning from History but must instead have a separate time which differs from historical time . . . it is in its temporality, in anteriority, that we find an otherness beyond being.[57]

Rather than identifying alternative temporalities, I want to suggest that cultural studies might deconstruct this temporal theory of power. In fact, discussions of culture and power are usually dominated by models and metaphors of time and history. There is an interesting paradox in modernism's privileging of time over space, for it is imposed upon a much longer history of the primacy of the visual as a metaphor of reality. But vision is always understood phenomenologically and thus returned to the sphere of the temporal. The result is, nevertheless, that space is erased as an enabling condition and grid of political, economic and cultural power. Overcoming this bias of modernity suggests that cultural studies develop geographies of power mapping social structures of mobility and stability. Rather than locating culture in the dialectic of the singular and the totality, it would see culture as an active agent in the production of places and spaces. This does not mean that we embrace "the end of history," but instead that we recognize that history—or rather, different histories—are always placed somewhere. I do not want to deny other temporalities but to spatialize them, to look at how histories are

deployed in space: it is not so much a question of when the other speaks, but where.

A spatial model of culture and power seems somehow tied, both to diaspora populations and to nations founded as settler colonies. The latter (e.g., America, Canada and Australia) all have origins involving genocidal campaigns. To different degrees and in various ways, each of them actively represses this history (which doesn't mean it is not there but that its effects are articulated in different ways). Each of them constructs its identity in spatial rather than temporal terms, erecting billboards rather than monuments. In each, a national identity is forged from both the spatial enormity of the nation and the particular geographies of the space. In both Australia and Canada, this is tempered by a continued investment in and identification with their European origins. In the United States, however, this spatialization of national identity is almost total.[58] Debates about American identity often focus on the place where its original character is to be located: the New England town hall, the Southern plantation, the frontier trail, the midwest community. It is here, in America, that I propose to look at culture as a spatialized "field of social management."[59]

WITH THE BEST OF INTENTIONS: THE LIMITS OF THE ANALYSIS

I am aware of the many weaknesses of the present effort. Some of them I choose to defend, others I can only acknowledge and accept. Its questions, perspective and passions are undoubtedly determined in part by my own autobiography, which placed me in a liberal, white, Jewish, New York, ascending middle class family at the beginning of the baby boom. Although I was shaped by the 1960s counterculture, I do not believe that any one speaks as a singular representative of that generation: not only was it so much more fragmented than we often acknowledge, but we have each been remade by our experiences and the paths of our own mobilities. My intellectual, political and even emotional commitments were changed forever as a result of the time I spent in Britain and Europe.

And the move from the East Coast urban culture of New York to the Midwest produced more than culture shock; it produced as well a different sense of the potential tyranny of urban elitism, suburban boredom and agrarian populism. It is here that I realized that the new conservatism had to be taken seriously.

I live in the heart of the farmbelt, the "heartland of America." I live in one of those peculiar "university towns," too small (in both its population and its attitudes) to be a city and too large to be a town, dominated by a land-grant state university, a mega-university which graduates close to ten thousand students a year. As a research institution, it is as elitist as any university. As a pedagogical institution, it too often takes the democratization of higher education (which is, after all, the rhetoric of its origins, only realized after World War II) as an excuse for its unimportance. It is not an exciting or attractive town (unless you like the prairie), but it is, in contemporary terms, very "livable" and has a reasonably rich cultural life. The student body is almost entirely white and middle-class and, to a large extent, majors in "pre-wealth" through a variety of different curricula. Their social life is dominated by fraternities and sororities (the university has the largest Greek system in the country) and university athletics. The majority are certainly politically unenthused and inactive (although there has always been a reasonably large group of political activists, on both sides of the spectrum and across a broad range of issues). It is in this context—teaching classes in rock and roll, popular culture and cultural studies—that I began to see emerge, over the past decade, a rather paradoxical conservatism in the ways my students interpreted their lives and their commitments. But it was a conservatism which many of my faculty colleagues and friends reflected back at them, although often they acted as if it were their right, while the students had some obligation to be radical. It was through the lens of this mundane conservatism that I began to try to think about the changing political climate of the United States and its relationship to popular culture.

For someone attempting to make some sense of contemporary popular culture, the task is extremely daunting. After all, how can you describe a world in which everything is potentially evidence for something, but you often don't know what it is evidence of, until it is too late? (How many times have people said to me that I should have seen or heard something because it was the perfect example of what I was arguing?) The simple fact of the matter is that no one can collect all of the material that is necessary or appropriate. And as the size and density of the field continuously expand, the contradictions multiply more rapidly than our writing. What I write today may easily be contradicted by what appears tomorrow. Almost every example I have used may have lost some resonances or taken on new ones by the time the book is published, for ephemerality is part of contemporary popular culture. Hence, I try not to judge texts and tastes, at least until I begin to see how the story might end. Examples are offered, not as conclusive evidence, but as billboards marking where we are, where we are going and where we might go. They are signposts of the changing relations of popular culture and daily life, and the changing configurations of our passions and commitments. They are also invocations (of a wider discourse) and invitations for the reader to supply his or her own examples, his or her own coordinates to the maps I am offering.

But the demands of politics and history still provide at least two standards for judging my argument. First, can it be continued, expanded, refined? After all, it admittedly collapses too much and ignores even more. Perhaps most importantly, while focusing on affect, I have too often ignored its link to particular ideological and libidinal codes. Nevertheless, I will be satisfied if I have told at least part of the story and managed to put some interesting questions on the agenda. Second, are there people who can recognize something of their own lives in my descriptions, who are able to locate and orient themselves within my maps? Every story told about the present invites the reader to locate themselves in relation to some "we." My own invitation to identification can move between progressive intellectuals and a broader fraction of the population because it points to a dimension of contemporary experience. Different people may feel different degrees of inclusion and investment in this dimension. I am not claiming that this "we" speaks for anyone, for it is not offered as an identity with its own sociological referent. The reader

will accede to, refuse or struggle against my attempt to locate them within this contemporary field of struggle.

Finally, I must acknowledge the difficulty of much of the language of this book. It is often too academic and occasionally hermetic, but I hope that the analysis will have something to say to a broader audience. I would have liked to arrive at a more accessible vocabulary, but I do not want to fall into a common pseudo-populism which rejects such work as elitist and exacerbates the tension between activists and organizers on the Left, and intellectuals. This tension contrasts sharply with the very real commitment of the Right to nurture its intellectuals. It is not that the Right is any less anti-intellectual but that it recognizes the importance of analysis and the possibilities of exploiting such intellectual labor (often through the use of professional writers who "translate" academic work) by disseminating it to those responsible for the production of popular culture and public opinion.

Intellectuals are laborers paid to produce something called knowledge. And like any laborer, they seek to develop skills and vocabularies which give them a privileged claim to compensation ("I understand poststructuralism, pay me!"), status and power (however little that may be). They are also motivated by the pleasure of the activity, by the material rewards and comforts of the social position and perhaps by a real desire to isolate themselves from the rather more difficult existence of other forms of employment. For whatever reasons, intellectuals seek more adequate understandings of particular aspects of the world. In such efforts, language is never an innocent cape placed on top of reality in order to hide it from the light of popular scrutiny. (This is not to deny that it may have such effects or that it may be motivated by an elitist desire for power.) Like Batman's cape, language remakes that which it is covering. Intellectuals are often criticized for introducing neologisms and dropping names, but these are often useful and efficient ways of bringing an entire argument or position quickly into the conversation. Such conversations with others seeking answers to the same or similar questions are absolutely vital to intellectual work.

Why are physicists or chemists describing the physical world expected to use languages not available to most people, while those exploring social reality have to speak so that everyone can understand? Is human reality any less complex, less multilayered, less contradictory, less surprising than the relations of subatomic particles? If the social world is complex, then sometimes the obvious accounts don't work; sometimes we need complex and nonobvious explanations of what is going on. Why does the burden of responsibility belong to the researchers who use such languages instead of the social norms which define what "educated" people are expected to know, what languages they are expected to speak? (Our students are expected to speak the languages of genetics and computers, but not of Marxism or deconstruction.) Perhaps it is not researchers' desire to insulate themselves but the social pressures which maintain the languages of common sense, languages which protect the existing social relationships (and hence the existing structures of power) that need to be questioned.

The real elitism is the assumption that "ordinary" people are unable to read such material. Whether they are willing to do the work necessary to read it is a different matter; it may have less to do with academic language than with their perception that intellectuals do not address the questions to which they are seeking answers. For example, while intellectuals of the Left argue over whether "Right" and "Left" have any meaning, whether they can be used to describe the political terrain, the Right confidently continues its efforts to restructure the nation's commitments, and people still make judgments about which side they are on. This does not mean that the lines are not fuzzy; perhaps they have always been, perhaps they are fuzzier today than in previous moments. But we can describe those uncertainties, and the differences they make, and we can argue about ways of reinvigorating the possibility of a progressive Left politics.

But intellectuals are more than researchers; they are positioned in a number of institutions and discourses. They are almost always teachers—we forget at our peril that a professor is someone who "professes" a position—with pedagogical, social and political responsibilities. Many intellectuals, especially on the Left, are only willing to speak where their credentials legitimate it or when their self-

reflexivity can turn them back onto themselves. The result is that intellectuals speak too often in isolation. I would propose that while intellectuals must always approach questions from a particular region and with a particular perspective, they must continually attempt to draw the lines connecting their expertise to other, broader social structures and relations. Public intellectuals must take a risk to speak beyond the parameters of their own confidence in order to begin again a public debate which has largely disappeared.

IF YOU CHOOSE TO CONTINUE . . .

The rest of the book is organized into four parts, each of which can be seen as a relatively independent essay. This is not merely a gesture to fragmentation but a way of acknowledging the gaps and absences in the analysis. The first part is unapologetically theoretical and academic. It offers a model of cultural studies—a "nonstructu-ralist, empirical formalism"[60]—based on a synthesis of the Gramscian perspective of Stuart Hall and the "postmodern" theories of Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari. For those not inclined to begin at the beginning, I have provided a glossary of the key terms introduced in this section. The second part indirectly offers a definition of rock or at least an interpretation of its power and importance in American society. It describes how rock was shaped by the context of its emergence in the 1950s and the signifi-cance of the differences in the contemporary context. The third part argues that the new conservatism of America involves the rearticula-tion of selected aspects of rock's popular logic in order to restructure and discipline daily life itself. The final part considers why this new conservatism is being constructed and why there has been so little effective opposition. In the end, understanding this contemporary political struggle leads me to rethink the status of capitalism and the possibility of an oppositional Left.

I have tried to develop a political and theoretical practice con-cerned with its own possible shape and with the possibilities of a world which always at least partly escapes the critic's desire to restructure it. Whether it is appropriate, whether I have succeeded, can only be answered contextually and strategically. Unfortunately, like any political struggle, you often only know if you made a bad choice when it is too late. I have attempted to initiate a project that I will never be able to complete by myself. Despite the occasional rhetoric of certainty to which my passion sometimes leads me, my conclu-sions are offered as both tentative and partial. In part the success of this book depends on its ability to move different readers between the different systems of identification and investment ("we's") con-structed in each part. Even if my analysis is mistaken, I hope I have at least raised questions that can and will be fruitfully addressed in whatever discussion may follow.

9

NATION, HEGEMONY
AND CULTURE

A number of features of the new conservatism, especially when taken together, offer a perplexing scenario. First, and perhaps most important, the new conservative formations seem to have broadly based popular and emotional appeal. Second, this appeal is often quite distinct from popular support for the specific programs and positions of the new conservatism, although such support is often mobilized and orchestrated. Third, there is often an obvious contradiction between the new conservatism's explicitly stated projects and its actions (e.g., its antistatist project of deconstructing the social-democratic compromise of the postwar years versus its reconstruction of powerful politically aligned state apparatuses; its rhetoric of economic prosperity versus the real economic devastation resulting from its policies; and its rhetoric of individual liberty versus its "war" on civil liberties). Fourth, this formation is able to win the electoral support of class fractions which would seem to have strong reasons to oppose the interests and policies of the new conservatives. Yet, this scenario of the U.S. cannot be treated in isolation. Many other advanced industrial societies, including Canada, France, Britain and Germany (and Australia, although it does not quite fit the model) have had similarly successful conservative struggles in the past decade.

HEGEMONY BY ANY OTHER NAME . . .[1]

Cultural studies has often used Gramsci's concept of hegemony to describe these historical modes of national political struggle, but the term remains ambiguous. For some, hegemony refers to an almost universal process by which domination is achieved through the construction of an ideological consensus.[2] Alternatively, Stuart Hall takes it as a specific, historically emergent project of restructuration with its own conditions of possibility and its own strategies of struggle.[3] As a "conjunctural" politics, hegemonic struggles can have radically different forms in different social formations and national contexts. Consequently, one needs to undertake the arduous and, at this stage, speculative task of bringing the concept to bear upon the particular context of the U.S.

Still, there are some characteristics of all hegemonic struggles. Hall distinguishes a hegemonic struggle from the attempt to establish power through consensual agreement.[4] While both are responses to the increasing complexity and importance of civil society as a site of political struggle, their structures and strategies are significantly different. Struggles to establish consensus divide the social formation into two mutually exclusive worlds corresponding to two social groups, each with its own realities, experiences, cultures and politics. The relations between the two social groups are defined hierarchically and maintained through processes of incorporation. The dominant group organizes the subordinate population and culture "from above"; the dominant group struggles to impose (win the consent of the subordinate population to) its ideological vision of reality. Such consent disarms any resistance by making the subordinate population over in the image of the dominant group.

In a hegemonic struggle, on the other hand, the social field cannot easily be divided into two competing groups. The diversity of "the people" confounds any such simple divisions; for while the masses appear to be undifferentiated, social differences actually proliferate. The difference between the subordinate and the dominant cannot be understood on a single dimension. Power has to be organized along many different, analytically equal axes: class, gender, eth-

nicity, race, age, etc., each of which produces disturbances in the others. At the same time, those seeking to hold the dominant position do not constitute a single coherent group or class. Instead, a specific alliance of class fractions, a "bloc" which must already have significant economic power, attempts to win a position of leadership by rearticulating the social and cultural landscape and their position within it. This rearticulation is never a single battle. It is a continuous "war of positions" dispersed across the entire terrain of social and cultural life. At each site, in each battle, the "ruling bloc" must rearticulate the possibilities and recreate a new alliance of support which places it in the leading position. It must win, not consensus, but consent:

> The "spontaneous" consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group; this consent is "historically" caused by the prestige (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys by virtue of its position and function in the world of production.[5]

In the contemporary world, it is less clear that the confidence in the ruling bloc is the result of its economic position, although the power of that position is necessary. Increasingly, that confidence has itself to be won and even constructed.

The hegemonic struggle for power takes place on and across an already constituted field, within which the identities and positions of the contesting groups are already being defined but are never fixed once and for all. Hegemonic politics always involves the ongoing rearticulation of the relations between, and the identity and positions of, the ruling bloc and the subordinate fractions within the larger social formation. If it is to win hegemonic leadership, the ruling bloc cannot ignore resistances to its specific struggle, nor to its longer-term projects. It has to recognize and negotiate with at least some of the resistant fractions. It need not incorporate them into its own position, nor entirely disarm the differences. These fractions can remain outside the hegemony, apart from the ruling bloc, retaining their subordinate position. Their subordinate relationship to the ruling bloc, however, is an active, empowered one, even to the point

where they can redefine and restructure the hegemonic project itself. A hegemonic politics does not incorporate resistance but constructs positions of subordination which enable active, real and effective resistance. The ruling bloc will also attempt to define the position of the excluded: those resistant fractions with whom it cannot or will not negotiate, which it therefore seeks to place outside the hegemonically restructured social formation. Hegemony is not, then, the construction of a consensus in which all resistance is incorporated into the dominant ideological positions; it is the ruling bloc securing the position of leadership for itself, across the terrain of political, social and cultural life.

Laclau and Mouffe describe this as the construction of an internal frontier within the social formation.[6] The ruling bloc (or its counter-hegemonic opponents) struggles to organize different and often antagonistic social and political groups into two opposing camps, each defined by an "imaginary" equivalence among its own fractions and, as a result, a common opposition to the other camp. (It is unclear which comes first.) Hegemony constructs a fundamental boundary, an organizing difference, within a society, through the distribution of social fractions. Such a "frontier" requires a principle of ideological articulation which is able to define the equivalences on either side of the boundary. For example, for Laclau and Mouffe, the possibility of a contemporary counter-hegemonic struggle rests upon the ability to construct a system of equivalences among various fractions opposed to both the status quo and the growing conservative hegemony according to the principle of democratic interests.[7] Those on each side of the frontier must struggle, not only against those on the other side, but also to constantly increase the size and space of their own alliance.

Hegemonic leadership has to operate where people live their lives. It has to take account of and even allow itself to be modified by its engagement with the fragmentary and contradictory terrain of common sense and popular culture. This is where the social imaginary is defined and changed; where people construct personal identities, identifications, priorities and possibilities; where people form and formulate moral and political agendas for themselves and their societies. It is here that people constantly reconstruct their future in the light of their sense of the present, that they decide what matters, what is worth investing in, what they are, can be or should be committed to. Hall, following Gramsci, describes this as the need for any hegemonic struggle to ground itself in or to pass through "the popular."[8] The popular here is not a fixed set of texts or practices, nor a coherent ideology, nor some necessarily celebratory and subversive structure. It is the complex and contradictory terrain, the multidimensional context, within which people live out their daily lives. Although it always has a political registration, that registration is never guaranteed in advance. Hegemony always involves a struggle to rearticulate the popular. There can be no assurance ahead of time what the results will be, for it depends upon the concrete contexts and practices of struggle and resistance. Speaking in the vocabulary of popular ideologies, using the logics by which people attempt to calculate their most advantageous position, celebrating the pleasures of popular culture, appropriating the practices of daily life—this is where hegemony is fought and what it is fought over.

Consequently, hegemony cannot be approached in purely ideological terms; it is the result of economic, political, cultural and ideological struggles. Hegemony involves an attempt to rearticulate the complex relations among the state, the economy and culture. And within this project, particular ideological appeals may be deployed as both the site of and weapon in a hegemonic struggle. For example, in the attempt to construct its own leadership, Thatcherism deployed race and racism as "one of the means through which hegemonic relations are secured in a period of structural crisis management." Such racism was "not a simple extension of repression but a recomposition of relations of power at all levels of society."[9]

Hegemony is organized around an explicitly defined national project of restructuring the social formation, a project which mobilizes the struggles of popular culture and daily life. This project is, finally, an attempt to reconstruct daily life and its relationship to the social formation. But it always remains a project, rarely completed, always changing in relation to its changing circumstances and always needing further work.

While this general model describes some aspects of the rise of a contemporary conservatism within the world of late capitalism, it does not describe how they have been articulated into specific national struggles. Here one must begin to look at the conditions and characteristics which define and enable their differences. To begin, I will summarize some of the major features of Hall's exemplary analysis of Thatcherism in Britain as a hegemonic struggle involving the ideological reconstruction of common sense as the cultural reconstruction of a "national popular."[10] Hall emphasizes the need to articulate such popular struggles to the attempt to win control, first of the economic sector, and subsequently, of the state apparatuses.

First, Thatcherism arose and gained ascendency in response to a very real, very particular and very powerfully experienced sense of national economic crisis. Thatcher's project—despite its ideological, cultural and moral dimensions—was primarily directed to the very real economic changes both within Britain and internationally. The project of Thatcherism was partly defensive, an effort to fend off some of the more drastic challenges to the older forms of capitalism still operating in England. What emerged was a fairly specific national project which demanded sacrifice in return for the imaginary construction of a promised community of prosperity. Second, the alliance which Thatcher put together and installed in a position of leadership was remarkably consistent; to the extent that contradictions arose within the ruling bloc, Thatcher seemed quite willing and capable of purging specific fractions. Third, Thatcherism operated within a political system in which the political, legislative and executive functions are combined into a single process. This not only enabled the enormous success of Thatcher's program and proposals, it also guaranteed an ongoing public debate around her legislative agenda.

Finally, there is the figure of Thatcher herself. She was extremely powerful, positioned as both the originator and representative of the ruling bloc and its project; consequently, she was identified with every specific proposal and with each victory (and defeat). Moreover, her success rested not only on legislative control nor a taken-for-granted popular constituency, but rather on her ability to forge a different temporary popular political alliance around any particular issue. For example, Thatcher's attack on education condensed a conservative articulation of parent power, a popular economy of education and a pragmatic view of the curriculum. At the same time, her power was quite personalized, depending in part on her female positioning: Thatcher was not merely the "Iron Lady," she was the lower-middle-class housewife with authority—the English "school-marm." (Not coincidentally perhaps, she used to be the minister of education.) This image, perhaps the most redolent, largely defined the homology that existed between Thatcher's personal authority, the hegemonic project of Thatcherism, and its struggle over the popular. Whether her personal authority (as well as a number of unpopular programs) led to her declining popularity, she was replaced. It remains to be seen whether "Thatcherism" will continue to define a conservative hegemony.

Hall has described the Thatcherite project as "authoritarian populism": "a movement towards a dominative and 'authoritarian' form of democratic class politics—paradoxically, apparently rooted in the 'transformism' . . . of populist discontents."[11] Thatcherism is a struggle to reshape the very terrain of common sense according to an imaginary vision of British culture, a partly defensive response to the real sociological changes which have significantly altered the face of British culture and society. Across the range of social positions, practices and identities, Thatcherism attempted to reshape common sense by constructing a frontier within the social formation, a boundary of permissible identities: on the one side, a reconstructed "England" organized around an imaginary past, an imaginary definition of "Englishness"; on the other side, the enemy within, "the alien wedge." In this particular hegemonic struggle, *politics leads culture*.

Thatcherism had a somewhat perplexing relation to popular culture; some cultural institutions, such as education, universities and state apparatuses which supported marginal cultural production (such as the Greater London Council) were significant concerns to the extent that they appeared to be powerful sites of oppositional discourses. While Thatcherism constantly policed popular media (e.g., public television), this was apparently an attempt to protect

itself and to open up the field to a free-market economy. Rarely did it attempt to occupy the ground or resonances of mainstream popular culture (as opposed to popular languages, fears, etc.); and the attacks on the forms of popular culture often came from residual conservative groups and figures (e.g., Mary Whitehouse). One result of this complex relation to popular culture was that both mainstream popular culture, and the culture of various marginalized fractions (especially those Black and immigrant populations excluded from Thatcherism's "English"), have been able to articulate widespread and popular dissatisfaction.

In significant ways, this analysis does not work in the context of the contemporary U.S. despite the very real similarities that can be identified. It is not just a matter of the differential success of the two conservative movements. Both are the product of real historical work within their respective parties—in the U.S., this began immediately after the defeat of Goldwater in 1964—and in the intellectual sphere (through various privately endowed think tanks). Both can be seen as responding, in the first instance, to changing economic conditions; both are fundamentally committed to the centrality and primacy of capitalism (and to the power of finance capital and a service economy rather than manufacturing); both have attacked the corporatist state and the social-democratic compromise of the postwar era; both have sought to install economic definitions of freedom over individual rights and civil liberties (i.e., the right to compete and fail); and both, for a while at least, were embodied in the figure of a single person—a national leader.

There were very real economic problems which presented a significant challenge to U.S.-based multinational corporate interests; the "disorganization" and reorganization of late capitalism involves: changing relations between national and world economies; changing social organizations and distributions of the working population (including the emergence of new forms, locations and organizations of labor, the rise of the service class, and the changing ethnic and gender composition of the labor force); and a declining rate of profit. In the U.S., this challenge could not be resisted or even merely accommodated; it required a radical restructuring of the place of

economic interests in the political, cultural and daily life of the nation. It was met, in the first instance, by the direct involvement of corporate capital in political activities and its publically expressed dissatisfaction with the state—and the state—of the nation. This new involvement took a variety of forms (e.g., funding PACs and various think tanks, direct national advertising campaigns) which were crucial elements in the construction of a conservative hegemony in the U.S.

The economic crisis facing the U.S. was not immediately experienced as a radical collapse of the economy. It was, in fact, not particularly obvious for the majority of the middle classes until the beginning of the 1980s, and even then it was often perceived in terms of the recurrent problems of recession, unemployment and inflation. For the general public, the problem was often constructed and understood in terms of the changing position of the U.S. in international relations. The crisis was perceived as the loss of America's economic, political and military leadership in the world. It was a problem of national ego and international hegemony rather than survival. Consequently, it was most powerfully marked by specific events (e.g., the oil embargo, the Iranian hostage crisis, etc.) and responded to with a decidedly nationalistic rhetoric.

A second major difference can be seen in the struggle to win control of the Republican party and the alliance that was constructed. The new conservative alliance in the U.S. was always a much more fragile and potentially temporary political bloc. While its public face was often dominated by the so-called New Right, it included more traditional bureaucratic conservatives from the Republican party, as well as "big business" capitalists.[12] It has required enormous effort for this alliance to successfully constitute a "ruling bloc"; often this work went beyond consensus building within the alliance to the active suppression of the differences between the fractions. Even the image of a unified New Right covers over numerous ideological contradictions, for it involves a range of different groups in complex alliances and antagonisms. The project of the moral traditionalists involves redirecting the nation's cultural agenda according to their own religious fundamentalism. They are perhaps the most success-

fully populist group, having combined the techniques of televangelism and direct mail appeals (for letter writing campaigns and fundraising) in single issue antiliberal campaigns. The rhetoric of the neoconservatives (many of whom were New Left liberals in the 1960s) overlaps with the cold war conservatives, focusing on the "world mission" of the U.S. and the need to reinscribe powerfully nationalistic feelings in order to recapture the "traditional" values of the nation (usually defined only by its assumed difference from an imaginary threat), which were undermined by internal forces in the 1960s. The economic neoliberals are committed to the free play of market forces—anything is permissible if, under free market conditions, it makes a profit—but their influence is limited by the presence of both monetarists and supply-siders. Three projects, three enemies—the antichrist, geopolitical others and state regulation. The construction of the "unity" of the New Right, and beyond that of the new conservative alliance, depended partly on the precarious ability, at any moment, to condense these three enemies into a single figure (e.g., Arabs, Communists, Japanese, South American drug dealers, etc.) and on the active work of overlooking the contradictions between the projects.

A third difference stems from the separation of the executive and legislative functions and from the unstable role of political popularity in these functions in the U.S. political system. The result is that the new conservative alliance has been much less successful in legislating its programs and policies (since, despite its popularity at the level of national politics, the new conservatism seems weaker at the level of local and state elections). Ironically, its major effects have come through the executive's control over the state apparatus: through a refusal to allocate budgeted funds and through appointments to various state agencies (including, most frighteningly, the Supreme Court). Through executive and judicial action, it has selectively strengthened or weakened, regulated or deregulated various aspects of social life. It has also been successful through secret, if not illegal, executive orders and actions. One immediate consequence of this unique form of influence has been the decided absence of public debates about many policies and proposals, except in the context of already enacted decisions or scandals. This has made it more difficult to organize a highly visible set of struggles aimed directly against the hegemonic Right on a wide-scale and permanent basis. Even the marginalized and oppressed populations have been largely incapable of organizing an oppositional alliance, or even of producing popular oppositional discourses.

Finally, consider the figure of Ronald Reagan as the first president who embodied the sentiment, passion and ideology of the new conservatism. A great deal of the popular support for the new conservative alliance was organized around the personal popularity, power and image of the president. And a large part of the work of holding the various fractions of the ruling bloc together was accomplished through the figure of Reagan. In fact, although Bush's victory in 1988 continues the Republican control of the White House and the hegemony of the new conservative alliance, it is not at all clear that the balance of power within the alliance has remained unchanged. Bush's administration is largely staffed by regular Republican party bureaucrats rather than representatives of the various New Right fractions. Bush is, in the worst sense of the term, a cold war bureaucrat, with little direct and immediate appeal to any of the major fractions. A recent column by Richard Berke in the New York Times carried the headline: "Conservatives content with Bush, but not policies."[13] In the past year, there have been serious breaks within the alliance, between the new conservatives, the old-line conservatives, and the New Right, over such issues as the Iraq war, the budget and even the significance of the 1990 election results.

Even today, the source of Reagan's popularity and political success remains unclear (although his popularity was never as great as it was often felt or represented at any particular moment[14]). Nor was his relationship to the hegemony of the Right ever direct and straightforward. Reagan was neither the founder of, nor the most articulate spokesperson for, nor even always a representative of, the policies and ideologies of the new conservatism. He was, metaphorically, their celebrity spokesperson, harking back to a day when people assumed that an endorsement meant a real commitment to the product. If he lost a battle, it did not diminish his position. If he

acted in ways that contradicted his image or his public posture, his power remained intact. In fact, it was never clear what his image was for it was full of ideological and personal contradictions. Reagan was an anticommunist who helped construct a second detente; a militarist who negotiated a disarmament treaty; a free-enterprise capitalist whose administration often intervened directly into the market; a moralist whose administration was riddled with scandal and dishonesty; a strongly profamily father whose own family was the source of scandals; a strong leader who often seemed unprepared and even incapable of actually managing the reins of state; an intelligent man who consistently confused movies and realities, forgetting not only the details of U.S. military and foreign policy, but even the facts of his own biography; a sincere man who was often exposed as having lied to his public.

Perhaps the source of his popularity was his relation to popular culture and daily life. He was the living realization of every elitist intellectual's worst nightmare, the living proof that their disdain for the popular imagination was justified: a television star as president. Reagan never articulated a national project, never constructed a coherent historical (or even imaginary) vision of American glory which could define a project of restoration. His different visions were at best composed of bits and pieces of history. But what may be most significant is that his images of America were always taken from popular culture and daily life: whether appeals to the heroism enacted in Hollywood movies or to the ongoing struggles of families attempting to survive and succeed. Reagan, whether considering issues of policy or of identity, was apparently untroubled by the difference between public and private, fact and fiction.

Reagan—and consequently, to some extent, the ruling bloc he stood in for—did not stand outside of the formations of popular taste and popular culture. They were as much implicated within the distribution of popular taste as the audiences to which they spoke. Its spokespersons (even the most elitist, like William Bennett, who went from education secretary to government drug czar) were often more comfortable quoting Bob Dylan, the Beachboys or Bruce Springsteen than posing as representatives of the elitist canon they

defended. Yet, at the same time, they were actively involved in policing and even attacking, not the media per se, so much as the forms and specific texts of popular culture. It is in this specific weighting of and relationship to the popular that the new conservatism struggles to constitute, not a popular elitism, but an elitism of and within the popular—a populist elitism. It is less a matter of the ideological meanings of popular culture than of their material distribution, the ways they are presented and used, how they are taken up, and the forms of people's commitments to them. Popular culture becomes the ground, the tactics and the first stake of hegemonic struggle.

THE "STRATEGIES" OF THE NEW CONSERVATISM

All of this suggests that, in some ways, the struggle for a new conservative hegemony in the U.S. operates differently from, and on a different ground than, its related struggle in Great Britain. Rather than attempting to win the minds of the nation, there is a struggle over its heart and body. This project works at the intersections of politics, everyday life and popular culture. The question is how people's affect—their attention, volition, mood, passion—is organized, disciplined, mobilized and ultimately put into the service of specific political agendas. Here the struggle for hegemony foregrounds popular culture and languages; it attempts to transform popular mattering maps and the nature and sites of authority in contemporary life. It operates on the very ground on which affect and politics are linked together, rather than on the terrain of ideology and common sense. In this contest, *culture leads politics.*

I am proposing a disjunction between two hegemonic sites: the rearticulation of common sense and the reconstruction of a "national popular." When Gramsci spoke of the "national popular" as a primary field in which hegemonic power is constructed, at least sometimes he referred to the collection of material cultural practices which were taken to constitute both the common culture of the people, and a national identity.[15] That is, what novels, films, etc.

do a particular people consume and how is this assemblage itself articulatable to a national identity? In this sense, the national popular is directly connected to struggles over the shape and deployment of cultural formations and apparatuses, over how they empower particular population fractions and cultural practices.

The new conservative alliance recognized (or more accurately, articulated) the national crisis in affective rather than economic or ideological terms. The crisis is the product of a lack of passion, of the fact that people do not care enough about the values they hold to do "what is necessary." It is a crisis of nihilism which, while not restructuring ideological beliefs, has undermined the ability to organize effective action. Americans are not working hard enough—at their jobs, in their families, for their nation, or in the service of their values. The struggles to put a new conservatism into place, insofar as they represent a partially successful hegemonic moment, do not begin by restructuring commonsense assumptions about the world. They are largely built on a generally shared mistrust of common sense; they use ideological differences to redistribute the passions of popular commitment. Instead, they restructure people's investments in the sites of the popular. Thus, for example, Reaganism did not reconstruct an ideology of anticommunism; if anything it (unintentionally?) parodied a taken for granted ideology which had lost its powerful affective resonance. Precisely by rendering the explicit ideology irrelevant—no one could take it too seriously—Reaganism made it possible again to affectively invest in it. This is neither anticommunism as a political platform nor as an ideological interpretation, but as an emotionally empowering state. This perhaps explains why it was so easy to dispense with it, both nationally and from the conservative platform.

This vision of the hegemonic project of the new conservatism challenges two common assumptions: that the struggle is a political one seeking control of the state; and that it operates primarily by redeploying classist, racist, homophobic, masculinist and nationalist ideologies. In one sense, I do not want to disagree with either of these. It is certainly true that the new conservatism has redeployed ideological differences in a very powerful way. And it is certainly

true that these are having significant and often devastating consequences on many fractions of the population. Yet these appeals are often contradictory (e.g., not only around race but, even more obviously, around sex). More importantly, their success has been too easy, especially given that so many people explicitly oppose these forms of ideological subordination. Nor can one overlook the fact that these ideological appeals have been extremely visible, almost blatent (as in Bush's election appeals to racism), but at the same time their material reality seems to remain hidden. However, too often, this is taken to suggest one of two analyses: Either the conservatives, having won political dominance, are now moving to eliminate cultural resistance. Or, in the attempt to hide the economic misery resulting from their policies, the conservatives are attempting to distract the public's attention by turning it to ideological issues. But one must look elsewhere for an explanation of the power and effects of these ideological tactics.

The assumption that the new conservative alliance has been primarily a political group seeking to control the state apparatuses is concisely stated by Patrick Buchanan, who calls upon conservatives "to wage a cultural revolution in the 90s as sweeping as the political revolution in the 80s."[16] Again, I believe this is too simple, for the fact of the matter is that the conservatives have won and held political power only by waging a cultural war. It is true that most of their energies have been directed at political institutions and only recently have they turned their resources toward cultural institutions (such as universities, museums, etc.). But it would be a mistake to identify the visible targets of the new conservative alliance with its weapons and strategies. Control of the state enabled the conservatives to accomplish many specific tasks, and gave them an important base of operations. It also gave them privileged access to the institutions of public opinion, in response to which one needs to reintroduce a good dose of conspiracy and manipulation theory. The public is being lied to and events are apparently quite consciously selectively described and reported. One need not assume any intentionality on the part of the news media in this process; it is rationalized in the terms of the close relations between popular sentiment and sales on

the one hand and between the press and the state bureaucracy (as sources of information) on the other. The result is not only that it is increasingly difficult to differentiate between political reporting and human interest stories, but also that the line between facts and statements is increasingly ignored (e.g., "the President denies . . ." becomes a story without a description of the charges). But the apparent success of such manipulation cannot be explained by falling back on images of the masses as intrinsically manipulatable, as cultural and ideological dopes. In fact, vast numbers know or assume that they are being lied to, or else they seem not to care.

This is precisely the paradox at the heart of contemporary U.S. politics and of the new conservatism's successes. A large proportion of the population is outraged by at least some of what is going on, yet—with the exception of those active on the Right—they remain largely inactive and uncommitted. There is a feeling of helplessness: what can anyone do? Even if you could get enough people involved, would it do any good? And if it did, then the whole thing would no doubt be quickly corrupted by its own success. When people do protest or struggle, it is often so specific and local that it cannot be mobilized into a larger national alliance. The depoliticization of the population, its disinvestment from active political issues and struggles—its apathy, as it were—is very real and I believe that it has to be constantly produced. This is at least one crucial element within the contemporary hegemonic struggle.

In fact, controlling the state may not be a necessary condition for the current conservative hegemony. I am aware that this sounds rather strange, and I do not mean to suggest either that the new conservative alliance does not want state power or that there are not devastating consequences of the alliance's use of the state apparatuses. But the question of how it has achieved and maintained this control has to be considered. If the new conservatism can accomplish its victory directly within the space of culture and everyday life, it will have already won the terrain on which any democratic state, no matter who controls it and with what ideology, must operate. The new conservatism is an attempt to reconstitute the very ground— and hence the possibility—of American life. It is an attempt to restructure all of the planes and domains of people's lives, all of the institutions and practices of the social formation; it is an attempt to reconstruct the very meaning of America and the vectors of its future. To this end, it employs a vast array of institutions and apparatuses, popular discourses and public movements, individuals and social groups, most of which exist outside of the space of the state.

The paradox described above can be rewritten: precisely by repoliticizing and re-ideologizing all of the social relations and cultural practices of everyday life, the new conservatism is effectively depoliticizing a large part of the population. It is creating a "demilitarized zone" within everyday life through a series of "strategies" directed at the national popular. This is a hegemonic struggle carried on through a redistribution of the cultural sites of people's affective investment, aimed in part, but only in part, at a reconstruction of their political investment in the nation. A struggle over the places and spaces of everyday life is articulated into the conjunctural relations of power. By reducing the popular to structures of common sense, and the social formation to a distribution of ideological subjects, theorists of hegemony often ignore the possibility of hegemony operating through systems of identification and belonging other than the normalizing systems of identity and difference, including those with which people traditionally distinguish political possibilities: Republican and Democrat, liberal and conservative, communist and anti-communist.

My fear is that this struggle to reconstruct and reorganize the structures of everyday life may have been more successfully established than the Left optimistically assumes; and it has been established elsewhere than where the Left pessimistically assumes. The Left may be losing ground to the nihilism of postmodernity, or to the commodification of late capitalism, or to the ideological conservatism of political positions. But these depend on another set of battles over the affective possibilities of political life, and unless the Left begins to examine the mechanisms and consequences of this contest, it will be unable to struggle against it.

Here an entirely different set of questions arise: How are cultural practices deployed into hegemonic struggles? How can popular cul-

ture be a strategic weapon in, as well as the ground of, hegemonic struggles? How can the reconfiguration of cultural spaces, places and tempos itself become a principle of the rearticulation of structures of power? How are the dominant structures of power constituted and put into place? By questioning the ways in which culture is articulated to economic and political struggles, I want to map some of the ways in which, in the contemporary context, popular culture is articulated against itself and in favor of specific economic and political relations. I am interested in how a certain kind of apathy is actively being produced as the necessary ground for further political, economic and social transformations. This project cannot be read off of the ideological struggles of culture, nor even from the politics of cultural trends. It involves the rearticulation of the politics of ownership, anchorage and territorialization by which new maps are established on top of the dispersed cultural field. I want to identify three "strategies" which have carried this project forward, although I do not assume that they are the product of intentional efforts by the new conservative alliance. The Right has not created them, but it is working with and on them, attempting to place them in the service of their own project and to articulate their effects.

The first involves appropriating the territorializing logic of the rock formation to produce a frontier which works as a differentiating machine. The frontier as an image has always been part of America's social imaginary, for it has defined the open-endedness of its identity; it has been the always uncertain location of the American dream. A frontier is a border which can be transgressed and colonized; it is something to be crossed into another space. The postmodern frontier, inscribed by and on popular culture, defines an impermeable yet ambiguous gap between the livable and the unlivable, the possible and the impossible, the real and the unreal. Its ambiguity is the result of the uncertainty of which side of the frontier is the site of a positive investment. It distributes people and practices (and the investments that connect them) in a specific way. It divides the population by identifications, locations and investments rather than identities and differences. No enemy is constructed, but those who apparently live on the other side of the frontier, within entirely different maps are excluded from certain relations. Similarly, cultural practices are distributed in such a way that neither time nor space is available for those located outside the popular—for the non- and the un-popular.

The second strategy involves reinvesting particular sites along the frontier with authority. For as much as the new conservatism may appropriate the postmodern sensibility of the rock formation, it does not assent to the particular mattering maps which it offers. Instead, it re-ideologizes particular identities, relations and practices. For example, a commitment to "the family" becomes the measure of one's existence within the properly "American." Similarly, "addiction" becomes a powerful, negatively charged activity which can authoritatively explain a broad range of events and reconfigure people's everyday lives. But in each case, the meaning of these sites remains undefined, for it is less a case of constructing new mattering maps than of using these maps to construct the lines of the differentiating machine. The ideological values of the Right produce "affective epidemics" which reestablish the authority of the Right to speak for others while making it difficult if not impossible to locate the source of that authority. By constructing a mobile authority, the frontier is reconstituted as a constantly changing map of everyday life and authority.

Finally, the territorializing-differentiating machine is made into a new form of machine, a "disciplined mobilization," which puts the excluded under erasure. It is not so much a question of what the specific points on the frontier mean but of the context of possibility they construct, the parameters of mobility and stability they enable. The frontier becomes the limit of the lines of flight of the rock formation, bending them back onto the formation itself, creating everyday life as a closed space with no exterior. The disciplined mobilization creates its own "disappeared," replacing the terror of those who have been made to disappear with the depoliticization of those who remain within the reconfigured geography of everyday life. For not only are those outside of everyday life denied any reality, but the reality of power outside of everyday life is also erased. The disciplined mobilization is the final realization of rock's nightmare—

imprisoned within everyday life, without promise of an outside. The frontier is transformed from something which is crossed in order to enter into another space into a self-enclosing interiority with no exteriority. The territorializing machine of rock has been rearticulated, through a series of strategies, into an apparatus of power or, more particularly, an apparatus of disempowerment and depoliticization.

I do not mean to claim that these strategies tell the complete story about the increasing conservatism of the United States, for they only describe one of its conditions of possibility. A more complete analysis would have to examine how this popular depoliticization is itself articulated to the ideological and economic work of the new conservative alliance. It would have to examine how different historical forces, including commodification, fragmentation, religion, etc., articulate each other and the conjuncture. But I am concerned here only with the strategies by which the "normal" is being regulated and reconstructed within a particular political trajectory, in a movement toward the Right. For the moment, I will content myself with examining this aspect of the move to the right. Together, the three strategies describe a set of historical events which, whether consciously manipulated by the new conservatives or not, are remaking the geography of power by remaking the maps of people's affective possibilities. Precisely by rearticulating specific practices and attitudes—attacking them, appropriating them, moving them somewhere else—an entire affective organization (popular formation) is being transformed and transported, at least in part, to the right. The new conservatism is built upon the possibility of using the contemporary crisis of authority to define its own credibility; it operates on and within the popular, or more specifically, on and within the contradictions of the contemporary popular sensibilities. The next three chapters address these strategies directly.

10

HEGEMONY AND THE POSTMODERN FRONTIER

I want to return to the question of how the United States constructed its own sense of identity in the postwar years. In particular, how was a boundary drawn which could mark its difference from the rest of the world? Traditionally, the answer to this question has assumed the construction of an external boundary separating the U.S. from some external threat, usually communism. This was, after all, the power behind the rhetoric of containment and contamination which so pervaded postwar popular culture and political discourse.[1] While I do not want to dispute the importance of this construction, problems remain: Why would the conservatives, at least since the end of the 1960s, take the leading role in dismantling the cold war? This does seem to be against the apparent interests of the powerful military-economic alliance which provided so much of their support. It also threatened what had been one of its most successful rhetorical appeals (e.g., Reagan's big bear waiting to come out of the forest). Part of the answer surely depends upon understanding the tensions not only within the new conservative alliance but also between the political and economic agendas of the various conservative fractions. But it depends as well on the failure, after the collapse of McCarthyism, of such a boundary to function internally. The fact is that the various rhetorical efforts to construct a new external enemy (e.g., the Arab world, the economic threat of Japan and the vague military threat of the "irrational" and uncontrollable "third world") have failed to take hold of the popular imagination for more than just a

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IDEOLOGY AND
AFFECTIVE EPIDEMICS

If the new conservatism depoliticizes politics, it also repoliticizes everyday life. The struggle over the place of politics is extended by transforming it into a struggle over the politics of place. The new conservative alliance's efforts to link itself—both positively and negatively—with the postmodern frontier is often eclipsed by its various fractions' attempts to restructure the field of values. This is not merely an ideological question of the meanings articulated to specific social experiences, identities and relations. The second strategy of the new conservative hegemony involves a struggle over the particular places that carry some weight, that pull people's discourse, actions and lives along certain vectors and away from others.

The success of the new conservatism depends on an effort to disarticulate people's (and the nation's) investments from the mattering maps of postwar popular culture. This struggle to change what matters in the U.S. depends upon the very sensibilities which made postwar pop culture different and which gave it its central place in our lives. If the new conservatism strategically attacks the affective investment in the rock formation, it also attacks rock's affective authority. It attempts to replace the various mattering maps which the rock formation put into place and the specific sites of investment and authority which it empowered: youth, pleasure/fun, the body, the celebration of change and experience, sex and drugs, the public declaration of certain forms of alienation and displeasure, etc. As Hugo Burnham, ex-member of the Gang of Four, describes it, one

gets "old" in the rock formation when "the rest of your life becomes more important than 'rocking out.' Growing old . . . means accepting that preserving one's health, brain cells, job, marriage, etc. is more important than (but not entirely at the expense of) being or doing your thing . . ."[1] The new conservatism attempts to control the spaces within which people operate, to incorporate them back (were they ever actually there? did they every actually escape?) into the socially sanctioned places of social relations (e.g., the family, school, etc.) It attempts to redistribute the spaces and places of the rock formation in which, for example, the family is a highly circumscribed site surrounded by a multiplicity of spaces defined as other to or outside of the family. This structure challenges the very specific forms of investment which the new conservatism would put into place. There is a very real antagonism between the two configurations of everyday life.

This is more than an ideological question because it involves the very possibility and nature of authority, of who or what has the right to speak for others, to stand in their place, to construct their mattering maps. The affective "crisis" of America is a crisis of authority—not merely that specific figures and sites of authority have been challenged but that the very authority of authority has itself become suspect. Whether or not there is a crisis, which seems to imply some preexisting moment of normality, the postmodern sensibility certainly made the rather sudden perception of a crisis real. The new conservatism has to struggle, not only to strategically reconstruct authority in certain dimensions, places and times, but also to reinvest the very possibility of authority in a way which will protect it from the constant deconstructive cynicism of the postmodern sensibility.

The new conservatism produces its own ideological places—affective magnets—which organize people's mattering maps. These maps not only represent a coherent system of values but also organize and prioritize people's investments. Many of these valued places apparently come from other, sometimes older, sometimes competing formations. Their importance has often been determined elsewhere (e.g., by demographic or economic changes). But their location within the new conservative maps changes their inflection, and

increasingly they appear to belong to these maps. Any investment in these charged sites seems inevitably to implicate people with the new conservatism which claims ownership, not only of the particular site, but of the field in which it identified.

This produces an increasingly common experience: once someone enters the field, they find themselves almost uncontrollably situated on or at least pulled toward "the right," regardless of their ideological relations (or lack of relations) with the Right. For example, a friend who recently became a father described feeling as though every time he speaks of his concerns as a parent, he "sounds" like a conservative. It is not merely that the Right seems to "own" the discourse of the family, but that the discourse itself, which belongs to no one, pulls one affectively over to the right. It is as if the affective investment called an ideological position into its place as its (illusory but necessary) alibi.

It seems that the new conservatives mobilize ideology to restructure the mattering maps of everyday life, redistributing the places that matter and redefining their political inflections. On this view, the new conservatism is an ideological struggle over the specific content or meaning which surrounds people once they are called to the appropriate places. But this does not explain how people are called to these places, nor how they are "trapped" within them despite their political and ideological disagreements. I want to suggest that while the new conservatives see themselves engaged in a series of ideological battles, they are not in control of the effects of their practices. Their strategy entails a much greater challenge to the very structure of authority and everyday life, for what are called by these magnetic sites are not individuals but other places on people's mattering maps. The specific magnets function, not as stable sites of investment, but as structural principles which discipline the very nature and possibility of mattering maps. They have no clear or single meaning or identity. They operate less as references to some image or value, to specific "places" within which particular investments can be made and specific activities or relations enacted, than as "transit lines" which control the trajectories and define the spaces of everyday life. They direct people's movements, constructing lines

of flight across the space of their mattering maps. This strategy goes beyond recognizing the structure of investment created by the rock formation; it reorganizes the very possibilities of structuring such investments. It creates a new kind of mattering map which depends less on specific investments (places) than on the assumption that any stable set of investments is impossible (given that people live along the postmodern frontier). And it make it extremely difficult to contest specific organizations and values.

Such ideological sites work as "affective epidemics." Rather than an organization differentiated by places and spaces, such epidemics produce everyday life as a series of trajectories or mobilities which, while apparently leading to specific concerns, actually constantly redistribute and disperse investments. Affective epidemics define empty sites which, as they travel, can be contextually rearticulated. These mobile sites are constantly fetishized, invested with values disproportionate to their actual worth. Their most important function is to proliferate wildly so that, like a moral panic,[2] once an affective epidemic is put into place, it is seen everywhere, displacing every other possible investment. But unlike moral panics, such epidemics are not always negatively charged and they have no specific focal point of identity, working instead through structures of identification and belonging. Mattering places are transformed into vectors so that the concerns and investments of real social history become the ruins of a displaced, perhaps even misplaced, paranoia. In response to a condition that has been often characterized as "cultural weightlessness,"[3] the new conservatism establishes a daily economy of saturated panics. This leaves only two possibilities: either fanaticism or sentimentality, both struggling to make a difference within a condition of affective excess.

I will give a few examples of these epidemics. The most obvious is the war on drugs, or more generally on addiction. It is not just that one suddenly sees drugs everywhere, as the new universal culprit. More importantly, as soon as "drugs" are found, nothing else seems to matter. All other questions or concerns have to be set aside, disappearing in the face of the drug epidemic. The need to end drug use erases not only the poverty and alienation which leads people to

it, but also the economic and political interests which have and continue to sustain the drug traffic. In the name of protecting people from drugs, individual liberties can be sacrificed. As soon as drugs or alcohol are mentioned, the original crime which may have led to an investigation takes a back seat. In the name of eradicating the drug trade from Black ghettos, one can ignore the contradictions that operate within this illegal economy, and the further devastation that removing drug money might do to these neighborhoods. Political careers take a second place to drug use; in fact, everything takes second place to the implied threat of drugs, as the epidemic spreads. Even our most basic standards of compassion and decency: for example, in the shadow of the drug panic, some states have proposed bringing back public—televised—whipping as an adjunct, not even an alternative, to prison. And typically, once such epidemics have been deployed, they continue to operate whether the panic continues or not. Thus, the attack on addiction has not decreased, despite the fact that the number of Americans who rated drugs as the "number one domestic problem" fell from 64% to 10% in just over a year.[4]

The most powerful affective epidemic in the contemporary U.S. is organized around and across the family. The power and presence of images of the family depend in part on the fact that there is little content to what is increasingly seen as a threatened, besieged space rather than a specific place. The family is suddenly everywhere, appearing, for no reason, in a wildly unpredictable range of places: including films (e.g., *Dick Tracy*, *Pretty Woman*), television programs (e.g., the new westerns such as *Paradise*) and ads (e.g., mothers take charge in ads for both Arsenio Hall and Richard Simmons). Even popular music seems to be paying more attention to the family.[5] At the same time, the contemporary images are so varied and often, in the best postmodern tradition, strange (e.g., the popularity of *The Simpsons* and the cult status granted to *Twin Peaks*).

Traditional discourses and debates around the family centered on issues of the social arrangements in the home, and the nuclear family (mommy, daddy, child) was taken to define the family as a site worthy of investment. But today a minority of "families" in the U.S. fit the model of the nuclear family. Contemporary images and

discourses of the family do not rely on such normative images. While the initial formulation of the "crisis" of the family in the 1970s was often framed in terms of the collapse of the nuclear family, this was less true of the 1980s. It is not a matter of social relationships but of, as a recent Gitano ad puts it, of "the spirit of the family." The family has come to define the language in which other relationships have to be made to matter; "familialization" frames more and more of contemporary social space. Even the discourses of AIDS groups are increasingly organized around the validity of homosexual relations as "families."

Similarly, the range of familial arrangements has become utterly unpredictable. For example, the family which is at the center, both narratively and ideologically, of *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* is composed of an aging rat and four adolescent turtles. The family of *Alien Nation* often explicitly criticizes contemporary values and disrupts gender and sexual roles. The family no longer has an identity which can be protected. What we are dealing with, as Arthur Silverblatt has described it, are places "for convenient, disposable, fast famil[ies]."[6]

Consequently, it is no longer a matter of "the family in crisis." Rather, all social problems are increasingly linked or rather reduced, not to individual failures, but to the absence of the family as a determining force. It is not the structure or state of the family that is at stake, but its affective power to redirect our investments and movements. After all, to talk about the family in crisis would inevitably raise questions currently excluded from the possibilities of daily talk, about the material conditions and suffering of families and especially children. The epidemic of the family somehow obviates the need for a more critical relation to the family itself. The family in the U.S. has increasingly come to be the billboard of the possibility of security, displacing the home, which too many can no longer afford anyway.

The family has become a life-style choice, representing little more than a set of experiences (e.g., consider the statement that one wants to have a child because it is an experience that shouldn't be missed). The rhetoric of women's biological time-clock is a part of this larger

formation. One has only a certain period of time in which to choose to have the experience of children and, if missed, the opportunity is lost. There is little space in these images to discuss the desirability of such choices in the contemporary world. As Ellen Willis puts it, babies have become "a socially acceptable source of joy."[7] The debates over the pressure on women to marry (and whether it is necessary or even possible) have continuously moved back and forth, allowing no conclusion other than that women are and should be constantly panicked. One of the characters in *thirty something* has a nightmare that she is on *Geraldo* (the talk show) as an example of a woman over thirty who has been "left on the shelf." And Madonna, in her self-produced concert documentary *Truth or Dare*, constantly chats about how she wanted to surround herself with emotionally crippled people so that she could fulfill her need and desire to be a mother.

The new family is at the center of the nation, but unlike the 1950s, the new family is not child-centered. As a life-style, it represents a consumer practice (what Ehrenreich calls "suburban pastoralism"[8]) which is, quite simply, diametrically opposed to the consumerism of the rock formation and its contemporary negative rearticulations (e.g., the yuppie or the postmodern youth of *Less Than Zero*). On the other hand, the increasing public debates about the need for "open adoption" place the family squarely within an ambiguous biology, leaving the parameters of parental identity always undecidable.

But the family does even more. Reagan's rhetoric redefined and relocated the first settlers and the founding experience of "America": the country's origins were located neither in the individual pioneer (Turner's frontier hypothesis) nor in the founding of communities (Dewey's democratic theory) but in the union of families. As the new primary unit of social definition, the family displaces the individual as the site of rights and liberties. This enables an attack on individual civil liberties and the constitutional protections of the Bill of Rights. In the name of the family, the space of individual rights can be sacrificed, even though it apparently violates Americans' supposed ideological commitment to individualism. Similarly, the

child becomes nothing but a position within the space of the family. Tipper Gore wants the family to control the possibilities of childhood, rearticulating the family as the source of social discipline (e.g., the increasing turn from a concern with child and teen suicide to a paranoia over teen crimes, from drug dealing to gang wars and murder) and even of corporal punishment. The current spectacle of child abuse trials, not coincidentally, tends to focus on institutional abuses, leaving unexamined the concrete places of the family as sites of child abuse. Not only is the latter hidden, but the rhetoric of the failure of the public institutions regarding childhood ensures that the child must always be returned into the family.

There is even an increasing propensity to expand the space of the family beyond that of consumption and morality. The home can colonize all of our activities: it can become the site of both cultural production (as in *America's Funniest Home Videos*) and material production (in the return to piece production and sweatshops). Such expansions of the family are legitimated by replaying and rearticulating an old and familiar theme: the brutality and hostility of the outside world. At the same time, contemporary discourses gleefully appropriate such images of brutality (e.g., the increasing use of images of business as a battle between animals: one ad casts competition as a shadow play of the *good* wolf baring his fangs over the helpless sheep). *People* described the 1980s as "the decade of brutishness unchained, 10 perilous years when the whole of public life took on the atmosphere of a slam dance being cheered by a hockey crowd."[9] The nation learned to survive "free-floating aggravation" of public life: "the flower generation tore tradition to shreds, but in the 1980s some magic sewing machine has stitched it all up again."[10] That magic sewing machine was the family.

Other epidemics are constructed around the vector of the family: for example, the contemporary fascination with health. As in classical Greece, the health of the body has become the visible sign of the worth of the individual. Health has, in its epidemic form, become a moral issue. To fail to invest in the health of the body is to forsake any moral worth. The panic continues to spread through the necessary attempt to keep up with the constant flow of information

about what is good for you and what is not. But it is impossible, for the information continually changes and contradicts itself. One invests in the body, not for the sake of the pleasures that it may produce, but simply to "be healthy" (which is not quite the same as feeling healthy). It demands an increasing vigilance over one's activities and an increasing commitment to activities that have no other purpose than to prolong the ability to participate in those same activities (or perhaps in the activities such as work which provide you with the leisure time to continue to seek the healthy body). The health epidemic can also be seen as a rearticulation of the investment in youth. Ads proliferate which announce, simultaneously, the end of childhood and the beginning of health as pleasure. For example, in one ad (for Doritos), a group of kids announce that "once you hit thirty, your life is shot," but their declaration is followed by a series of images of over-30s engaging in a variety of "youthful" activities.

The economy has itself become a site of an affective epidemic. The debt, for example, whenever invoked, strikes terror into the hearts and minds of the population. It leads them to take positions and actions that, at least many of them claim, they do not wish to take. But they have no choice. The debt is itself a complex issue, both in terms of its causes and its effects. Unlike the threat of inflation, the debt has little *direct* impact on consumer practices and life-style choices (while it has a profound impact on the international economy and, most especially, on the economies of third world countries, for it takes money out of circulation and relocates it back within the comfortable boundaries of the U.S.). But this is not what panics Americans; it is rather the concept of owing someone so much money. Of course, this is an entirely inadequate model of how contemporary finance economies work, but that does not seem to matter. It is not an ideological problem but an affective epidemic.

On the other side of the economy, consumerism itself has been transformed into a purely affective investment which incorporates everything into its spaces. Rather than an activity, it becomes an investment in itself. One invests in capital. One no loner consumes to keep up with the Jones, or even to be different from them. One no longer buys a dream. Consumption becomes an end in itself

(e.g., television games shows in which you "try to outshop your opponents") and shopping takes on a weight all its own. It has become a vector along which people invest in their own lives—buying themselves, as it were, investing in themselves as capital. They no longer define themselves through their relations with or differences from others (whether people or capital). They do not shop for value, or even for symbols of status, but as a space of mobility. Consumerism does not signal or produce mobility; it is identical with mobility. The consumer moves among the other commodities. Consumerism marks an affective investment in capital, an investment within which people are themselves located as both the subject and the agent. Consumerism provides something like a moment of stability insofar as it offers a sense of control, even though its stability is only the stability of mobility, and its control is only that of moving in the spaces opened by capitalism.

Even "America"—the nation itself—has been transformed from a specific site of investment into the vector of an affective epidemic. It is not merely an instance of "nihilism masquerading as patriotism"[11] but of the necessary erasure of any meaning that might inform the sign of "America." The nation operates in the future perfect tense. It has become a dispersed sign of investment which constructs a "distanced and mobile patriotism" that nevertheless functions as an immediate investment. America is reduced so that it can be held up as an object, a spectacle to itself, held in awe. Whether on the movie screen or in contemporary writing, America is inevitably reduced to its detail without any claim of typicality. In fact, its images are increasingly images of the chicness of its hickness, of the ordinariness of its weirdness and the weirdness of its ordinariness. (*Twin Peaks* and the films of Jonathan Demme are only the clearest examples of this.) It is the heartland which, always on a small scale (none of the grand scale of *The Way the West Was Won* here) comes to speak softly about our increasing obsession with the nation, not as a search for identity or commonality but as a desire to be transfixed by our own self-conscious artificiality.[12]

For the first time, just as the myth of America is fading around the world, Americans seem to treat America as the rest of the world

treated it at least since the end of the Second World War, when the U.S. became a world power without actually intending or desiring to. America is an icon of empty mobility (captured in the image of consumerism). A panic is organized around the fear of America's own Americanization. Americans have traditionally had little sense of time or history except in the form of the nation's transcendental future. As this has collapsed, as the American dream has dissolved into the postmodern frontier, the nation has been left with only an empty paranoia about America. Consequently, without knowing what it is they are to defend, people can only defend its symbols— emptied of any meaning or difference: the Constitution, the Statue of Liberty, the flag, and even its language. And these symbols, wherever they are, become little more than the signs of a staunch defense against something that they cannot name, something that they know was not supposed to happen to them, but has already happened: we have become American. The new conservatism does not offer a new definition of America. It does not relocate its center. It disperses it once again into its regional voices, while refusing the logical consequence of multiculturalism. The new conservatism locates people within a space in which they can neither challenge the embodied meaning of the nation, nor offer an alternative. They can only try to escape the empty spaces of its power as a seductive investment.

This is a nationalism with no content. America as an affective epidemic has no entailments, although it has powerful consequences. If America does not stand for anything except the appropriate and even necessary vector of its population's nationalism, it becomes impossible to argue against any action taken in its name. This is not the same as "my country right or wrong" for that still allows the possibility of moral judgments which transcend nationalism, even if they are always to be refused. Reagan and Rambo mark a nationalism which is indifferent to any moral difference. Thus, even while there may always be moral discourses in this new nationalism (e.g, Rambo is defending freedom; Arnold Schwarzenegger in *Predator* is a mercenary who only takes on rescue missions and refuses assassinations, so he has to be tricked into this one), they

remain contentless, with no criteria by which any instance can be judged. Consider the conservative morality which justifies children (or anonymous strangers) turning in their parents for drug possession. This affective epidemic constructs an "empty fullness" at the center of the nation which merely guarantees that there is always a center and that it can never be identified. Whatever people's affective response (whether to specific incidents or to broad agendas), there are no grounds on which to imagine constructing an oppositional nationalism.

The effect of transforming the terrain of ideological sites into affective epidemics is that it is no longer possible to treat them as the occasion for public debates. Questions of fact and representation become secondary to the articulation of people's emotional fears and hopes. This partly explains the new conservatism's "ideological" successes: they have been able to control specific vectors without having to confront the demands of policy and public action. Similarly, they have been able to construct issues with enormous public passion (such as the current attacks on universities, curricula and "political correctness") without leaving any space for public engagement.

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THE DISCIPLINED MOBILIZATION OF EVERYDAY LIFE

While there have been important studies of the politics of contemporary culture, little effort has been made to draw the lines that connect culture to the specific projects of the new conservative alliance and the larger struggles over power taking place in the contemporary world.[1] Such studies, whatever their theoretical or political commitments, have generally reproduced analyses offered over the past century: the narcotization of the population; escapism, if not manipulation and deception; the individualization of the social and political; the disappearance of the public; the regulation and disciplinization of the practices of the population. In a sense, all of these are true, but they ignore the specific forms which such strategies may take (e.g., the power of a logic which not only enables deception but makes it reasonable and even desirable). And more importantly, they ignore the ways in which such cultural strategies are themselves deployed by specific historical agencies into hegemonic struggles over the distribution of resources, values and power.

When *People* published its retrospective of the 1980s, the publisher introduced the issue by noting "how much mental and emotional terrain we've covered."[2] That terrain is partly measured by the two strategies I have described: the rearticulation of the postmodern frontier and the construction of affective epidemics. But the real effects of these strategies, and ultimately, I believe, the real source of both contemporary forms of depoliticization and of the increasingly conservative tone of life in the United States, depend upon the

production of a new regime of everyday life. Lefebvre predicted such a strategy: "Modern society tries to control the changes that take place in everyday life . . . To subdivide and organize everyday life was not enough; now it has to be *programmed* . . . to cybernitize society by the indirect agency of everyday life."[3] It is the contemporary form of this control, the attempt to produce "a closed circuit"[4] of everyday life, that defines the third strategy of the new conservatism: not merely the reconstruction and reorganization of everyday life, but the transformation of everyday life into a specific form of structured mobility, a disciplined mobilization. Everyday life becomes the site for and the mode of a new apparatus of power, aimed at depoliticizing significant segments of the population by erasing the lines that connect everyday life to the political and economic realities that are its conditions of possibility. While this opens the possibility of a politics of everyday life, it closes off the possibility of organizing a sustained counter-hegemonic struggle.

This restructuring of the field of power and politics by the operation of a disciplined mobilization resembles the counterculture of the 1960s in some ways. Many segments of the counterculture were less concerned with questions of state and economic policy (Vietnam being the most obvious exception, but even there it was a war which impinged immediately upon the everyday lives of those involved in the protest) than with questions of alienation and life-style. Ultimately, the popular face of the protest movement suggested that the transformation of everyday life would itself lead to a transcendence of both power and politics. The new conservatism might be seen, then, not merely as an attack on the counterculture but as an explicit reversal of its program using the same logic and many of the same strategies. The major political struggles are located within everyday life: they are the matters of the values which our life-styles embody, and questions of state values become largely irrelevant except insofar as they impinge upon, determine or sanction specific everyday values and life-styles. Even economics has to be reduced to images and questions of everyday life; for example, in Reagan's identification of the national economy with that of "the" family. Or consider the recent advertising campaign in which *Fortune* claims to "discuss

business in terms of what matters," and of course, the list of "what matters" could serve as a litany of current images and debates about life-style and values.[5]

As the counterculture was shaped by the rock formation, it is possible to see the new conservative deployment of a disciplined mobilization as an attempt to both disempower and rearticulate the rock formation itself. In chapter 4, I described the abstract structure of daily life (and, by extension, everyday life) as a map of spaces and places, a structured mobility. Places are the sites of stability where people can stop and act, the markers of their affective investments. They define the possibilities of people's identifications and belongings and construct the systems of authority in which they live. Spaces are the parameters of the mobility of people and practices. They define the trajectories along which different groups can travel and the vectors which make different connections possible or impossible. Every organization of places and spaces is constantly being constructed—territorialized—by lines of articulation and escaped—deterritorialized—by lines of flight. In chapter 6, I suggested that the power of music could be located in its ability to produce such structured mobilities, and in its popular formations, mattering maps. The mattering maps of the rock formation privilege mobility and space over stability and place. This is not surprising, given that the rock formation was defined for and by a population which was constructed by being shuttled around, which had no place of its own. Its places were the sites where it could escape the discipline of other places and find the space for its mobility, its rhythms and its dance. Punk not only helped undermine the claim of authenticity (as a site of investment), it also further privileged space over place. Thus, it is not surprising that post-punk rock would so quickly and totally return to its roots in rhythms and dance and turn its melodies and lyrics into little more than sentimental soundtracks.[6]

The increasingly rapid rhythms—both literally and figuratively—of the contemporary versions of the rock formation signal its constant love/hate relationship with the postmodern sensibility which has reinflected its possibilities. This sensibility has undermined its ability to construct anything but the most temporary and contentless sites

of investment and authority, even to the point where the culture increasingly appropriates places taken from the dominant culture which it has traditionally opposed (e.g., rock's turn to the family). The contemporary rock formation only lets one feel at home for a moment. It produces maps of spaces with no places or at least, its places are increasingly called into the service of its spaces, its stabilities into the service of its attempt to continue to find lines of mobility. It is as if mobility had become the only source of empowerment and security available in the face of postmodernity. But the rock formation also produces its own discomfort with this situation. The solution demands a particular resolution of rock's ambivalent relation to everyday life: on the one hand, refusing to leave its comfortable spaces; on the other hand, always producing lines of flight which point to the possibility of another space even as it denies the possibility of transcendence and salvation.

It is this ambivalence which the new conservatism has challenged. By rearticulating rock's structured mobility to a specific hegemonic struggle, it has constructed a different territorialization of everyday life. In this new apparatus of power, the homelessness of the rock formation is normalized. And more importantly, the rock formation's lines of flight are disciplined so that they can no longer point to another space. They must always return into everyday life, reterritorializing themselves without becoming lines of articulation. It is simply that their flight now has to be enclosed within the space of everyday life.

Everyday life is already a reification produced by and as a relation of power. There is no innocent moment when everyday life escapes power. The relations of spaces and places which constitute the maps of everyday lives are the scene in which power enacts itself through apparatuses of territorialization and deterritorialization. A disciplined mobilization is a strategy by which the very possibility of stabilities (identities, authorities) is negated through the reification of mobility and space. A disciplined mobilization transforms everyday life into an apparatus which produces spaces with no places, mobility with no stability, investments with no permanence, belonging with no identity, authority with no legitimation. Once one enters

its spaces, there is no longer a frontier to cross, for even the frontier would constitute the possibility of a place. Instead, everyday life becomes a transit-compulsion in which sites of investment are transformed into epidemics and ultimately into pure mobilities. One can only continue to move along the frontier of everyday life, as along a Moebius strip. There is no longer an outside or an inside, only the constant movement within everyday life itself. Every line of flight which signals the possibility of an outside is stopped at the frontier, bent back upon itself. Lines of flight are deployed in the service of a new territorialization which deterritorializes only the limited space of everyday life. A disciplined mobilization signals the triumph of an unconstrained mobility which is nothing but a principle of constraint. But it is neither individuals nor communities but affective alliances, marked by different durations and intensities, which travel along the Moebius strip.[7]

A disciplined mobilization entails a radical reorganization of the very structure of everyday life in relation to people's sociopolitical existence. It restructures and transforms the very nature of people's affective relationship to the world so that such investments can no longer anchor them into something outside of everyday life. Instead, affective investments only traverse the surfaces of everyday life. Affect now constructs smooth and fluid transit lines along the surfaces of a minimalist configuration of people's everyday environment. The postmodern frontier is narratively transformed: "nihilism with a happy face" has become "nihilism with a happy ending." Survival itself has been renarrativized, for the only affective response to this disciplined mobilization, the only strategy for surviving in this structure of everyday life, is, "Don't worry, be happy"—and keep moving! This can be seen in the design and fashion aesthetics of the 1980s: "The pressure on us to change and change and change again has, in the end, numbed the eye and destroyed the contemporary aesthetic itself."[8]

A disciplined mobilization is a specific structuring of everyday life according to the dictates of a specific struggle for power: deterritorialization itself becomes the form of its territorialization. The places and spaces which constrain mobility disappear in favor of a boundary

which produces a mobility always circling back on itself, always caught within the compulsions of the frontier within which it has been constructed. Perhaps the best embodiment of a disciplined mobilization is Disney World, which, even as it puts business on display, erases corporations (including its own existence). In Disney World, the entire game is to keep moving through its infinitely filled, expanding spaces. Like the growing tourist trade in the U.S., Disney World makes everyday life into a mobile closed display.

Unlike other hegemonic strategies, a disciplined mobilization is neither dialogic nor expansive. It does not seek to construct alliances. It is an organization of social space through a regime of movement or performativity. It is an arational, affective space within which ideological differences make no difference. It need not oppose their continued activity since their affective authority is undermined. If it were ever to be completely realized, if it were ever to occupy the entire social space, people as affective subjects would be completely vulnerable to and within its circuits.[9]

It is at least as dangerous as any temporary victory by a conservative ideology or party because the Left has often acceded to its operation. Consider one of the more interesting and paradoxical political events in recent years: the emergence of left-wing anti-free speech movements. While attempts to limit speech are too often assumed to be implicitly right-wing, the current scene makes obvious the variations within, and the complexities among, such practices. Many of these campaigns are located on college campuses around the country, where the issue is not banning speech that is critical of authority, but rather banning speech which in some way "harms" the atmosphere within which such critical speech can flourish. (Another example is the "boycott" of Andrew Dice Clay. Neither of these is quite the same as the antipornography movement.) There is an increasing call to censor various discourses which undermine the calm, rational and, most importantly, hospitable environment of the academy. In the name of opposing a discursively hostile environment in which various minorities (whether racially, ethnically, sexually or gender marked) are discomfited, some people challenge the right of such obnoxious speech to exist.

Interestingly, the challenge is not made in the terms of an intellectual attack on the position, or on any legal or political ground. Rather, it is offered on the grounds of ensuring that students gain the maximum education possible by making sure that they "feel at home" in school. The question is not framed in terms of whether such obnoxious speech challenges a minority student's existence within the institution; it is enough that it undermines his or her ability to invest themselves, to feel comfortable there. This utterly comprehensible if somewhat politically contradictory position actually transforms the labor of investment, of place-making, into the labor of mobility. Instead of arguing about the politics of language and representation, the debate focuses on people's ability to live and invest in, to move among, the practices of its discursive environment. But by claiming to eliminate the barriers of mobility into and within the place (i.e., the intellectual life and professional training of the university), it also denies the specificity of the investment in the place itself.

The frontier, now defining the boundary of a seemingly unconstrained mobility—unconstrained within the everyday life, entirely constrained by the frontier—is itself transformed from a differentiating machine which excludes the other (yet in the very process reaffirms the other's presence) into an excising machine which erases or "disappears" the other. More accurately, a disciplined mobilization is a machine which performs a double erasure. It erases those living outside of everyday life and the existence of a political terrain outside of everyday life. But if there is nothing outside, no other side, then the frontier is no longer a boundary.

First, it erases those fractions of the population which cannot be located within, and hence dealt within in terms of, the structures of everyday life. It is not merely that contemporary society has condemned a significant portion of the population to existing within a new economic "underclass"; it is also that, to a large extent, those living within everyday life must be blind to their very existence except insofar as their oppression can be presented within the terms of the suffering of everyday life. The underclass can matter only insofar as its collective experience can be measured against that of those within

everyday life; it can never be recognized as a necessary condition of everyday life. It can only be located as both the subject and the object of new organizations of fear and hatred.

Such an erasure is not predicated on any essential identity, or even upon a system of ideological differences. In fact, it operates through inclusion more than exclusion. It is determined instead by whether one is already within the space of everyday life or, by some quirk of fate, can enter into its transit by "buying into" its logic. Once there, "freedom" abounds. But there is little opportunity to enter. In this way, the transit-compulsion of everyday life offers itself as its own principle of existence: the frontier reinscribes itself according to the distribution of the population. If everyday life is a rare thing, historically determined and available only to certain privileged populations, that privilege is no longer identifiable with any traditional social difference. It is not a matter of class, race or gender, but of what segments of the different classes, races and genders have access to, or already exist within, the disciplined mobilization of everyday life. The frontier, then, is not racist, although it puts many different racisms into place; it is not sexist, although it puts many different sexisms into place. These specific, often local, sometimes civil and sometimes violent, forms of racism, sexism and classism proliferate when and where the hostile spaces outside of everyday life challenge its self-enclosedness. But the distance between the frontier and that which remains outside cannot even begin to be measured, and certainly cannot be understood by those within everyday life except according to principles of inequality or caring.

Second, the disciplined mobilization of everyday life secures the erasure of any reality which is outside of its maps. Everyday life expands to encompass all of existence, becoming the entirety of space and the only place. Everything becomes comprehensible only within the mobile terms of everyday experience. Thus, what is erased is the very possibility of the political as a domain which both exceeds and transcends the everyday. Mort and Green, perhaps too naively, note

> rapid changes in time-honoured distinctions between something
> called politics on the one hand and leisure, pleasure and personal

life on the other. That is to say that politics in a formal sense is being challenged by a series of "cultural revolutions" taking place beyond its boundaries . . . Opinion polls and research confirm that "depoliticisation" registers not only a deep pessimism about politics itself, but a growing disengagement of "life" (where people choose to put their energies) from politics.[10]

Too often, descriptions of the contemporary political scene fall back onto general descriptions of the disappearance of public life and civil society, or of the depoliticization of the masses.[11] But such descriptions, however accurate, are also too predictable; their generality guarantees their impotence. Rather than providing a specific understanding of contemporary conservatism, they substitute a mechanical rhetoric which locates the blame elsewhere and fails to find any viable oppositional practice. But the contemporary forms of conservatism are defined by powerful affective lines and practices; moreover, without assuming any single or simple conspiracy, we must nevertheless recognize that such changes are powerfully articulated to specific political agents and agendas.

Many people have noted the similarities between the 1950s and the 1980s; both were characterized by a certain depoliticization of the general population. But few have commented upon the different forms of that depoliticization, and on the different modes by which they were constructed. The 1950s, after all, have to be understood in part in the context of the attempt to construct a culture of consumption in which increasing domestic consumer demand was to fuel continuing economic growth. In terms of this economic project, everyday life was increasingly commodified, treated as little more than a site for the accumulation of commodities. Politics had to be excluded from this realm of existence, and it was: politics was a dangerous game, one which could easily come back to haunt you. Involvement in political activities outside of everyday life (and at the time, there was little sense of a politics within everyday life) was a threatening and potentially terrifying commitment. The terror was not only personal (the threat of public attack and humiliation) but public as well (the threat to the American way of life). But politics had not disappeared. While the depoliticization of the 1950s represented a turn into everyday life, the lines which could take one into

the public realm of politics and the state remained available. And the very possibility of following such lines enabled the emergence of at least some fractions of the counterculture, and produced the almost inevitable split between the youth who followed those lines and their liberal parents. Perhaps everyday life in the 1950s was too seductive in its own right and, in the end, it did lull people into a certain passivity, helped along by a good dose of fear.

Civil society is that space between the domain of the state and economic apparatuses and the domain of private (which is not to say nonsocial) life and experience. It is here that public forms of interaction and cooperation are forged, that individuals and groups find forms of language and association by which they are able to evaluate and struggle to change the social order. In the 1950s, civil society did not disappear, but it was caught in a battle. When it was losing, it was pushed aside, overshadowed by the increasingly safe and seductive preoccupation with an everyday life which was not quite the same as the domain of private life. But occasionally it reappeared to offer possibilities for genuinely public forms of social action and rhetoric (e.g., the civil rights movement, however limited its successes).

But in the 1980s, both civil society and private life have collapsed into the domain of everyday life and, as a result, the very possibility of lines of flight from everyday life into the public arena of state and economic apparatuses is disappearing. It is not just that capitalism or the state has come to dominate civil society or that the languages of civil society (along with those of people's private lives) have been commodified. Rather, it is becoming harder to locate the differences on people's mattering maps. It a very real sense, this exclusion of politics is itself built upon the postmodern refusal of taking things too seriously. It is precisely the sense of helplessness in the face of political and economic relations that justifies the retreat into everyday life; if you can't change the world, change the little piece of it that is within your constant reach. But that reach must be limited, not only to a specific geographic region, but to a specific plane as well. If it is too dangerous to care about the world, too difficult to change it, care about everyday life, change your life-style. Thus, for exam-

ple, even the leader of INFACT (an activist group which actually does enter into battle with economic institutions) defines the enemy in anything but structural terms: "The enemy is not capitalism but the 'abuses' of multinational corporations." She describes her own position as follows: "This isn't a job . . . It's a commitment; it's a life-style . . . that is based on the 'philosophy of living simply,' that makes a statement about how money gets distributed in the world."[12] Political activism is being replaced by "human activism."[13] The distance between life-style (as a statement) and political struggle appears to be disappearing, so that the condition of children living in poverty can be seen as the result of the "lack of responsible parenting."

It is not that politics is privatized but that it disappears from the perspective of those moving within the transits of the everyday life. The place of politics is itself transformed into a space which is inaccessible from everyday life, and hence it remains invisible to those within everyday life. Politics as the realm of governance itself— the issues, interests, complexities and compromises involved in state and economic policy—cannot matter. To put it simply, there is no quicker way to end a conversation or ruin a party these days than to start "talking politics." The worst thing to be labeled is a "politico," not merely because "they" take things so seriously, but because they take seriously things outside the boundaries of everyday life.[14]

It is increasingly common to hear people say that "it takes all their time and energy to get through the day," as if that accounted for their avoidance of politics as well as of the depressing information which might lead them back into politics. It is as if, somehow, people are too involved in everyday life to notice that which shapes it. There seems to be no way out of everyday life, as if maintaining a life-style was a full-time job which absorbed all of people's energy and time. The very practices of everyday life—the speed and direction of their mobilities—seem to lock people into the disciplined mobilization's expanding exclusivities. And the only source of mobility within its circuits is capital itself. As Lefebvre correctly points out, "nowadays everyday life has taken the place of economics,"[15] not only in the sense that it is the object which power struggles to

construct and regulate, but also that it has become the field on which struggles are increasingly confined.

This disappearance of politics, its encapsulation within everyday life, may help to explain the successful mobilization of popular support for the Iraq war. Because the images of the war so saturated people's lives in real time, they quickly became fascinating, banal and even comfortable rather than horrifying. This is not a question of whether the image "accurately" represented the reality of the war or whether its reality disappeared into its image. These questions raise important issues about other strategies, although it would be a mistake to assume that they were obvious and simple: while the military manipulated and even lied to the press and the population, they did so only by creating an appearance of total honesty (e.g., what they had to lie about in Vietnam—friendly fire, they revealed in Iraq). Rather, it has to do with the place of the image in—as part of—reality. The images of the war were articulated and deployed into people's lives so as not to disrupt or break into the closed space of everyday life. Instead, the war was absorbed into its rhythms, tempos and intensities, into its mattering maps.

Everything outside of everyday life—the site of what I might uncomfortably refer to as real or practical politics—is now disinvested, placed in no place, with no lines connecting it to the space of mobility through which we navigate everyday life. But to say that politics has been reinscribed into everyday life, and that a whole other realm of politics has thereby been expelled from people's mattering maps, is not the same as saying that the political has become individualized. Everyday life is not totally organized in individual terms; it is the site of many forms of social and collective organization. It can involve community action and reach into the forums of public life. Hence, it is quite possible to organize "political" movements within and around issues of everyday life.

If the postmodern frontier defines the impossibility of affective investments, everyday life and practices are all that can matter. This is not as unreasonable as it may sound, for, after all, the recognition that there is a politics to everyday life is a crucial challenge to the micro-workings of power. Everyday life has become the site of

empowerment, the only place where one can find the energy to act in any way against the grain of social tendencies, the only place where one can struggle to gain a bit of control over one's life. But practices which may be empowering on one plane are now rearticulated into the disempowering structure of a disciplined mobilization. It is easy to recognize that people actively use specific popular cultural practices to meet their own needs and to empower themselves against the debilitating demands of their postmodern condition. And perhaps they use them against the experience of their own subordination. But this does not itself guarantee that such relations are not themselves hijacked into larger structures which, in the end, make it impossible (or at least unlikely) that such relations can ever be used to challenge the conditions within which people's lives are shaped and determined. Popular culture can be an important source of empowerment in a number of different ways. So can struggles over the politics of everyday life. But this "empowerment" (even when it involves struggles) is caught up within the disciplined mobilization of everyday life, so that the very activities which empower us—in fact, the very forms of empowerment—become partly responsible for the disciplined mobilization itself. Empowerment becomes politically disabling, a weapon to be used against people. The very practices which empower people in everyday life also disempower them by rendering them unable to get out of everyday life itself.

For example, ecology as a political struggle is increasingly displaced from questions of national and international policy and economics to the immediate micro-habits of everyday consumerism (e.g., recycling). Without denying the importance of changing individual consciousness and practices, it is still imperative to recognize that the ecological disaster cannot be averted unless individuals can be mobilized, on an international scale, to change the economic and political structures which allow and even encourage the continued pollution of the environment and the destruction of its (not our) resources. To say that ecology can be politicized only within the terms of everyday life means that it is a matter of collective life-styles and social actions, but that it cannot be treated as a question of state,

corporate and economic policy. Such movements seem incapable of mounting a sustained critique of the forces which impinge upon and organize the structured ways people move through their lives. Thus, the very empowerment which struggles within everyday life make available can be articulated into larger structures of disempowerment which continue to subordinate people by erasing the possibility of political struggles in another space. It is as if the feminist insight that "the personal is political" had been magically transformed into the statement that the personal is the political, the only political realm that can matter.

On the other side of everyday life, the realm of the individual (i.e., private life)—admittedly a historical construct, but one with certain empowering consequences—is also collapsing into everyday life; the result is that it becomes increasingly politicized even as it opens up important issues and sites to be incorporated into the politics of everyday life. Thus, while everyone and everything moving within the spaces of everyday life is equal, they are all equally uncomfortable, equally vulnerable. They are constantly under the surveillance of the other. They are never able to stop and construct a place for themselves for fear of offending someone else (when every statement or gesture can be taken to violate some norm of appropriate behavior within the particular space, and the norms themselves are constantly changing), and of being disciplined in the only way possible—being expelled from the mobile space of everyday life. The widespread influence of what might be loosely called "New Age philosophy," from ecology to corporate management techniques to self-help programs (e.g., Alcoholics and Narcotics Anonymous) similarly signals the collapse of questions of personal lives and values into the more public issues of life-style and everyday life. This has certainly contributed to the legitimacy of the various strategies of disciplinization of the new conservatives (see chapter 6).

Actually, it is not quite true to say that there is no longer a space outside of everyday life, for, increasingly, the possibility of escaping the postmodern frontier and everyday life is invested in the space of the "otherworldly." Consider the enormous popularity of such films as *Flatliners* and *Ghosts*. The latter's black-and-white morality, as

well as its faith that love conquers all, are anchored in the existence of a spiritual reality which is devoid of any politics. Similarly, the overwhelming horror of the Iraq war, its threatening "otherness," was transformed into the otherworldly rhetoric of the mystical evil and the apocalyptic. It was as if Nostradamus had suddenly reemerged to be the prophet of this war: only nine years to go, according to his count. And if this was a war and a protest movement without any apparent music of their own (even the invasion of Panama had its own place for music), if this was an army of youth without any sex, drugs or rock 'n' roll, Madonna may yet emerge as having provided their only soundtrack—in the "orientalist" sounds of both the remade "Like a Virgin" and the "Beast within Mix" of "Justify My Love." Both resonate—the latter explicitly, the former implicitly—with what can only be heard by American ears as an appeal to the "otherworld" of spirituality (which embodies the ambiguous relation to the other, both spiritual and evil).

The most powerful billboard of this new popular space is David Lynch's *Twin Peaks*. Laura Palmer in the figure of a corpse was one of *People* magazine's twenty-five most intriguing people of 1990. There is obviously something postmodern about this fetishism of a corpse, although it lacks the sense of postholocaust horror that framed a similar image in *The River's Edge*. *Twin Peaks* deconstructed the calm surfaces of small-town life and offered a supernatural mystery. Nothing new about either of these. But it also constructed a universe in which every disruption of the surface pointed beyond the hypocrisy of human relations, beyond the existence of evil within human beings, to a transcendent supernatural. By the end of the series, the stakes in the battle transcended even the existence of the planet. The program embodied many of the features of the postmodern sensibility, yet perhaps its most striking feature was the sheer beauty of its photography, its characters and, most noticeably, its soundtrack. The music was so much more than theme or mood music, it was almost another character. It was both sensuous and boring. Like New Age music, it was music to come down from a trip for a generation that doesn't trip. It always pointed beyond itself, not just to the characters (with different songs serving as signatures) or to the

visual surfaces of the program. It pointed to a powerfully haunting reality, always standing beyond everyday life, threatening to shatter it. Yet simultaneously, it closed in on itself, forcing the listener/ viewer back into the surfaces of its world, and into the comfortable insecurity of everyday life.

The collapse of all political space, civil society and private life into everyday life and the transformation of everyday life into a disciplined mobilization not only depoliticizes large segments of the population, it also eviscerates the recognition of popular culture as a terrain and weapon of struggle. Instead, culture seems to exist almost entirely free of or entirely reduced to entanglements with both economic and political relations. It is merely the "stuff" of everyday life. But the politics of popular culture extends far beyond the space of everyday life, far beyond its contribution as a commodity to profits, and far beyond its textual and ideological work. It extends into the hegemonic struggle to reconfigure both everyday life and the contemporary relations of people, resources and capital. However, I must reiterate that I am not dismissing the importance of struggles over and within the politics of everyday life. I want only to contextual- ize them, to argue that their importance has itself become a weapon within, and the object of, other political battles. Nor am I suggesting that we should not resist the inequalities of the contemporary organi- zation of everyday life. But those relations are articulated to and sustained by other—structural—relations of power that intersect with but do not exist primarily within the relations of everyday life.

I want to begin to question the function of the disciplined mobili- zation of everyday life in the contemporary struggle for a new conser- vative hegemony, and the relations between the mobility of everyday life and the changing structures and possibilities of capitalism. This will involve trying to understand the effects of the conservative hegemony as I have described it on people's and the nation's chang- ing place in the space of capitalism, both locally and globally. Contemporary intellectuals—myself included—are at a distinct dis- advantage here since, too often, the very strengths of contemporary cultural theory have driven a wedge between culture and those domains (including politics and economics) which escape the cul-

tural domain. The disciplinarity, even of the interdisciplinary work of cultural studies, has resulted in a overavailability of information and an underavailability of knowledge. But equally important, the current generations of intellectuals are as much implicated in and subordinated by the disciplined mobilization as any other segment of the population. Nevertheless, it is still possible and necessary to make some initial effort in this direction. For in the end, *People* may have gotten it right: "Money: Rich or poor, it was how everyone in the 80s kept score."[16]

NOTES

INTRODUCTION: THEORY, POLITICS AND PASSION

1. See L. Grossberg, "I'd Rather Feel Bad Than Not Feel Anything at All [Rock and Roll: Pleasure and Power]," *Enclitic*, 1984, vol. 8, pp. 94–111. Also S. Hall, "Notes on Deconstructing 'the Popular,' " in R. Samuel (ed.), *People's History and Socialist Theory*, London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, pp. 227–40; A. McRobbie, *Feminism and Youth Culture*, London, Macmillan, 1991; J. Fiske, *Understanding Popular Culture*, Boston, Unwin Hyman, 1989.

2. See T. Modleski (ed.), *Studies in Entertainment: Critical Approaches to Mass Culture*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1986; and M. Budd et al., "The Affirmative Character of U.S. Cultural Studies," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 1990, vol. 7, pp. 169–84.

3. I use "American" with apologies, since there is no other adjective for the United States. For an analysis of the devastating consequences of this transformation, see P. Mattera, *Prosperity Lost*, Reading, Addison-Wesley, 1990. For an earlier effort to describe this transformation, see L. Grossberg, *It's a Sin: Essays on Postmodernism, Politics and Culture*, Sydney, Power Publications, 1988.

4. See L. Grossberg, "Teaching the Popular," in C. Nelson (ed.), *Theory in the Classroom*, Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1986, pp. 177–200.

5. L. Grossberg, "Rock Resistance and the Resistance to Rock," in T. Bennett (ed.), *Rock Music: Politics and Policy*, Brisbane, Institute for Cultural Policy Studies, 1989, pp. 29–42.

6. "Daily life" refers to the socially organized material pattern and events of people's existence. I use it, rather than "experience," to avoid assuming the centrality of the experiencing subject.

7. A. Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind*, New York, Simon and Schuster, 1987, pp. 74–75.

8. G. Greenwald, *Rock a Bye Bye Baby* (audio tape), The Eagle's Nest, n.d.

9. See E. F. Brown and W. R. Hendee, "Adolescents and Their Music," *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1989, vol. 262, pp. 1659–63.

10. All quotes taken from T. Gore, letter, Parents' Music Resource Center, n.d.

11. *Rock and Roll Confidential*, July 1990, no. 80, p. 1.

12. *Rock and Roll Confidential*, June 1991, no. 89, p. 1, points out that only 14 months after the deal was struck, 13 states introduced mandatory labeling bills in 1991, in clear violation of the agreement.

13. *You've Got a Right to Rock: Don't Let Them Take It Away*, by the editors of *Rock and Roll Confidential* (3d ed., 1991) is available from Box 341305, Los Angeles, CA 90034.

14. T. Carson, "What We Do Is Secret: Your Guide to the Post-Whatever, *Village Voice Rock and Roll Quarterly*, Fall 1988, p. 24.

15. See L. Martin and K. Segrave, *Anti-Rock: The Opposition to Rock 'n' Roll*, Hamden, CT, Anchon, 1988.

16. I use "new conservatism" to describe a popular political sensibility in daily life; it refers to the growing saliency and popularity of certain conservative positions among broad segments of the population. Such conservative positions include the growing acceptance of economic and political inequalities and of structures of local discrimination against various (but not all) subordinated groups, the attempt to impose minority-held moralities on society, the reduction of equality to the possibilities of economic competition, the rejection of freedoms in the name of social values, and the marginalization of radical oppositional groups and alternatives. The "new conservative alliance" refers to an amorphous and largely unorganized collection of the various political and economic agents, organizations and movements that actively (although not always publicly) support the new conservatism, work for its victory and attempt to ensure that its success will be translated into governmental policy. While the new conservative alliance includes many fractions of the Republican party, neofascist paramilitary organizations and many procapitalist groups, the New Right refers to a narrower and more explicit alliance between particular groups that had been largely marginalized even within the Republican party before Reagan's presidency. Their political platform is often but not always based on a series of moral appeals to particular "American" values.

17. From one angle, the attacks on rock can be seen as just another token of the cultural panic and paranoia which has greeted, not merely postwar popular culture, but popular cultures throughout the centuries. By emphasizing the fact that popular culture is simultaneously attacked and desired, some critics are able to treat it as an enduring domain of existence outside of, or opposed to, dominant structures of power. See P. Stallybrass and A. White, *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression*, London, Methuen, 1986.

18. R. Goldstein, "Swept Away: In the Wake of Bush," *Village Voice*, January 10, 1990, p. 23.

19. The quote is from Marx but has recently been popularized in M.

Berman, *All That Is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity*, New York, Simon and Schuster, 1982.

20. A. Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, trans. Q. Hoare and G. Nowell Smith, New York, International Publishers, 1971, p. 331.

21. "Physicians Losing Interest in Abortion, Report Claims," *Daily Illini*, Champaign-Urbana, May 1, 1991, p. 4.

22. Alan Wolfe, "Politics By Other Means," *The New Republic*, November 11, 1991, pp. 39 and 40.

23. My own view of cultural studies depends heavily on the ideas of Stuart Hall. For discussions of cultural studies, see: S. Hall, "Cultural Studies and the Centre: Some Problematics and Problems," in S. Hall et al. (eds.), *Culture, Media, Language*, London, Hutchinson, 1980, pp. 15–47; S. Hall, "Cultural Studies and Its Legacies" in L. Grossberg et al. (eds.), *Cultural Studies*, New York, Routledge, 1991, pp. 277–286; S. Hall, "The Emergence of Cultural Studies and the Crisis of the Humanities," *October*, 1990, no. 53, pp. 11–23; R. Johnson, "What Is Cultural Studies Anyway?," *Social Text*, 1986/87, pp. 38–80; L. Grossberg, "The Formation(s) of Cultural Studies," *Strategies*, 1989, no. 2, pp. 114–49; L. Grossberg, "The Circulation of Cultural Studies," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 1989, vol. 6, pp. 413–21; Patrick Brantlinger, *Crusoe's Footprints: Cultural Studies in Britain and America*, New York, Routledge, 1990; Cary Nelson et al., Introduction to L. Grossberg et al. (eds.), *Cultural Studies*; and G. Turner, *British Cultural Studies: An Introduction*, Boston, Unwin Hyman, 1990.

24. There are particular reasons why cultural studies found a home in communications (and secondarily in education) in the U.S. First, it depended on a particular reading of cultural studies as a literary-based alternative to the existing work on mass communications. Second, there was an indigenous tradition in the work of the Chicago School of Social Thought and John Dewey in particular. Third, normative concerns with culture, the assumption that culture mattered in the life of society, had been largely marginalized in literary studies (by new criticism) and in anthropology and sociology (under pressure to be scientific). The field of communication was partly born out of and into the midst of the mass culture debates (a continuation of the mass society debates which had earlier given rise to other disciplines of the human sciences) and hence could not escape the question of culture's normative weight. Finally, these debates were caught between the pessimism of the Frankfurt School and the optimism of American liberals. Communication could not escape the tension or its own ambivalence. Interestingly, the recent incorporation of cultural studies into literary studies has often meant a turn to theory, to theories which do not sanction interpretation (e.g., Foucault) or to non-literary and popular cultural texts. Rarely has it opened up discussions about the difficulties of doing cultural studies of "canonical literature," where the relation between the context and the critic's reading becomes difficult to identify.

25. The situation varies in each country. Australia, for example, has a

longer history both of a "native" cultural studies tradition and of a serious engagement with British cultural studies.

26. Many of those now describing their work as cultural studies were attacking cultural studies only a few years ago although they have not changed their project in the interim. Many of those who now appropriate the term want to read only very selectively in the tradition. While I do not believe that one has to read everything, it is helpful to read enough to orient oneself. Ironically, many of these critics would be quite upset if someone were to read their own theoretical sources (e.g., Lacan) as superficially as they read in cultural studies. And even more ironically, they are often the very critics who refuse to allow that people may read popular culture in a similar way.

27. Histories of British cultural studies often paper over significant differences, e.g., within the "subcultural" studies: cf. S. Hall and T. Jefferson (eds.), *Resistance through Rituals: Youth Subcultures in Post-war Britain*, London, Hutchinson, 1976, and D. Hebdige, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*, London, Methuen, 1979. They also overlook counterexamples to the master narrative that has already been constructed; e.g., the first collective project undertaken at the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at the end of the 1960s was a study of women's magazines, and in particular a short story called "Cure for Marriage." The Centre also embraced a variety of forms of collective and individual work (often determined partly by people's part-time work and commuting schedules) and of political interventions (e.g., involvement in policy debates, monitoring media, etc.).

28. After all, everyone has a different political and intellectual biography. My own intellectual development led me from science into philosophy and history (Hayden White, Loren Baritz) to British cultural studies at a reasonably early moment in its development (Richard Hoggart and Stuart Hall) to American cultural studies (James Carey) to phenomenology and hermeneutics (Paul Ricoeur) to Gramsci and Foucault (basically skipping the so-called Althusserian moment).

29. For example, in England, there was *Working Papers in Cultural Studies, Screen Education, I & C* and *Feminist Review*; in Australia, *Art and Text* and the Local Consumption Press, as well as the *Australian Journal of Cultural Studies*. The apparent unity of cultural studies has to be imagined, constructed and imposed and therefore also deconstructed and opposed. We need to examine how the appearance of orthodoxy or homogeneity is deployed in ways that position cultural studies both intellectually and politically.

30. G. Spivak, "The Making of Americans, the Teaching of English, and the Future of Culture Studies," *New Literary History*, 1990, vol. 21, pp. 781–98.

31. C. West, cited in J. Pfister, "The Americanization of Cultural Studies," *The Yale Journal of Criticism*, 1991, vol. 4, p. 204. The question of ethics here suggests that cultural studies might fruitfully turn to the work of Spinoza and Schopenhauer.

32. A. Gramsci, cited in S. Hall, "Cultural Studies and its Theoretical Legacies," in L. Grossberg et al. (eds.), *Cultural Studies*.

33. As we shall see later, this is because it is articulated to the popular.

34. Increasingly, what is passing for cultural studies in the U.S. is simply too easy. The two most common examples are literary deconstructionism and various studies of popular culture which forget what is at stake. In fact, British cultural studies was formed by a series of engagements and rearticulations of works from other national formations (largely French). Such serious engagement and rearticulation is unfortunately not evidenced in much of the American appropriations of cultural studies.

35. P. Patton, "Notes for a Glossary," *I & C*, 1981, no. 8, p. 47.

36. This is not to say that intellectual activity, even politically motivated and directed work, is a form of, or substitutable for, political activity. In certain instances, intellectuals may be involved qua intellectuals in a political movement. Still, it may be the case that intellectual work is vital to political change. See the debate over the role of cultural criticism in the battle against AIDS: D. Harris, "AIDS and Theory," *Lingua Franca*, June 1991, pp. 16–19. Also E. Michaels, *Unbecoming: An AIDS Diary*, Rose Bay (Australia), Empress, 1990.

37. For example, the enormous guilt that has been constructed around the reality of the death of people with AIDS: see J. Z. Grover, "AIDS, Keywords, and Cultural Work," in L. Grossberg et al. (eds.), *Cultural Studies*.

38. Hall, "Cultural Studies and Its Legacies."

39. Too often interdisciplinarity is taken to mean: (1) you do basically what you were doing but with a few theoretical references from another discipline; or (2) you do basically what you were doing but add some allusions to the context taken from another discipline. Cultural studies' interdisciplinarity is an aggressive counterdisciplinary logic.

40. R. Williams, *The Long Revolution*, London, Chatto and Windus, 1961, and *The Country and the City*, London, Oxford University Press, 1973.

41. J. W. Carey, *Communication as Culture*, Boston, Unwin Hyman, 1989.

42. See, e.g., the work in *Public Culture* and *Diaspora*. For an elaboration of this argument, see Cary Nelson et al., Introduction to L. Grossberg et al. (eds.), *Cultural Studies*.

43. Williams, *Culture and Society 1780/1950*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1958, p. 295.

44. See R. Hoggart, *The Uses of Literacy*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1970 (orig. 1957).

45. In its own way, the "post–colonialist" critique of History replaces one totality (Europe as the scene of History) with another (the postcolonial scene). Postcolonialism can be nothing more than a convenient term to mark the variety of ways in which nations have incorporated and dominated other populations and cultures. (See K. Tololyan, "The Nation-State and

its Others," *Diaspora*, 1991, vol. 1, pp. 3–7.) We have to recognize the history and diversity of such relations: colonial populations which the colonizers define as "Others even as it constitutes them, for purposes of administration and the expansion of markets, into programmed near-images of the very sovereign self" such as India (G. Spivak, cited in R. Young, *White Mythologies: Writing History and the West*, London, Routledge, 1990, p. 17); settler colonies such as the United States, Canada and Australia; genocide and Apartheid (through spatial compression—reservations—and imprisonment: e.g., native populations in most settler colonies); homeless populations dispersed as ethnic, religious or racial enclaves within national formations (e.g., Kurds, Palestinians); and the variety of "voluntary" and forced diasporas (e.g., expatriates, slave trade, guest workers, forced exiles, and emigrant communities).

46. R. Williams, *Culture and Society 1780/1950*. (Stuart Hall, personal communication).

47. See G. Viswanathan, "Raymond Williams and British Colonialism," *The Yale Journal of Criticism*, 1991, vol. 4, pp. 47–66.

48. Dipesh Chakrabarty, personal communication.

49. For example, we might consider the relation between the concept of culture and racism/slavery in various post–Civil War Southern writing. Also, we need to explore the erased history of writings on culture that have come out of the Afro–American diaspora. See, e.g., J. B. Childs, *Leadership, Conflict, and Cooperation in Afro-American Social Thought*, Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1989. My thanks to Herman Gray for raising this question. We also need to avoid the arrogance of assuming that "culture" is a category invented by Europe.

50. See I. Hunter, *Culture and Government: The Emergence of Literary Education*, London, Macmillan, 1988; and C. Steedman, *Childhood, Culture and Class in Britain: Margaret McMillan, 1860–1931*, New Brunswick, Rutgers University Press, 1990.

51. This work is already ongoing in a variety of discourses in and around cultural studies. I do not mean to suggest that these issues are only relevant to the project of articulating cultural studies into America.

52. R. Young, *White Mythologies*, p. 14.

53. Ibid., p. 3.

54. Ibid., p. 13.

55. R. Barthes, *The Empire of Signs*, New York, Hill and Wang, 1982.

56. J. Baudrillard, *America*, London, Verso, 1988.

57. R. Young, *White Mythologies*, p. 15.

58. This sense of spatial identity began with some of the first colonizers, the Puritans, who saw their new home as an-other space, the new Eden. The constitutional debates recorded in *The Federalist Papers* focus on the attempt to define the new nation in terms of distances traveled. And John Dewey, that most American of American philosophers, defined community in terms of proximity—face to face relations—rather than traditional and knowable communities. For an interesting discussion of space and time,

see D. N. Parkes and N. Thrift, "Timing Space and Spacing Time," *Environment and Planning*, 1975, vol. 7, pp. 651–70.

59. Tony Bennett, "Culture: Theory and Policy," *Culture and Policy*, vol. 1, 1989, pp. 5–8. Such a spatial logic of power should not be seen as the binary opposite of temporal logics but as the result of a rhizomatic critique of "modern" thought in which one subtracts temporality as a transcendental term.

60. C. Gordon, "The Subtracting Machine," *I & C*, 1981, no. 8, p. 36.

CHAPTER ONE: ARTICULATION AND CULTURE

1. Compare S. Hall, "Encoding/Decoding," in S. Hall et al. (eds.). *Culture, Media, Language*, London, Hutchinson, 1980, pp. 128–38, and D. Morley, *The Nationwide Audience: Structure and Decoding*, London, British Film Institute, 1980.

2. See, for example, P. Smith, *Discerning the Subject*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1988.

3. See S. Hall, "Religious Ideologies and Social Movements in Jamaica," in R. Bocock and K. Thompson (eds.), *Religion and Ideology*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1985, pp. 269–96.

4. See L. Grossberg, "Ideology of Communication: Post-structuralism and the Limits of Communication," *Man and World*, 1982, vol. 15, pp. 83–101.

5. E.g., John Fiske, *Reading the Popular*, Boston, Unwin Hyman, 1989.

6. S. Hall, "Signification, Ideology and Representation: Althusser and the Post-Structuralist Debates," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 1985, vol. 2, pp. 91–114; and "The Problem of Ideology: Marxism without Guarantees," in B. Matthews (ed.), *Marx: A Hundred Years On*, London, Lawrence and Wishart, 1983, pp. 57–86, For another view of ideology, see W. F. Haug, *Commodity Aesthetics, Ideology and Culture*, New York, International General, 1987.

7. See D. Adlam et al., "Psychology, Ideology and the Human Subject," *Ideology and Consciousness*, 1977, no. 1, pp. 5–56; and "Debate" with Stuart Hall and the Editorial Collective, *Ideology and Consciousness*, 1978, no. 3, pp. 113–27. Also C. Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, New York, Basic Books, 1973.

8. M. Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith, New York, Pantheon, 1973, p. xvi.

9. See E. Laclau and C. Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*, London, Verso, 1985; and E. Rooney, "Discipline and Vanish: Feminism, the Resistance to Theory, and the Politics of Cultural Studies, *Differences*, 1990, vol. 2, pp. 14–27.

10. S. Hall, "New Ethnicities," *Black Film, British Cinema*, ICA Documents 7, London, ICA, 1988, p. 27.

18. T. Ward, "Sex and Drugs and Ronald Reagan," *Village Voice*, January 29, 1985, p. 15.

19. Tufts University student newspaper.

20. D. Sheff, "Rolling Stone Survey: Portrait of a Generation," *Rolling Stone*, May 5, 1988, p. 50.

21. Ibid., pp. 47–49.

22. P. Moffitt, "R U Hip, Sixties People," *Esquire*, April 1981, p. 6.

23. R. Lacayo, "Madonna," *People Extra: The 80's*, Fall 1989, p. 50.

24. N. Tennant/C. Lowe, "It's a Sin," ASCAP Cage Music/10 Music/Virgin Music Inc., 1987.

25. N. Tennant/C. Lowe, "Rent," ASCAP Cage Music/10 Music/Virgin Music, Inc., 1987.

26. P. Oakley/I. Burden, "Love Action (I Believe in Love)," Sound Diagrams/Virgin Music Ltd. Dinsong Ltd., 1981.

27. M. Coleman, "New Order's," p. 61.

28. P. Rudnick and K. Andersen, "The Irony Epidemic: The Dark Side of Fiestaware and the Flintstones," (*Spy*), rpt. *Utne Reader*, May/June 1989, no. 33, p. 35.

29. F. Rose, "Welcome to the Modern World," *Esquire*, April, 1981, p. 32.

30. R. Goldstein, "Home Cooking."

31. R. Lacayo, "Madonna."

32. T. Ward, "Sex and Drugs," 48.

33. J. G. Ballard, *The Atrocity Exhibit*, London, Triad/Panther, 1985, p. 63.

34. R. Lacayo, "A Kindler Gentler Nation," *People Extra: The 80's*, Fall 1989, p. 105.

35. G. O'Brien, "What Is Hip?" *Interview*, July 1987, vol. 271, pp. 42–43.

36. O. Sacks, *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat and Other Clinical Tales*, New York, Harper and Row, 1987, pp. 108–15.

37. Ibid., p. 116–17.

38. Ibid., p. 119.

39. Ibid.

40. F. Jameson, *Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, Durham, Duke University Press, 1991. See also C. Newman, "What's Left out of Literature," *New York Times Book Review*, July 12, 1987, p. 1ff.

41. Cited in S. Zizek, "The Subject Supposed to . . . (Know, Believe, Enjoy, Desire)," paper delivered at the Wars of Persuasion Conference: Gramsci, Intellectuals and Mass Culture, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, April 24, 1987.

42. M. Ventura, *Shadow Dancing in the USA*, Los Angeles, Jeremy Tarcher, 1985, p. 24.

43. Kirsten Lentz, personal communication.

44. See, e.g., R. Christgau, "Madonnathinking, Madonnabout, Madonnamusic," *Village Voice*, May 28, 1991, pp. 31–33; and Andrew Good-

win, "Popular Music and Postmodern Theory," *Cultural Studies*, 1991, vol. 5, pp. 174–90.

45. B. E. Ellis;, "The Twentysomethings: Adrift in a Pop Landscape," *New York Times*, December 2, 1990, p. H37.

46. Jon Crane, "Terror and Everyday Life," *Communication*, 1988, vol. 10, pp. 372–74.

47. S. Frith, "Art of Poise," *Village Voice*, April 9, 1991, p. 74.

48. S. Reynolds, "Dazed and Confused," *Village Voice*, January 1, 1991, p. 70.

49. S. Frith, "The Club Class," *Village Voice*, November 21, 1989, p. 77.

50. Ibid.

51. Ibid.

52. P. Schjeldahl, "Irony and Agony," *In These Times*, August 20–September 2, 1986, p. 16.

53. Arion Berger, "No Great Shakes," *Village Voice Pazz and Jop Supplement*, February 27, 1990, p. 9.

54. "This is the postrock generation gap. The young listen to more and more, and it means less and less. The old listen to less and less, but it means more and more. The young are materialists; music is as good as its functions. The old are idealists, in search (like the band in *The Commitments*) of epiphany." Simon Frith, "He's The One," *Village Voice*, October 29, 1991, p. 88.

CHAPTER NINE: NATION, HEGEMONY AND CULTURE

1. This chapter draws heavily on the work of Stuart Hall and John Clarke, as well as personal conversations with both of them. See S. Hall, *The Hard Road to Renewal: Thatcherism and the Crisis of the Left*, London, Verso, 1988; S. Hall and M. Jacques (eds.), *The Politics of Thatcherism*, London, Lawrence and Wishart, 1983; S. Hall et al., *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law and Order*, London, Macmillan, 1978; J. Clarke, *New Times and Old Enemies*, London, Routledge, 1991.

2. R. Williams, *Marxism and Literature*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1977, pp. 108–14; T. Gitlin, *The Whole World Is Watching: Mass Media in the Making and Unmaking of the New Left*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1980.

3. S. Hall, "The Toad in the Garden: Thatcherism Among the Theorist," in C. Nelson and L. Grossberg (eds.), *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1988, pp. 33–57.

4. Ibid.

5. A. Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, trans. Q. Hoare and G. Nowell Smith, New York, International Publishers, 1971, p. 12.

6. E. Laclau and C. Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards*

a Radical Democratic Politics, London, Verso, 1985; and E. Laclau, "Metaphor and Social Antagonisms," in C. Nelson and L. Grossberg, *Marxism*, pp. 249–58. Hall, Laclau and Mouffe all interpret hegemony as a struggle between the people and the power bloc, rather than taking the more traditional view which locates hegemony in the relation between the state and civil society.

7. E. Laclau and C. Mouffe, *Hegemony*; C. Mouffe, "Hegemony and New Political Subjects: Toward a New Concept of Democracy," in C. Nelson and L. Grossberg, *Marxism*, pp. 89–101.

8. S. Hall, personal conversation.

9. J. Solomos, B. Findlay, S. Jones and P. Gilroy, "The Organic Crisis Of British Capitalism And Race: The Experience of the Seventies," in Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, *The Empire Strikes Back: Race and Racism in 70s Britain*, London, Hutchinson, 1982, pp. 11 and 21. See also Women's Studies Group of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, *Women Take Issue: Aspects of Women's Subordination*, London, Hutchinson, 1978. Both of these are exemplary in their recognition of the complex relations of politics, economics, culture and identity, although the latter does fall back at times into a fetishism of the local overdetermination of identity. For a discussion of the cynicism in the new conservative's deployment of racism as an electoral issue in the U.S., see D. Ireland, "Press Clips," *Village Voice*, November 26, 1991, p. 10.

10. S. Hall, *The Hard Road to Renewal*.

11. S. Hall, "Authoritarian Populism," *New Left Review*, 1985, no. 151, p. 118.

12. See R. Pollin and A. Cockburn, "The World, the Free Market and the Left," *The Nation*, February 25, 1991, pp. 224–36; and C. J. Lang, "The Hole in America's Stocking," *Village Voice*, December 25, 1990, p. 38ff.

13. R. L. Berke, rpt. *Champaign Urbana News Gazette*, May 6, 1990, p. B1. See also C. Page, "Bush Has Drifted from Mainstream," *Chicago Tribune*, November 5, 1990, section 5, p. 13; J. B. Judis, "Slurs Fly in Right's Uncivil War," *In These Times*, October 18–24, 1989, p. 3; and J. B. Judis, "The War at Home," *In These Times*, March 14–20, 1990, p. 12ff.

14. See T. Ferguson, "F. D. R., Anyone?" *The Nation*, May 22, 1989, p. 689.

15. Thus, Gramsci noted that Italy's national popular was largely composed of cultural texts imported from other European cultures. See A. Gramsci, *Selected Writings, 1916–1935*, ed. D. Forgacs, New York, Schocken, 1988, pp. 363–78.

16. Patrick Buchanan, "In the War for America's Culture, the 'Right' Side Is Losing," *Richmond News Leader*, June 24, 1989. Note also that the new conservative alliance is actively concerned with more local—i.e., state, county and city—state apparatuses as well.

CHAPTER TEN: HEGEMONY AND THE POSTMODERN FRONTIER

1. Andrew Ross, *No Respect: Intellectuals and Popular Culture*, New York, Routledge, 1989, chapter 2.

2. J. Crane, "Terror and Everyday Life," *Communication*, 1988, vol. 10, p. 320.

3. A. Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind*, New York, Simon and Schuster, 1987, p. 147.

4. James Stone, quoted in Geoffrey Stokes, "Pressclips," *Village Voice*, October 17, 1989, p. 8.

5. S. Blumenthal, "Marketing and the President," *New York Times Magazine*, September 13, 1981.

6. R. Stone, "Keeping the Future at Bay: Of Republicans and Their America," *Harper's*, November 1988, p. 61.

7. "Reagan . . . manages to make you feel good about your country, and about the times in which you are living. All those corny feelings that hid inside of you for so long are waved right out in public by Reagan for everyone to see—and even while you're listing all the reasons that you shouldn't fall for it, you're glad that you're falling. If you're a sucker for that act, that's okay." B. Greene, "It's Confession Time," *Chicago Tribune*, December 11, 1985, Sec. 5, p. 1.

8. W. Schneider, "The In-Box President," *Atlantic Monthly*, January 1990, pp. 34–43.

9. B. Minzensheimer, "Abortion Most Cited Issue," *USA Today*, November 8, 1988, p. 31.

10. "Which Issues Are Very Important to Women," *Time*, December 4, 1989, p. 82.

11. D. Sheff, "Rolling Stone Survey: Portrait of a Generation," *Rolling Stone*, May 5, 1988, p. 46.

12. W. Greider, "Money Matters," *Rolling Stone*, April 7, 1988, p. 47.

13. D. Sheff, "Survey," p. 51.

14. A. Gordon-Reed, "New York Stock Boys Shelved Ethics," *In These Times*, January 10, 1990, p. 18.

15. *Harper's*, November, 1988.

16. W. Greider, "Turned out, Turned off," *Rolling Stone*, April 7, 1988, p. 53.

17. "What We Watch," *TV Guide*, December 24–30, 1988, p. 7.

18. M. Oreskes, "America's Politics Loses Way As Its Vision Changes World," *New York Times*, March 18, 1990, p. A16.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid.

21. See E. Clift, "Racing to Control the Buzzwords," *Newsweek*, December 24, 1990, p. 21.

22. R. Stone, "Keeping the Future at Bay," p. 61.
23. Quoted in L. Savan, "Gettin' Tipsy," *Village Voice*, August 29, 1989, p. 56.
24. T. Carlson, "The Show That Wouldn't Die . . . ," *TV Guide*, January 13, 1990, p. 6.
25. Quoted in L. Savan, "The Trad Trade," *Village Voice*, March 7, 1989, p. 49.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid.
28. J. Levy, "Joy and Pain," *Village Voice*, February 28, 1989, p. 66.

CHAPTER ELEVEN: IDEOLOGY AND AFFECTIVE EPIDEMICS

1. Hugo Burnham, "When the Music's Over," *Details*, July 1991, pp. 35–36.
2. Unlike moral panics, such affective epidemics need have no anchor in reality; they can be entirely symbolic.
3. See, e.g., Fred Jameson, "The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism," in *Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, Durham, Duke University Press, 1991, pp. 1–54.
4. Reported in D. Lazere, "Drug Peace (with Honor), *Village Voice*, November 27, 1990, p. 12.
5. S. Reynolds, "Ladybirds and Start-Rite Kids," *Melody Maker*, September 26, 1986, pp. 44–45.
6. A. Silverblatt, "Families and Fries That Bind," *In These Times*, January 10–16, 1990, p. 21.
7. E. Willis, "Coming down Again: Excess in the Age of Abstinence," *Village Voice*, January 24, 1989, p. 22.
8. B. Ehrenreich, *Fear of Falling: The Inner Life of the Middle Class*, New York, Pantheon, 1989, p. 181.
9. R. Lacayo, "A Kinder Gentler Nation," *People Extra: The 80's*, Fall 1989, p. 104.
10. Ibid., p. 107.
11. C. Rickey, "Twilight of the Idols," *Fame*, December 1988, p. 42.
12. J. Hoberman, "What's Stranger Than Paradise," and K. Dieckman, "Stupid People Tricks," *Village Voice Film Special*, June 30, 1987, pp. 3–8 and 11–5, respectively.

CHAPTER TWELVE: THE MOBILIZATION OF EVERYDAY LIFE

1. See, e.g., S. Blumenthal, *The Rise of the Counter-Establishment: From Conservative Ideology to Political Power*, New York, Harper and Row, 1988.
2. E. P. Valk, "From the Publisher," *People Extra: The 80's*, Fall 1989, p. 5.
3. H. Lefebvre, *Everyday Life in the Modern World*, trans. S. Rabinovitch, New Brunswick, Transaction, 1984, pp. 61 and 64. I am particularly grateful to Meaghan Morris, whose work already suggested the possibility of linking Lefebvre and Deleuze and Guattari.
4. Ibid., p. 72.
5. This is a good example of the way industry is consciously dissolving the line between economics and culture.
6. This is not to say that post-punk music fails to achieve any politics, or that punk defined a political high point in the cyclical history of rock. Rather, punk was a particular project to articulate a specific politics which in fact missed many of the possibilities of a politics of affect, bliss and the postmodern sensibility. See L. Grossberg, "Another Boring Day in Paradise: Rock and Roll and the Empowerment of Everyday Life," *Popular Music*, 1984, vol. 4, pp. 225–58.
7. A disciplined mobilization cannot be understood within the traditional problematic of the individual (solipsism) and the social (tradition). Moreover, within such formations, affective alliances, unlike communities, need have no immediate consequences on people's way of life.
8. C. Sarler, "Fashion Falls Victim to Its Own Whims . . . ," *The Sunday Times*, January 15, 1989, n.p.
9. I want to acknowledge the contribution of Harris Breslow to this argument.
10. F. Mort and N. Green, "You've Never Had It So Good—Again!" *Marxism Today*, May 1988, p. 33.
11. E.g., J. Baudrillard, *In the Shadow of the Silent Majorities*, New York, Semiotexte, 1983.
12. Quoted in M. Feinberg, "Nancy Cole: Savvy Organizer," *In These Times*, May 16–22, 1990, pp. 4–5.
13. R. A. Koch, "Activism vs. Apathy," *U: The National College Newspaper*, March 1991, pp. 6–7.
14. R. Brunt, "The Politics of Identity," in S. Hall and M. Jacques (eds.), *New Times: The Changing Face of Politics in the 1990s*, London, Lawrence and Wishart, 1989, p. 152.
15. H. Lefebvre, *Everyday Life*, p. 197.
16. E. P. Valk, "From the Publisher."

CHAPTER THIRTEEN: LIFE DURING WARTIME

1. "Budget Analysts Cite Surge in Income Gap during '80s," *Daily Illini*, Champaign, Illinois, 1990.
2. George Winslow, "A System Out Of Control, Not Just One Bank," *In These Times*, October 23–29, 1991, p. 10.