Douglas Kellner [http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/faculty/kellner/]

T.W. Adorno and the Dialectics of Mass Culture

While T.W. Adorno is a lively figure on the contemporary cultural scene, his thought in many ways cuts across the grain of emerging postmodern orthodoxies. Although Adorno anticipated many post-structuralist critiques of the subject, philosophy, and intellectual practice, his work clashes with the postmodern celebration of media culture, attacks on modernism as obsolete and elitist, and the more affirmative attitude toward contemporary culture and society found in many, but not all, postmodern circles. Adorno is thus a highly contradictory figure in the present constellation, anticipating some advanced tendencies of contemporary thought, while standing firming against other regnant intellectual attitudes and positions.

In this article, I argue that Adorno's analyses of the functions of mass culture and communications in contemporary societies constitute valuable, albeit controversial, legacies. Adorno excelled both as a critic of so-called "high culture" and "mass culture," while producing many important texts in these areas. His work is distinguished by the close connection between social theory and cultural critique, and by his ability to contextualize culture within social developments, while providing sharp critical analysis. Accordingly, I discuss Adorno's analysis of the dialectics of mass culture, focusing on his critique of popular music, the culture industry, and consumer culture. I argue that Adorno's critique of mass culture is best read and understood in the context of his work with information superhighway. In conclusion, I offer alternative perspectives on mass communication and culture, and some criticisms of Adorno's position. Focus will be on the extent to which Adorno's now classical critical theory does or does not continue to be valid and useful for cultural studies and criticism today.

Adorno, Culture, and the Dialectic of Enlightenment

Adorno's theory of culture was bound up with his analysis with Max Horkheimer of the "dialectic of enlightenment" (1972). For Horkheimer and Adorno, in the contemporary era of World War Two, fascist death camps, and the threat of the triumph of fascist barbarism, Enlightenment had turned into its opposite -- democracy had produced fascism, reason had generated unreason as instrumental rationality created military machines and death camps, and the culture industries were transforming culture from an instrument of Bildung and enlightenment into an instrument of manipulation and domination.[1] Culture -- once a refuge of beauty and truth -- was falling prey, they believed, to tendencies toward rationalization, standardization, and conformity which they interpreted as a consequence of the triumph of the instrumental rationality that was coming to pervade and structure ever more aspects of life. Thus, while culture once cultivated individuality, it was now promoting conformity, and was a crucial part of "the totally administered society" that was producing "the end of the individual."

This pessimistic analysis of the fate of culture in modernity was part and parcel of Institute pessimism concerning the rise of the totally administered society in its fascist, democratic state

capitalist, and state communist forms. Yet Adorno and his colleagues continued to privilege culture as an important, and often overlooked, source of social knowledge, as well as a potential form of social criticism and opposition. As Adorno once wrote:

> the task of {cultural} criticism must be not so much to search for the particular interest-groups to which cultural phenomena are to be assigned, but rather to decipher the general social tendencies which are expressed in these phenomena and through which the most powerful interests realize themselves. Cultural criticism must become social physiognomy. The more the whole divests itself of all spontaneous elements, is socially mediated and filtered, is 'consciousness,' the more it becomes 'culture.'[2]

This passage points both to Adorno's position that administered culture was coming to play ever more fundamental roles in social production and reproduction, and to the belief that analysis of culture can provide crucial insights into social processes. Adorno ascribed a central role to cultural criticism and ideology critique precisely because of the key functions of culture and ideology within contemporary capitalist societies. This focus on culture -- which corresponded to some of his deepest interests -- took the form of a systematic inquiry into the different types, forms, and effects of culture and ideology in contemporary capitalist societies. These ranged from theoretical reflections on the dialectics of culture (i.e. the ways in which culture could be both a force of social conformity and opposition) to critiques of mass culture and aesthetic reflections on the emancipatory potential of high art -- themes at which Adorno excelled and which were central to his thought.

In this section, I will first disclose the origins of Adorno's critique of mass culture in his writings on popular music in the 1930s and argue that he radicalizes his critique as a response to Walter Benjamin's defense of art in the age of mechanical reproduction. From this optic, Horkheimer and Adorno's theory of the culture industry emerges from intense focus and debates over mass culture in Institute of Social Research discussions and publications and can thus be read as a classic articulation of the Institute critique of mass culture -- as I argue in the following section.

In the first issue of the Zeitschrift fur Sozialforschung, articles appeared by Leo Lowenthal and T.W. Adorno which set forth, respectively, a program for a sociology of literature and for a theory and critique of mass culture.[3] In addition to pioneering attempts to develop a sociology of literature, the Institute was among the first to apply the Marxian method of ideology critique to the products of mass culture. Whereas critical theorists like Horkheimer and Marcuse rarely analyzed artifacts of mass culture, others like Adorno and Lowenthal developed both global theories and critiques, while carrying out detailed studies of what they came to call the "culture industries." Adorno began the Institute critique of mass culture in his 1932 article, "On the Social Situation of Music," and he continued it in a series of studies of popular music and other forms of mass culture over the next decades.[4] Adorno initially criticized popular music production for its commodification, rationalization, fetishism, and reification of musical materials -- thus applying the

key neo-Marxist social categories to culture -- while criticizing as well the "regression" in hearing produced by popular music. The framework for his critique was thus the Institute theory of the spread of rationalization and reification into every aspect of social life and the resultant decline of the individual.

A remarkable individual on the margins of the Institute, Walter Benjamin, contested the tendency to sharply separate "authentic art" from mass culture and to valorize one at the expense of the other.[5] For Benjamin, mechanical reproduction (his term for the processes of social rationalization described by Adorno and others in the Institute) robbed high art of its "aura," of the aesthetic power of the work of art related to its earlier functions in magic, religious cults, and as a spiritual object in the religions of art celebrated in movements like romanticism or "art for art's sake." In these cases, the "aura" of the work derived from its supposed authenticity, its uniqueness and individuality. In an era of mechanical reproduction, however, art appeared as commodities like other mass-produced items, and lost its special power as a transcendent object -- especially in mass-produced objects like photography and film with their photo negatives and techniques of mass reproduction. Benjamin experienced this process -- which he believed to be irreversible -- ambivalently:

> For the first time in world history, mechanical reproduction emancipates the work of art from its parasitical dependence on ritual. To an even greater degree the work of art reproduced becomes the work of art designed for reproducibility. From a photographic negative, for example, one can make any number of prints; to ask for the 'authentic' print makes no sense. But the instant the criterion of authenticity ceases to be applicable to artistic production, the total function of art is reversed. Instead of being based on ritual, it begins to be based on another practice -- politics.[6]

While Adorno tended to criticize precisely the most mechanically mediated works of mass culture for their standardization and loss of aesthetic quality -- while celebrating those works that most steadfastly resisted commodification and mechanical reproduction -- Benjamin saw progressive features in high art's loss of its auratic quality and its becoming more politicized. Such art, he claimed, assumed more of an "exhibition value" than a cultic or religious value, and thus demystified its reception. Furthermore, he believed that proliferation of mass art -- especially through film -- would bring images of the contemporary world to the masses and would help raise political consciousness by encouraging scrutiny of the world, as well as by bringing socially critical images to millions of spectators:

> By close-ups of the things around us, by focusing on hidden details of familiar objects, by exploring commonplace milieus under the ingenious guidance of the camera, the film, on the one hand, extends our comprehension of the necessities which rule our lives; on the

> other hand, it manages to assure us of an immense and unexpected field of action. Our taverns and our metropolitan streets, our offices and furnished rooms, our railroad stations and our factories appeared to have us locked up hopelessly. Then came the film and burst this prison-world asunder by the dynamite of the tenth of a second, so that now, in the midst of its far-flung ruins and debris, we calmly and adventurously go traveling."[7]

Benjamin claimed that the mode of viewing film broke with the reverential mode of aesthetic perception and awe encouraged by the bourgeois cultural elite who promoted the religion of art. Montage in film, its "shock effects," the conditions of mass spectatorship, the discussion of issues which film viewing encouraged, and other features of the cinematic experience, produced, in his view, a new sort of social and political experience of art which eroded the private, solitary, and contemplative aesthetic experience encouraged by high culture and its priests. Against the contemplation of high art, the "shock effects" of film produce a mode of "distraction" which Benjamin believed makes possible a "heightened presence of mind" and cultivation of "expert" audiences able to examine and criticize film and society.[8]

In some essays on popular music and in his studies of the culture industries, Adorno attempted to provide a critical response to Benjamin's optimistic appraisal of the socially critical potential of popular art. In a 1938 essay, "On the Fetish-Character in Music and the Regression of Listening," Adorno analyzed in detail the various ways that music performers, conductors, instruments, technical performance, and arrangement of works were fetishized, and how this signified the ways that exchange-value was predominating over use-value in musical production and reception -- thus pointing again to how capitalism was able to control aspects of life once resistant to commercial concerns. In Adorno's words:

> The works which are the basis of the fetishization and become cultural goods experience constitutional changes as a result. They become vulgarized. Irrelevant consumption destroys them. Not merely do the few things played again and again wear out, like the Sistine Madonna in the bedroom, but reification affects their internal structure. They are transformed into a conglomeration of irruptions which are impressed on the listeners by climax and repetition, while the organization of the whole makes no impression whatsoever (FsR, p. 281).

In this situation, musical listening regresses to mere reaction to familiar and standardized formulas (FsR, pp. 285ff.) which increase social conformity and domination. Regression closes off

> the possibility of a different and oppositional music. Regressive, too, is the role which contemporary mass music plays in the psychological household of its victims. They are not merely turned

> away from more important music, but they are confirmed in their neurotic stupidity, quite irrespective of how their musical capacities are related to the specific musical culture of earlier social phases. The assent to hit songs and debased cultural goods belongs to the same complex of symptoms as do those faces of which one no longer knows whether the film has alienated them from reality or reality has alienated them from the film, as they wrench open a great formless mouth with shining teeth in a voracious smile, while the tired eyes are wretched and lost above. Together with sport and film, mass music and the new listening help to make escape from the whole infantile milieu impossible. The sickness has a preservative function" (FSR, p. 287).

Adorno's infamous attack on jazz should be read in the context of his theory of musical fetishism and regression.[9] For Adorno, the often faddish taste for jazz also exhibited features of fetishism, reification, and regression that he observed in other forms of popular music. Contrary to popular belief, Adorno argued that jazz was as standardized, commercialized, and formulaic as other kinds of popular music and encouraged cultural conformity (to dominant models, tastes, etc.) in its devotees as much as other forms of mass culture. Its seeming spontaneity and improvisation are themselves calculated in advance and the range of what is permissible is as circumscribed as in clothes or other realms of fashion.

Adorno and Horkheimer also attempted to counter Benjamin's optimistic appraisal of the progressive elements of film through critique of Hollywood film production. Film in the culture industries was organized like industrial production and utilized standardized formulas and conventional production techniques to mass produce films for purely commercial -- rather than cultural -- purposes. Films reproduced reality as it was and thus helped individuals to adjust and conform to the new conditions of industrial and mass society: "they hammer into every brain the old lesson that continuous friction, the breaking down of all individual resistance, is the condition of life in this society. Donald Duck in the cartoons and the unfortunate in real life get their thrashing so that the audience can learn to take their own punishment."(Horkheimer and Adorno 1972: 138). Finally, films "are so designed that quickness, powers of observation, and experience are undeniably needed to apprehend them at all; yet sustained thought is out of the question if the spectator is not to miss the relentless rush of facts. Even though the effort required for his response is semi-automatic, no scope is left for the imagination. Those who are so absorbed by the world of the movie -- by its images, gestures, and words -- that they are unable to supply what really makes it a world, do not have to dwell on particular points of its mechanics during a screening. All the other films and products of the entertainment industry which they have seen have taught them what to expect; they react automatically" (Horkheimer and Adorno 1972: 126-127).

During the late 1930s and the 1940s when Adorno was developing his critique of popular music (and culture), he was working with Paul Lazarsfeld on some of the first academic studies of the communications industry, and thus was being exposed to some of the more debased and

commercialized forms of popular music.[10] Obviously, Adorno was criticizing these musical forms from the standpoint of his conception of "authentic" music which he found instantiated in high modernism. "Authentic art," for Adorno, is a preserve of both individuality and happiness, as well as a source of critical knowledge. Further, an element of resistance is inherent in the most aloof art. Mass culture for Adorno merely reproduced the status quo and thus helped to reproduce personality structures which would accept the world as it is. High culture, by contrast, is conceptualized as at least a potential force of enlightenment and emancipation. For Adorno, however, only the most radically avant-garde works could provide genuine aesthetic experience. Against the false harmonies of kitsch and affirmative art, Adorno defended the "de-aestheticization" (Entkunstung) of art, its throwing off false veils of harmony and beauty in favor of ugliness, dissonance, fragmentation, and negation which he believed provided a more truthful vision of contemporary society, and a more emancipatory stance for socially critical art. In Adorno's view, art had become increasingly problematical in a society ruled by culture industries and art markets, and to remain "authentic," art must therefore radically resist commodification and integration. This required avant-garde techniques which would enhance art's shock-value, and its critical, emancipatory effects. In his volumes of critical writings, Adorno always championed precisely those most negative and dissonant artists: Kafka and Beckett in literature, Schonberg and Berg in music, Giacommeti in sculpture, and Celan in poetry. Through de-aestheticization, autonomous art would undermine specious harmonizations and reconciliation with the existing world which could not legitimately take place, Adorno believed, until the world was radically changed.[11]

For example, in his well-known critique of "politically committed art," "Commitment," Adorno writes:

> It is not the office of art to spotlight alternatives, but to resist by its form alone the course of the world, which permanently puts a pistol to men's heads... Kafka's prose and Beckett's plays, or the truly monstrous novel The Unnameable, have an effect by comparison with which officially committed works look like pantomimes. Kafka and Beckett arouse the fear which existentialism merely talks about. By dismantling appearance, they explode from within the art which committed proclamation subjugates from without, and hence only in appearance. The inescapability of their work compels the change of attitude which committed works merely demand."[12]

Thus, for Adorno "authentic art" provided insight into existing reality, expressing human suffering and the need for social transformation, and provided as well an aesthetic experience which helped to produce critical consciousness and the need for individual and social transformation. Art for Adorno was thus a privileged vehicle for emancipation. Aesthetic experience alone, he came to believe, provided the refuge for truth and a sphere of individual freedom and resistance. In addition, authentic art validates the claims of sensuous particularities and pure experience, providing bodily experiences of pleasure and validating sense experience devoid from ends. Art is thus an end in itself,

it liberates one from the cares of the world, it provides access to another dimension at the same time that it illuminates socio-historical reality, is a repository of historical truth, [add lyric poetry example

Adorno's problem was that in his optic only authentic art could provide genuine aesthetic experience, and it was precisely authentic art which was disappearing in the administered society. It is impossible here to go into the complexities of Adorno's theory of art, or to discuss the full range of his contributions to the sociology of culture, to ideology critique, and to aesthetic theory and political aesthetics. Instead, I turn to his and Max Horkheimer's critique of the culture industry and the ways that the Institute model influenced debates over mass culture and society from the 1950s to the present.

Adorno and the Culture Industry

While the origins of the Institute for Social Research approach to mass culture and communication are visible in Adorno's early writings on music, Horkheimer and Adorno did not really develop the theory of the culture industries until their emigration to the United States in the 1930s.[13] During their exile period from the mid-1930s through the 1940s, members of the Institute witnessed the proliferation of mass communications and culture and the rise of the consumer society, experiencing at first-hand the advent to cultural power of the commercial broadcasting systems, President Roosevelt's remarkable use of radio for political persuasion, and the ever-growing popularity of cinema during a period in which from 85,000,000 to 110,000,000 Americans paid to see "the movies" each week.[14] And they experienced as well the wide-spread popularity of magazines, comic books, cheap fiction, and the other flora and fauna of the new mass-produced culture.

The culture industry theory was developed in the United States during the heyday of the press, radio, and cinema as dominant cultural forms; it was published just before the first wave of the introduction of television, whose importance Adorno and Horkheimer anticipated, and whose forms and effects were analyzed by Adorno in a classic article originally entitled "How to Look at Television."[15] Interest in the new communications media was growing, and a new discipline was emerging to study its social effects and functions. Research into media communications in the United States was largely inaugurated by the Institute for Social Research, then located at Columbia University, and by Paul Lazarsfeld and his associates in the "Radio Research Project" and later the "Bureau of Applied Social Research" at Princeton and then Columbia University. Lazarsfeld was connected with the Institute for Social Research in various ways, and for several years the groups interacted and undertook common projects.[16]

From their vantage point in California during the 1940s, where many of their exiled compatriots from Germany worked for the film industry, Adorno and Horkheimer were able to experience how business interests dominated mass culture and could observe the fascination that the entertainment industries exerted within the emerging media and consumer society. Marcuse, Lowenthal, and others, who worked in Washington during this period for the Office of War

Information and the U.S. intelligence services, were able to observe government use of mass communications as instruments of political propaganda. The critical theorists thus came to see what they called the "culture industries" as a central part of a new configuration of capitalist modernity which used culture, advertising, mass communications, and new forms of social control to induce consent to and reproduce the new forms of capitalist society. The production and transmission of media spectacles which transmit ideology and consumerism through the means of allegedly "popular entertainment" and information were, they believed, a central mechanism through which contemporary society came to dominate the individual.

Adorno and Horkheimer adopted the term "culture industry," as opposed to concepts like "popular culture" or "mass culture," because they wanted to resist notions that products of the culture industry emanated from the masses or from the people.[17] For they saw the culture industry as being administered culture, imposed from above, as instruments of indoctrination and social control. The term "culture industry" thus contains a dialectical irony typical of the style of critical theory: culture, as traditionally valorized, is supposed to be opposed to industry and expressive of individual creativity while providing a repository of humanizing values. In the culture industries, however, culture has come to function as a mode of ideological domination rather than of humanization or emancipation.

The culture industry was perceived as the culmination of a historical process in which technology and scientific organization and administration came to dominate thought and experience. Although Adorno and Horkheimer carry out a radical questioning of Marxism and the development of an alternative philosophy of history and theory of society in Dialectic of Enlightenment, their theory of the culture industry provides a neo-Marxian account of the mass media and culture which helps explain both the ways in which the culture industries reproduce capitalist societies and why socialist revolutions failed to take place in these societies. In this sense, the Institute theory of "culture industry as mass deception" provides a rebuttal both to Lukàcs' theory of revolution and "class consciousness," and to Brecht's and Benjamin's belief that the new forces of mass communications -especially radio and film -- could serve as instruments of technological progress and social enlightenment which could be turned against the capitalist relations of production and could be used as instruments of political mobilization and struggle.[18]

For Adorno and Horkheimer, by contrast, these new technologies were used as instruments of ideological mystification and class domination. Against Lukàcs and others who argued that capitalist society necessarily radicalized the working class and produced class consciousness, Adorno and Horkheimer suggested that the culture industries inhibit the development of class consciousness by providing the ruling political and economic forces with a powerful instrument of social control. The conception of the culture industry therefore provides a model of a technically advanced capitalist society which mobilizes support for its institutions, practices, and values from below making class-consciousness more difficult to attain than before. Using Gramsci's terminology, the culture industries reproduce capitalist hegemony over the working class by engineering consent to the existing society, and thus establishing a socio-psychological basis for social integration.[19] Whereas fascism destroyed civil society (or the "public sphere") through politicizing mediating

institutions, or utilizing force to suppress all dissent, the culture industries coax individuals into the privacy of their home, or movie theater, while producing consumers-spectators of media events and escapist entertainment who are being subtly indoctrinated into dominant ideologies and conformist behavior.

The analysis of the culture industry stands, therefore, in a quite ambivalent relationship to classical Marxism. On one hand, the theory is part of the foundation for the critical theory of society, replacing the critique of political economy which had been the foundation for social theories previously in the Marxian tradition. And it served as an important part of the explanation of why the critical theorists no longer placed faith in the revolutionary vocation of the proletariat. Yet in other ways, the analysis of the culture industry employs Marxian arguments through stressing capitalist control of culture, the commodification and reification of culture, its ideological functions, and the ways that it integrates individuals into capitalist society.

For example, Adorno and Horkheimer utilize a model that pits the individual against its "adversary -- the absolute power of capitalism" (1972: p. 120), and describe the tendencies toward conformity, standardization, and deception in the culture industry by means of its control by monopoly corporations which themselves are central to the capitalist system (pp. 120ff.). The very processes of production in the culture industry are modelled on factory production where everything is standardized, streamlined, coordinated, and planned down to the last detail. Indeed, Adorno and Horkheimer use their analysis of the culture industry to call attention to what they perceive as the fundamental traits of the administered society, and to carry out a radical critique of capitalism. They suggest that reflection on the culture industries illuminates the processes toward standardization, homogenization, and conformity that characterize social life under what they call "totalitarian capitalism." The tendencies toward manipulation and domination in the culture industry illuminate similar trends throughout capitalist society.

In a key passage, they indicate how technological and material forces of progress can be used to foster domination and regression:

> The fallen nature of modern man cannot be separated from social progress. On the one hand the growth of economic productivity furnishes the conditions for a world of greater justice; on the other hand it allows the technical apparatus and the social groups which administer it a disproportionate superiority to the rest of the population. The individual is wholly devaluated in relation to the economic powers, which at the same time press the control of society over nature to hitherto unsuspected heights. Even though the individual disappears before the apparatus which he serves, that apparatus provides for him as never before. In an unjust state of life, the impotence and pliability of the masses grow with the quantitative increase in commodities allowed them" (1972: pp. xiv-xv).

Adorno and Horkheimer point to similarities between industrial and cultural production, and a growing social unification based on increasing homogenization and control:

> The ruthless unity in the culture industry is evidence of what will happen in politics. Marked differentiations such as those of A and B films, or of stories in magazines in different price ranges, depend not so much on subject matter as on classifying, organizing, and labelling consumers. Something is provided for all so that none may escape; the distinctions are emphasized and extended. The public is catered for with a hierarchical range of mass-produced products of varying quality, thus advancing the rule of complete quantification. Everybody must behave (as if spontaneously) in accordance with his previously determined and indexed level, and choose the category of mass product turned out for his type. Consumers appear as statistics on research organization charts, and are divided by income groups into red, green, and blue areas; the technique is that used for any type of propaganda (1972: 123).

Later in the chapter, Adorno and Horkheimer describe the blend between mass culture, advertising and consumption in the consumer society (Horkheimer and Adorno 1972: 156ff.). They argue:

> The assembly-line character of the culture industry, the synthetic, planned method of turning out its products (factory-like not only in the studio but, more or less, in the compilation of cheap biographies, pseudodocumentary novels, and hit songs) is very suited to advertising: the important individual points, by becoming detachable, interchangeable, and even technically alienated from any connected meaning, lend themselves to ends external to the work. The effect, the trick, the isolated repeatable device, have always been used to exhibit goods for advertising purposes, and today every monster close-up of a star is an advertisement for her name, and every hit song a plug for its tune. Advertising and the culture industry merge technically as well as economically. In both cases the same thing can be seen in innumerable places, and the mechanical repetition of the same cultural product has come to be the same as that of the propaganda slogan. In both cases the insistent demand for effectiveness makes technology into psycho-technology, into a procedure for manipulating men. In both cases the standards are the striking yet familiar, the easy yet catchy, the skillful yet simple; the object is to overpower the customer, who is conceived as absent-minded or resistant" (1972: 163).

The mass deception present in the culture industries is similar to the deception, false promises, and manipulation in the economic, political, and social spheres. In this conception, one of the main trends of contemporary capitalist societies is the synthesis of advertising, culture, information, politics, and manipulation that characterizes the culture industries. This dialectical focus on the relationships between the culture industry and capitalism points to a basic methodological position within critical theory that in turn marks its affinity to Marxian dialectics. For critical theory every social phenomenon must be interpreted in terms of a theory of society which itself is part of a theory of capitalism. The theory of the relationships between society and the economy illuminate phenomena like the culture industry, and its analysis in turn sheds light on the economy and society. Consequently, critical theory operates with a dialectic between its topics of analysis (the culture industry, or anti-semitism, or whatever other topic is addressed) and its theory of society. In this dialectic, the theory of society illuminates the topic under investigation -- which in turn illuminates the fundamental social trends (i.e. commodification, reification, etc.) described in the social theory.

After describing the style of culture industry products and the formulas, conventions, and stereotypes that constitute it, Adorno and Horkheimer analyze several of the strategies used to indoctrinate its consumers into acceptance of the existing society. "Entertainment," they claim, accustoms the audiences to accept existing society as natural by endlessly repeating and reproducing similar views of the world which present the existing way of life as the way of the world. The eternal recurrence of the same in the culture industry changes, they suggest, the very nature of ideology:

> Accordingly, ideology has been made vague and noncommittal, and thus neither clearer nor weaker. Its very vagueness, its almost scientific aversion from committing itself to anything which cannot be verified, acts as an instrument of domination. It becomes a vigorous and prearranged promulgation of the status quo. The culture industry tends to make itself the embodiment of authoritative pronouncements, and thus the irrefutable prophet of the prevailing order. It skillfully steers a winding course between the cliffs of demonstrable misinformation and manifest truth, faithfully reproducing the phenomenon whose opaqueness blocks any insight and installs the ubiquitous and intact phenomenon as ideal. Ideology is split into the photograph of stubborn life and the naked lie about its meaning -- which is not expressed but suggested and yet drummed in. To demonstrate its divine nature, reality is always repeated in a purely cynical way. Such a photological proof is of course not stringent, but it is overpowering.... The new ideology has as its objects the world as such. It makes use of the worship of facts by no more than elevating a disagreeable existence into the world of facts in representing it meticulously" (1972: pp.

147-148).

The culture industry thus tries to induce the individual to identify with society's typical figures and models: "Pseudo-individuality is rife: from the standardized jazz improvisation to the exceptional film star whose hair curls over her eye to demonstrate her originality. What is individual is no more than the generality's power to stamp the accidental detail so firmly that it is accepted as such. The defiant reserve or elegant appearance of the individual on show is mass-produced like Yale locks, whose only difference can be measured in fractions of millimeters" (1972: p. 154). The culture industry thus serves as a powerful instrument of social control that induces individuals to accept their fate and conform to existing society. Advertising progressively fuses in style and technique with the entertainment of the culture industry (1972: pp. 156-167) which in turn can be read as advertisements for the existing society and established way of life.

Like every theoretical conception, the notion of the culture industries was a product of its historical period and its insights and limitations result primarily from the fact that it theorized features of a past historical conjuncture. The Institute conception of the role of mass culture and communication was first shaped in the period of Nazi Germany where they witnessed Hitler's extraordinary use of mass communications and fascist spectacles. Obviously, the experience of fascism shaped the critical theorists views of the rise of a behemoth state and cultural apparatus combined with an eclipse of democracy, individuality, and what they saw as authentic art. And in exile in the United States, they observed Roosevelt's impressive use of the media and the propagandistic uses of the mass media during World War intellectual. Consequently, political use and control of the media during conditions of warfare, with an enlarged wartime state and subordinate war-time economy, coupled with capitalist control of the entertainment industries, provided the historical roots of the Institute model of the culture industries as instruments of social control. Indeed, the media under this type of militarized social system and war conditions -- whether liberal-democratic, fascist, or state socialist -- will be rather one-dimensional and propagandistic. Moreover, the critical theory model of the media and society also rather accurately described certain dominant trends and effects during the post-World War Two Cold War period when the media were enlisted in the anti-communist crusade and when media content was subject to tight control and censorship -a situation signalled by Adorno and Horkheimer's allusions to "purges" (1972: p. 123).[20]

Adorno, Cultural Studies, and Critique

The critique of the culture industries was one of the most influential aspects of critical theory, and its impact on social theory and on theories and critiques of mass communication and culture was significant. While there are many limitations to Adorno analyses of mass culture, it provides models of radical critique of the artifacts of media culture, situates culture and communication within the capitalist political economy and historical context of its day, and anticipates British cultural studies in taking seriously artifacts of media culture, conceptualizing the dynamic interaction between text and audience, and relating culture and politics.[21]

Thus, despite its limitations which I shall outline in this section, Adorno's analyses of the culture industries make many important contributions to the study of media culture. Adorno and his colleagues conceptualize culture and communications as part of society and focuses on how socio-economic imperatives helped constitute their nature, function, and effects. By conceiving of these important social forces as part of socio-economic processes, critical theory integrates study of culture and communication with study of the economy and society. And by adopting a critical approach to the study of all social phenomena, Adorno and critical theory are able to conceptualize how the culture industries serve as instruments of social control and thus serve the interests of social domination. Adorno and his Institute colleagues where thus among the first social theorists to see the importance of mass culture and communication in the reproduction of contemporary societies and developed a critical approach whereas more mainstream approaches were either "administrative" (Lazarsfeld's term), serving the interests of media industries and the status quo, or were "empirical," following the model of positivist science at the time.[22] Moreover, whereas studies of mass culture and communications tended to divide into social science-based empirical studies of mass communication and humanities and text-based cultural studies, Adorno's model focused -- at least in principle -- on production and political economy, text, and audience reception, thus providing a more integral model for cultural and communications studies than were developing during the epoch that he wrote and lived.[23]

Yet in contrast to the mode of condemnatory criticism associated with Adorno and critical theory, radical cultural criticism today should develop more complex strategies and should attempt to develop a more multi-dimensional approach to media culture. Rather than seeing its artifacts simply as expressions of hegemonic ideology and ruling class interests, it is more useful to see popular entertainment as complex products that contain contradictory moments of desire and its displacement, articulations of hopes and their repression. In this view, media culture provides access to a society's dreams and nightmares, and contains both ideological celebrations of the status quo and utopian moments of transcendence, moments of opposition and rebellion, and its attempted containment.[24] In reading the texts of media culture, we should also perceive how social struggles and conflicts enter into works of popular entertainment, and see culture as a contested terrain rather than a field of one-dimensional manipulation and illusion.[25]

Post-Adornoesque critical theories of culture and communication must therefore be able to develop more complex methods of cultural interpretation and criticism that pay attention to and conceptualize the contradictions, articulation of social conflicts, oppositional moments, subversive tendencies, and projection of utopian images and scenes of happiness and freedom that appear within media culture. In his study "On the Fetish Character in Music," Adorno wrote: "The familiarity of the piece is a surrogate for the quality ascribed to it. To like it is almost the same thing as to recognize it. An approach in terms of value judgements has become a fiction for the person who finds himself hemmed in by standardized musical goods. He can neither escape impotence nor decide between the offerings where everything is so completely identical that preference in fact depends merely on biographical details or on the situation in which things are heard."[26]

Arguing that all popular music is "so completely identical" might have some validity in the

analysis of the radio-based popular music of the day, although on the whole it violates Adorno's own defense of particularity and critique of identity-thinking which subsumes heterogeneous particulars to abstract categories. The classical critical theory approach, especially Adorno's work, generally limits itself, to attacking the ideology and purely retrogressive effects of radio, popular music, films, television, and so on. In this sense, the model of cultural interpretation and criticism is remarkably similar to crude Marxian critique of ideology which restricts cultural analysis to denunciation of ideology. Part of the problem is that for Adorno and many of his colleagues, the artifacts of the culture industry are simply beneath contempt. In Minima Moralia, Adorno writes: "Every visit to the cinema leaves me, against all my vigilance, stupider and worse."[27] Such an arrogant and grandiose gesture of absolute disdain, however, precludes understanding what gratifications popular culture actually provide and what needs it serves, in however distorted a fashion. This attitude also leads critical theorists to neglect, with some exceptions, analyzing specific films, television programs, or artifacts of popular culture, since they presume in advance that such artifacts are simply a debased form of culture and vehicle of ideology which are not worthy of detailed study or critique. Thus, when Adorno does analyze examples of popular music and television, he generally limits himself to arraigning their ideologies and "retrogressive" effects on consciousness without analyzing the work's contradictions, critical or oppositional moments, or potential to provide insight into social conditions or to elicit a critical response.[28]

But while popular music may, as Adorno argued, exhibit features of commodification, reification, and standardization, which may in turn have retrogressive effects on consciousness, such a theoretical optic cannot adequately account for the genesis and popularity of many forms of popular music such as the blues, jazz, rock and roll, reggae, punk, and other forms of music connected with oppositional subcultures. Since music is the most non-representational of all arts, it provides vehicles for the expression of pain, rage, joy, rebellion, sexuality, and other basic human experiences which might have progressive effects. Historically, the production of certain types of popular music was often carried out by oppressed groups, like blacks or hispanics, or by working class whites or marginalized youth. Much popular music thus articulates rebellion against the standardization, conformity, submission, and other features that Adorno criticized. Moreover, the forms of reception of popular music have frequently been dances and festivities in a context of transgression of propriety through drinking, wildly dancing, communally singing, making love, and other socio-erotic activities. Ragtime, jazz, bop, swing, and rock have been more at home in the brothel, dance-hall, or bedroom than within His Master's Voice in the living room. Though contemporary forms of punk and hard rock can provide background for young fascists and conservatives, it can also provide the social cement for a culture of political mobilization and struggle -- as the Rock Against Racism and Rock gegen Rechts concerts in England and Germany indicated in the 1980s.

Indeed, various global concerts, including a 1999 Internet concert, have continued to mobilize youth and to cultivate oppositional subcultures. Indeed, music like punk or reggae can be as bound up with a subculture of protest as much as with the commodification of culture for profitability and harmless catharsis -- although, as Adorno argued, all forms of media culture can be absorbed and coopted by the existing system.

Adorno's model of the culture industry does not allow for the heterogeneity of popular culture and contradictory effects, instead straightjacketing media culture in the form of reification and commodification as signs of the total triumph of capital and the total reification of experience. To be sure, much popular culture lends itself precisely to Adorno's categories and critique, though as suggested, other examples resist his categories and require a more complex approach to cultural interpretation and critique. Yet occasionally, Adorno did qualify his one-dimensional condemnation of popular culture, and also allowed for the possibility of audience resistance to media manipulation.[29] In "Transparencies on Film," Adorno uncharacteristically indicated that a certain sort of film might contain socially critical potential and that mass culture itself reproduces existing conflicts and antagonisms: "In its attempts to manipulate the masses, the ideology of the culture industry itself becomes as internally antagonistic as the very society which it aims to control. The ideology of the culture industry contains the antidote to its own lie" (p. 202). In particular, Adorno believed that the technique of montage (the juxtaposition of images to create multiple effects of meaning and socially critical associations) developed by Sergi Eisenstein and the revolutionary Soviet cinema provides models for a socially progressive cinema: "Film is faced with the dilemma of finding a procedure which neither lapses into arts-and-crafts nor slips into a more documentary mode. The obvious answer today, as forty years ago, is that of montage which does not interfere with things but rather arranges them in a constellation akin to that of writing" (p. 203).

Yet Adorno believed that pure montage and cinematic shock effects (such as were celebrated by Benjamin) "without the addition of intentionality in its details, refuses to accept intentions merely from the principle itself" (p. 203). Progressive film would thus have to combine montage in image construction with other effects, like advanced music (and progressive political intentions and insights?), to turn the images of film into a socially critical direction for Adorno: "The liberated film would have to wrest its a priori collectivity from the mechanisms of unconscious and irrational influence and enlist this collectivity in the service of emancipatory intentions" (pp. 203-204).

In another late article, "Leisure," Adorno pointed to limitations of the ability of the culture industry to manipulate spectator consciousness. Reflecting on a study conducted of the media's presentation of the marriage of a Dutch Princess to an upper class German, Adorno stressed that the audience saw through the media hype of this event, and realistically perceived its insignificance. He thus concluded: "The integration of consciousness and leisure is obviously not yet entirely successful. The real interests of the individuals are still strong enough, at the margins, to resist total control."[30] Yet as Jay Bernstein suggests in an Introduction to Adorno's writings on the culture industry, Adorno also emphasized a dialectics of "seeing through and obeying," whereby audiences saw through the facade of astrology, advertising and propaganda, yet continued to submit to the reign of mass culture, capital, and the existing system.[31]

Yet critical approaches to media culture today should not simply limit themselves to denouncing bourgeois ideologies and escapist functions. Even conservative media culture often provides insights into forms of dominant ideologies and sometimes unwittingly provides images of social conflict and opposition. Studies of Hollywood films, for instance, reveal that this form of

commercial culture exhibits a conflict of representations between competing social ideologies over the last several decades. Particularly, in the period from around 1967 to the present, a variety of competing ideological standpoints have appeared in mainstream Hollywood film.[32] Consequently, there is no one monolithic, dominant ideology which the culture industries promote, and indeed the conflicting ideologies in contemporary culture industry artifacts point to continuing and intensifying social conflict within capitalist societies.

Yet in the Institute critique of mass culture, there are no theories of oppositional and emancipatory uses of the media and cultural practices. There is neither a strategy for cultural revolution as is found in Brecht, Benjamin, and Enzensberger, nor is there a media politics to overcome the harmful effects that Adorno and Horkheimer describe.[33] In an era of media saturation, however, such asceticism would only further marginalize already marginalized critical intellectuals and oppositional groups. Consequently, a radical media politics should replace the pessimistic denunciation found in classical critical theory -- a point even more salient in the Age of the Internet.

Part of the problem is that Adorno and his followers rigidly juxtapose their concepts of "authentic art" -- modelled on masters of the avant garde like Schonberg, Kafka, and Beckett -- against mass culture which they denounce for failing to have the qualities that they find in their preferred aesthetic models. It's true that Adorno writes, in an oft-cited letter to Walter Benjamin:

> 'Les extremes me touches' [Gide], just as they touch you -- but only if the dialectic of the lowest has the same value as the dialectic of the higher, rather than the latter simply decaying. Both bear the stigmata of capitalism, both contain elements of change (but never, of course, the middle-term between Schonberg and the American film). Both are torn halves of an integral freedom to which, however, they do not add up. It would be romantic to sacrifice one to the other, either as the bourgeois romanticism of the conservation of personality and all that stuff, or as the anarchistic romanticism of blind confidence in the spontaneous power of the proletariat in the historical process -- a proletariat which is itself a product of bourgeois society.[34]

This citation is significant as it suggests that Adorno recognizes that high art and mass culture are both socially-mediated by capitalism and that Adorno does not attack popular culture per se, but the forms it takes under capitalism. Indeed, there are plenty of positive references to popular forms of entertainment like the circus, the music hall, and the carnival in Adorno, as well as positive references to Betty Boop films, even in the infamous essay on the culture industry written with Max Horkheimer. Rather than rejecting the popular tout court, Adorno is critical of a form of standardized mass culture that is part of the industrial processes of mass production and consumption within contemporary capitalism which in turn contributes to processes of homogenization and massification of both culture and audiences.

Usually, however, Adorno makes a rather rigid distinction between "high culture" and "mass culture," a dualism that has not only come under critical attack, but which is undermined by the very tendencies of postmodern culture to implode cultural boundaries and collapse hierarchies. Adorno, no doubt, would see this as an example of cultural barbarism, but it seems perverse to expect products of the culture industries to have the qualities of works of previous "high culture" or the avant-garde. Yet by limiting his model of authentic art to those few avant-garde examples of highly negative art, Adorno rules out in advance the possibility of any oppositional cultural politics and his model of emancipatory aesthetics is intolerably ascetic and narrow, limited only to those avant-garde productions which resist assimilation and co-optation.

In a sense, Adorno's aesthetics are undialectical. He operates with a binary contrast between "authentic" art and mass culture in which the latter is completely debased and emancipatory effects are limited to the former. This stance reproduces the German religion of high art and its inevitable elitism, and completely excludes the "popular" from the domain of "the authentic," thus regressing behind the critiques of Brecht and Benjamin -- and Adorno's own critique of "the authentic" in his book Jargon of Authenticity. Indeed, Adorno's own esoteric aesthetic theory itself becomes a jargon motivated by a dual fear of cooptation and regression.[35] Yet Adorno's uncompromising radicalism provides a healthy antidote to all affirmative and idealist aesthetics, and his obstinate obsession with art provides a wealth of insights into the mediations between art and society which might become productive for materialist social theory and cultural criticism of the future.

It is, admittedly exceedingly difficult to read and critique Adorno. An incomparable stylist, he defies summary. The Adorno adventure involves entering into his language, letting his writing and style carry you into a new way of seeing. Adorno's bon mot concerning Kafka -- "He over whom Kafka's wheels have passed, has lost for ever both any peace with the world and any chance of consoling himself with the judgement that the way of the world is bad" (P, p. x) -- holds as well for him: once one has genuinely appropriated Adorno's insights one cannot see the media and society in quite the same way. Once one has appropriated Adorno's vision, one finds his ideas instantiated and confirmed over and over, day after day. One has lost one's innocence, one finds one's self distanced from media culture, detects its standardization, pseudo-individualism, stereotypes and schemata, and the baleful effects of cultural commodification and reification. In a postmodern scene that celebrates the active audience, that finds resistance everywhere, that ritualistically acclaims the popular, Adorno is thus a salutatory counterforce.

In fact, while there is no question but that Adorno has overly one-sided and excessively negative and critical views of both the texts and the audiences of media culture, occasionally, I have a nightmare that in some sense Adorno is right, that media culture by and large keeps individuals gratified and subservient to the logic and practices of market capitalism, that the culture industry has become thoroughly commodified and absorbs and deflects all oppositional culture to subservient ends. At times, web-surfing, channel-shifting on cable systems, or scanning commercial radio can provide the impression that Adorno is correct, that most media culture is reified crap and blatant ideology, that culture has been fundamentally commercialized, homogenized, and banalized in contemporary capitalism. Yet when such nightmare thoughts dissolve, one sees a society in conflict

with competing groups struggling to control the direction of society, with progressive and regressive forces in contention. In this situation, to have a dialectical and oppositional cultural criticism that intervenes in the struggles of the present moment, it is clear that we must move beyond Adorno while assimilating his intransigent oppositional stance and critical insights.

Notes

1. See Horkheimer and Adorno 1972 and the discussion in Kellner 1989, Chapter 4. On Adorno and the Frankfurt School, see the articles collected in Andrew Arato and Eike Gebhardt, eds., The Essential Frankfurt School Reader (New York: Seabury, 1982) and Stephen Eric Bronner and Douglas Kellner, eds., Critical Theory and Society: A Reader (New York: Routledge, 1989; hereafter CTR); the discussions of the history of the Frankfurt school in Jay 1971 and Wiggershaus 1996; and the discussion of the Frankfurt school combination of social theory and cultural criticism in Kellner 1989.

2. T.W. Adorno, "Cultural Criticism and Society" in Prisms (London: Neville Spearman, 1967: 30). Adorno was influenced by the view that social reality was articulated within works of art which required hermeneutical deciphering held by his friend and mentor Siegfried Kracauer. See his article "The Mass Ornament" in CTR. On Adorno's cultural criticism, see Susan Buck-Morss, Origins of Negative Dialectics (New York: The Free Press, 1977); Gillian Rose, The Melancholy Science (London: Macmillan 1978); and Deborah Cook, The Culture Industry Revisited (Landham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1996).

3. See the translations in T.W. Adorno, "On the Social Situation of Music," in Telos 35 (Spring 1978), p. 130, and Leo Lowenthal, "On Sociology of Literature," in Literature and Mass Culture (New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1984) (page references to the latter article will be cited within the text). Later Adorno would become increasingly critical of what he saw as the superficiality of Lowenthal's sociology of culture and his own efforts would be much more sophisticated.

4. See, for example, T.W. Adorno, "On the Social Situation of Music," ibid; "On the Fetish Character of Music and the Regression of Hearing," in Andrew Arato and Eike Gebhardt, eds., The Essential Frankfurt School Reader (New York: Seabury, 1982; hereafter FSR); and "On Popular Music," Studies in Philosophy and Social Science, Vol. IX, No. 1. (1941). See also the collection of Adorno's writings on mass culture edited by J.M. Bernstein, T.W. Adorno, The Culture Industry (London: Routledge, 1991) and The Stars Down to Earth and Other Essays on the Irrational in Culture, edited by Stephen Crook (London Routledge, 1994).

5. Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in Illuminations (New York: Schocken, 1969). On Adorno and Benjamin's shared aesthetic interests and debates, see Buck-Morss, Origins, ibid.

6. Benjamin, "Work of Art," op. cit., p. 224.

7. Op. cit., p. 236.

8. Op. cit., pp. 237-241.

9. Adorno, "Jazz. Perennial Fashion," Prisms, op. cit., pp. 119-132. It should be noted that Adorno developed his conception of jazz while researching popular music for CBS in a grant obtained by Paul Lazarsfeld. Thus, his sample of jazz music was mostly mediocre radio performances or popular records; there is no evidence that Adorno ever heard live jazz performances or was aware of the wealth of different types of jazz circulating at the time; thus, while his critique might describe aspects of the sort of jazz broadcast on network radio, it obviously misses the richness of the jazz tradition and is probably the most harshly criticized of any of Adorno's work. See note 10 for sources on Adorno's work with Lazarsfeld.

10. On the relationship between Lazarsfeld, Adorno, and the Institute, see the memoirs by Paul Lazarsfeld, "An Episode in the History of Social Research: A Memoir" and Theodor W. Adorno "Scientific Experiences of a European Scholar in America," both in The European Migration, edited by Donald Fleming and Bernard Bailyn (Cambridge, Mass., 1969), and David E. Morrison, "Kultur and Culture: The Case of Theodor W. Adorno and Paul F. Lazarsfeld," Social Research, Vol. 45, No. 2 (Summer 1978). Lazarsfeld published over fifty books and many articles that helped to found the new discipline of communications research.

11. For various of Adorno's analyses of high art, see the studies in Philosophy of Modern Music (New York: Seabury, 1973); Notes to Literature (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991); and Aesthetic Theory (London: Routledge, 1984).

12. T.W. Adorno, "Commitment," in Aesthetics and Politics (London: New Left Books, 1977), pp. 180, 191. The notion of authentic-art-as-negation runs throughout Adorno's writings on art which generally formulates the notion in paradoxical terms: "Art records negatively just that possibility of happiness which the only partially positive anticipation of happiness ruinously confronts today. All 'light' and pleasant art has become illusory and mendacious. What makes its appearance aesthetically in the pleasure categories can no longer give pleasure, and the promise of happiness, once the definition of art, can no longer be found except where the mask has been torn from the countenance of false happiness" (FSR, p. 274).

13. While Adorno began the Institute critique of mass culture in his analyses of the standardization, pseudo-individuality, and manipulative effects of popular music (discussed above), Max Horkheimer spoke of the "entertainment industry" in several 1930s articles, and analyzed the differences between "authentic art" and "mass culture" in "Art and Mass Culture," now collected in Critical Theory (New York: Seabury Press, 1972). Leo Lowenthal, who earlier had carried out a study of popular magazine biographies in Germany, analyzed images of success in American magazines, noting a shift from "heroes of production" to "heroes of consumption," in which the "stars" of the culture industry played a major role (in LPCS). A 1941 issue, in English, of Studies in

Philosophy and Social Science (Vol. IX, No. 1) was devoted to mass communications and advanced the notion of "critical research" which combined "theoretical thinking with empirical analysis." Thus the famous study of the "culture industry" in Dialectic of Enlightenment built on earlier work and highlighted a theme that had become central to the work of Adorno and the Institute for Social Research.

14. See William Dieterle, "Hollywood and the European Crisis" in Studies, ibid, pp. 96ff.

15. T. W. Adorno, "How to Look at Television," The Quarterly of Film, Radio, and Television, Vol. VII (Spring); republished as "Television and the Patterns of Mass Culture" Mass Culture, edited by Bernard Rosenberg and David Manning White (Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, 1957) and collected in T.W. Adorno, The Culture Industry. Interestingly, Adorno and Horkheimer also anticipated in the early 1940s that television would become the most powerful part of the culture industry: "Television aims at a synthesis of radio and film, and is held up only because the interested parties have not yet reached agreement, but its consequences will be quite enormous and promise to intensify the impoverishment of aesthetic matter so drastically, that by tomorrow the thinly veiled identity of all industrial culture products can come triumphantly out into the open, derisively fulfilling the Wagnerian dream of the Gesamtkunstwerk -- the fusion of all the arts in one work" (1972: p. 124). They foresaw a condition in which television would be the apotheosis of the commercialization of culture to an extent that the movies would be perceived as a cultural form relatively uncluttered with commercial messages: "if technology had its way–the film would be delivered to people's homes as happens with the radio. It is moving toward the commercial system. Television points the way to a development which might easily enough force the Warner Brothers into what would certainly be the unwelcome position of serious musicians and cultural conservatives" (1972: p. 161.

16. For a further discussion of the relation between the Institute and Lazarsfeld and the impact of Critical Theory on media theory and research in the United States, see Douglas Kellner, "Critical Theory, Mass Communications and Popular Culture," Telos 62 (Winter 1984/85), pp. 196-206. For a provocative critique of Lazarsfeld's paradigm, see Todd Gitlin, "Media Sociology: The Dominant Paradigm," Theory and Society, Vol. 6, No. 2 (1978), pp. 205-253. Although Gitlin presents an excellent critique of Lazarsfeld's paradigm, especially as set forth in Personal Influence, he tends to neglect the critical elements of Lazarsfeld's work and also fails to point out that an alternative critical paradigm was present alongside Lazarsfeld's in the work of the Institute. Many essays in the issue of the Journal of Communication, "Ferment in the Field," Vol. 33, Nr. 3 (Summer 1983) contain appraisals of Lazarsfeld's influence on communications research; other articles mention the impact of Institute critical theory on communications research in the United States, though none of these studies systematically demonstrates how the Institute for Social Research influenced theories of communications, culture, and social theory.

17. See T. W. Adorno, "The Culture Industry Revisited," New German Critique 6 (Fall 1975), pp. 11; reprinted in CTR.

18. Lukàcs, History and Class Consciousness, ibid; Bertolt Brecht, Gesammelte Schriften, Vol. 18 (Frankfurt, 1967), translated as "Radio as a Means of Communication," in Screen, vol. 20, Nos. 3/4 (Winter 1979/80), pp. 24-28; and Walter Benjamin, Illuminations (New York: Schocken, 1969). On the other hand, the culture industry theory can also be seen as an application of Lukàcs' theory of the commodity fetishism and the reification of culture and consciousness in capitalist society to artifacts of mass communications and culture, which is then turned against Lukàcs' political theory by claiming that these phenomena prevent the development of class consciousness, upon which Lukàcs' theory of revolution depends.

19. On Gramsci's theory of hegemony, see Antonio Gramsci, Prison Notebooks (New York: International Publishers, 1971) and Carl Boggs, The Two Revolutions (Boston: South End Press, 1984).

20. On the culture industries and the blacklist, see Victor Navasky, Naming Names (New York: Viking Press, 1980).

21. On the Frankfurt School anticipation of British cultural studies, similarities and differences, see Douglas Kellner, "Critical Theory and British Cultural Studies: The Missed Articulation," in Cultural Methodologies, edited by Jim McGuigan. London: Sage, 1997: 12-41.

22. For discussion of the contributions of Adorno and critical theory to study of culture and communications, see Douglas Kellner, "Kulturindustrie und Massenkommunikation. Die Kritische Theorie und ihre Folgen," in Wolfgang Bonss and Axel Honneth, editors, Sozialforschung als Kritik (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1982), 482-514; "Critical Theory, Mass Communications, and Popular Culture," Telos 62 (Winter 1984/85), 196-206; and Critical Theory, Marxism, and Modernity, Chapters 5 and 6.

23. For discussion of how Adorno and the Frankfurt School overcome the divide between communications and cultural studies, see Douglas Kellner, "Political Economy and Cultural Studies: Overcoming the Divide," Cultural Studies in Question, edited by Marjorie Ferguson and Peter Golding. London: Sage Publications, 1997: 102-120.

24. See Fredric Jameson, "Reification and Utopia in Mass Culture," Social Text 1 (Winter 1979): 130-148. For my own view, see Douglas Kellner, Media Culture. Cultural Studies, Identity and Politics Between the Modern and the Postmodern (London: Routledge, 1995).

25. See, for example, Peter Biskind, Seeing is Believing: How I Stopped Worrying and Came to Love the Fifties (New York: Pantheon, 1983); Douglas Kellner and Michael Ryan, Camera Politica: Politics and Ideology in Contemporary Hollywood Cinema (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988); and Kellner, Media Culture, op. cit..

26. Adorno, "On the Fetish Character in Music and the Regression of Listening," in The Culture

Industry, op. cit., p. 26.

27. Adorno, Minima Moralia, op. cit., p. 25.

28. I'll cite some qualifications below which are seized upon by Adorno's defenders to pose alternative readings of his denunciation of the culture industry. Alternative readings are always possible and are sometimes fruitful, but the overwhelming force of Adorno's writing on mass culture is purely negative and, I believe, provides obstacles to more incisive radical approaches to mass-mediated culture.

29. See T.W. Adorno, "Transparencies on Film," New German Critique 24-25 (Fall/Winter 1981-2), pp. 199-206. In the same issue, Miriam Hansen attempts to indicate how Adorno might be used to contribute to a more positive reading of film; pp. 186-198.

30. T.W. Adorno, "Freizeit," Stickworte (Suhrkamp: Frankfurt, 1969). Cited in Andreas Huysen, "Introduction to Adorno," New German Critique 6 (Fall 1975): 10; translated as "Free Time" in The Culture Industry, op. cit..

31. Jay Bernstein, "Introduction" to T.W. Adorno, The Culture Industry, op. cit., pp. 10 ff.

32. See Kellner and Ryan, Camera Politica, op. cit. and Kellner, Media Culture, op. cit.

33. See Hans Magnus Enzensberger, "Constituents Toward a Theory of the Media" in The Consciousness Industry (New York: Seabury, 1974) and Douglas Kellner, "TV, Ideology, and Emancipatory Popular Culture," Socialist Review 45 (Nov-Dec) and "Public Access Television: Alternative Views," in Making Waves, Radical Science 16 (London: 1975). For Brecht's radio theory and Benjamin's analysis of the radicalizing potential of film, see the material cited in note 4. Brecht's radio plays are found in Gesammelte Schriften, Vol. 2, op. cit.), and Benjamin's are collected in Gesammelte Schriften, Band IV, 2, or the Werkausgabe, Band 11 (Frankfurt, 1980). For my more recent studies of oppositional Internet politics, see Douglas Kellner, "Intellectuals, the New Public Spheres, and Technopolitics," New Political Science #41-42 (1997): 169-188 and "Toward a Radical Democratic Technopolitics," Angelaki, 1999.

34. Adorno to Benjamin, Aesthetics and Politics, op. cit., p. 123.

35. Most Adorno critics have noted his almost paranoic fear of cooptation, and Peter Burger makes a salient argument that fear of regression motivated Adorno's aesthetic theory in "The Decline of the Modern Age," Telos 62 (Winter 1984-85): 117-130.