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MODERN MUSIC CULTURE: ON SHOCK, POP AND SYNTHESIS

In the modern era, western music culture is fragmented. Throughout the twentieth century, it is possible to see an unprecedented alienation of serious classical composers from the public and, at the same time, the growth of commercial music forms with an extraordinary success and 'popularity' in terms of market sales. However crude this depiction of a complex history, music shows a more extreme polarization than the other older art forms. Architecture may be the exemplary medium of an alienated and dominating modernism; and the ideology of the avant-garde was constructed in late-nineteenth-century visual art as well as in music. But neither the visual arts nor architecture show an expanding and volatile mass market of popular forms *synchronously* with the development of their modernisms and avant-gardes.¹

On the other hand, within commercial popular music there is a proliferation of markets and of production processes which is remarkable compared with other mass media. Television, cinema, the press and radio are by comparison large-scale, centralized and oligopolistic forms of cultural production, with little entry or influence by small-scale producers and distributors. Some of these media, as their technologies evolve, show signs of the potential development of more active and invasive margins, but the overall trend is still towards concentration.²

Music therefore provides a fascinating object for cultural study. In comparison with other modern forms it has embodied a uniquely full spectrum of positions across the cultural field, and this makes it possible to examine that field as a historical totality. Musical modernism and popular music, both dramatic expressions of larger cultural movements, developed concurrently. By exploring the interrelation between them - a problem ignored until very recently in cultural theory - we can understand forces at work behind the still-forming character of postmodernism. Such an exploration must begin by delineating modernist and popular music cultures.

In socio-economic terms, there is a music that is predominantly financed by state and corporate subsidy, and reproduced in educational institutions, and a music primarily produced and circulated through commercial market mechanisms; until recently, it was largely ignored by educational bodies. This distinction between musical modernism and popular music corresponds to Bourdieu's two spheres of cultural and economic capital.³ Aesthetically, the modernist/popular divide is equally clear. The modernist avant-garde grew out of the history and the crisis of the classical-romantic tradition: a music defined at

once by a continuity and a break with, a conscious negation of, functional tonality. From a period of polymorphous atonality at the start of the century, the second Viennese school of Schoenberg, Webern and Berg developed in the 1920s the compositional technique and philosophy known as serialism.⁴ This century, whether or not they have used it, most modernist and 'serious' avant-garde composers have been trained in serialist technique. And if they did not use serialism, the impulse of the avant-garde was to find a new underlying compositional rationality or system to replace the overthrown and dying tonal system. This search for new systems has been deterministic, rationalistic and scientific. Leading composers such as Pierre Boulez, Karlheinz Stockhausen and Milton Babbitt have drawn on mathematics, statistics, information theory, acoustics, linguistics, structuralism as theories to inform their compositional practice. In parallel, they have indulged in a love affair with technology: the modernist desire for new means to match new systems, which has also been an end in itself. For most of us, this outline can best be grasped intuitively, as a 'self-evidence': the atonal (or polytonal) and arhythmic (or poly-rhythmic) complexity of modernist music. My aesthetic sketch becomes a discursive analysis: another characteristic of modernism, in which artistic practice and theoretico-philosophical discourse are merged to an unprecedented degree. But the most significant fact is the echoing silence of modernist musical discourse towards popular music, with the rare exceptions who don't entirely ignore its existence (notably Adorno) being unremittingly hostile.⁵ In other words, for musical modernism, commercial popular music is a repressed and invisible 'other'.

The academic study of popular music aesthetics has hardly begun.⁶ But there exists a consensus of minimal denning characteristics which can suffice for now. Most basic is the centrality and character of rhythm, with roots in Afro-American rhythmic traditions, and from which multiple lines of development and cross-fertilization have grown. Second, popular music displays a tendency for cyclic structures containing, acting as vehicles for, or allied to, improvisation) or quasi-improvisational development, rather than the extensional development and syntactic structures of functional tonality. Third, it embraces, rather than avoids, multiple repetition at various levels.⁷ Harmonically, the history of popular music is now recognized as a complex synthesis involving waves of Afro-American and then European influence. This aesthetic characterization is barely adequate, but it is not vague: it is as possible cerebrally as it is libidinally to distinguish the rhythmic character of popular musics from that of classical or modernist music. In fact, other aesthetic criteria, particularly the timbral inflections and vocal styles of popular music, are less susceptible to written transcription and so far harder to analyse. These criteria have been likened to the difference between mainly notated and mainly aural music traditions. Allowing for aural aspects in the interpretation of modernist music, and notation as also central to popular music, the distinction remains suggestive of their origins and of their continuing character. As to discourse, the theoretical texts of musical modernism have proselytizing and pedagogic functions - they aim to convert and educate. By contrast, the primary rhetoric of popular music is an unselfconscious publicity, aiming to sell and to persuade to consume.

There are, to summarize, two distinct and evolving musical cultures, one modernist and the other popular, which circulate in different socio-economic spheres and have distinct aesthetic and discursive forms. But now it is necessary to focus in on their internal structures, since they are not undifferentiated. In one of the more interesting recent analyses of the phenomenon, Perry Anderson cautions against portraying modernism as timeless and unitary. Instead, he traces the periodization of modernism, defined by its reaction against the earlier movements of romanticism and realism, its uneven geographical distribution and the variety of its aesthetic tendencies - German expressionism, Italian futurism, cubism and surrealism - which none the less shared a common sensitivity to the new inventions and artefacts of the machine age. In relation to technology, Anderson notes that 'the condition of this interest . . . was the abstraction of techniques and artefacts from the social relations of production that were generating them. . . . It was not obvious where the new devices and inventions were going to lead. Hence the - so to speak - ambidextrous celebration of them from Right and Left alike - Marinetti or Mayakovsky.'⁸ Both right and left (Italian futurism, Russian constructivism), apparently different political positions within modernism, were agreed on an uncritical technological optimism.

As to music, the broad field of twentieth-century composition contains several streams, not all equally modernist - we could, for example, discern a strong populist and nationalist tradition, in Bartok and Kodaly, Ives and Copland, Vaughan Williams and Britten. But for divisions within modernism, it is instructive to look at controversies surrounding the commitment to new technologies, and the major split within the musical avant-garde between the 'serious' post-serialists and 'unserious' experimentalists, who congregated around the leading figure of John Cage.⁹ Both factions were attracted by the new electronic and recording media, but they used them differently. The post-serialists combined the use of electronics with their commitment to scientific rationalities, hoping in this way to 'solve' the problem of the future direction of composition. Stockhausen sought to achieve the total serial control of musical timbre by combining electronic means with acoustic analysis. Conflicts within this group, for example between Babbitt (the leading figure on the American east coast) and the Europeans, took the form of accusations of insufficient mathematical rigour.

By contrast, the experimentalists and their French counterpart in *musique concrete* used the new machines artisanally. *Musique concrete*, which Boulez deplored and considered empiricist, involved the recording of everyday sounds as sources and then manual editing: in other words, music collage. In reaction to the post-serialists' scientism and rationalism, Cage's followers turned to mysticism (Zen), chance, indeterminacy, or the alternative political determinism of Marxism-Leninism,¹⁰ to theorize their music. In reaction to post-serialism's hyper-complexity, they used ethnic and 'primitive' musics as sources, stripping their soundworlds bare in the genres called minimalism and systems music.

Socio-economically, the two avant-gardes were differently placed in relation to the state and the academy. While Babbitt ruled the music department of Princeton, and in Europe Stockhausen and Boulez had the run of state radio

stations and research institutes, experimental composers subsidized their work by occasional art college teaching (in the USA, Mills College, in the UK, Portsmouth and Maidstone Art Colleges). They inhabited a mixed economy, part performers, part recording artists, part teachers; but, as an American informant told me, 'Those guys never got tenure!' Through these mechanisms of opposition and reaction, post-serialism and experimental music can be seen as coexistent and complementary, defined by conscious antagonism to one another.

I have defined popular music culture as primarily, and simply, commercial. This ignores, with purpose, the line commonly drawn between 'mass' and 'popular' culture - a distinction imbued with evaluative connotations: 'mass culture' as produced by monopoly culture industries, bearing ideology and imposed on a passive public; 'popular culture' as authentic (working-class) and vernacular, an active and self-produced resistance to bourgeois hegemony. This homology model of class and culture - bourgeois domination through mass media, working-class resistance through popular culture - is a legacy of the mass culture critique, Marxian and otherwise. But it goes even further back to what Peter Burke has called the deeply embedded assumptions of 'primitivism', 'purism' and 'communalism' in writing by late-eighteenth- and nineteenth-century romantic and nationalist intellectuals who opposed 'people's culture' to the culture of the urban 'mob'.¹¹ In fact, Burke doubts whether there ever were pristine 'people's' folk cultures beyond the influence of the market and larger exchange networks. This suggests that it is a fantasized and idealized view of popular culture, seen as authentic, vernacular and resistant to commerce, which is the root of the mass/popular polarity. 'Authenticity' has been an extraordinarily resilient analytic concept in popular music studies, perhaps because, as many authors have noted, it is deep in the heart of rock and country music mythology. It seems to me time to drop this ideological baggage and accept the demise of the homology model, so as to get to work instead on the real and significant differences and conflicts that do exist - *within* commercial popular culture.¹²

Within musical modernism, the opposition of mass to popular, and the concomitant idealization of 'the popular', was precisely the ideological mechanism underlying modernists' attitude to non-art musics, and divided them once again. On the one hand, the post-serialist ideologues had little interest in ethnic musics. They treated with amused or irritated condescension the 'soft' humanism of those composers who made a great deal of their relationship with, and use of, ethnic and folk musics. On the other hand, nationalists such as Bartok, Kodaly and Ives drew on what they believed were their national folk traditions (including military brass band music, for Ives); while Debussy, Stravinsky and, under their influence, the experimentalists drew variously on the rhythmic vitality, modes, tone colours, and simplicity of non-western musics - as did eclectics such as Messiaen. These phenomena are important to examine, since they are often referred to by writers who defend musical modernism as unalienated because of its interest in ethnic musics. There are two critical points which are skated over by the defenders. First, the modernists' relationship was to ethnic or folk musics: they disdained the commercial popular music that was directly, socially present around them.

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Instead, they went on field trips, or used ethnomusicology, to discover 'authentic' popular musics. This was, just as Burke suggests, a search for the pristine and primitive in musical culture, a romanticization. Second, the modernists used these musics as *sources* - to borrow from, be inspired by, use 'in quotes', transmute. They were still defined as an 'other' to be drawn on and used in modernist terms, rather than understood or 'entered' in their own terms. This second point is particularly relevant to recent assertions about musical postmodernism, which is claimed to be effecting a *rapprochement*, a new synthesis, between the modernist and popular music legacies. I return to this question later.

As for the complexity of popular music culture, there is now a growing body of work exploring the significance of socio-economic diversity in its production.¹³ The most common analytic distinction is that between large-scale and small-scale sectors. Relations between the 'major' multinational record companies and small 'independent' companies are contradictory: at one level dramatic competition, at another co-operation and interdependence. An influential American model of their relation describes a periodic, cyclical movement whereby the majors, because of their monopoly form, become sluggish, conservative and non-responsive to the audience.¹⁴ At this point small, upstart independent entrepreneurs, more closely in touch with new audiences, new sources of talent and new technologies, invade the majors' market or create a new one. This period is followed by recuperation by the majors, who bring out their own version (the 'cover') of the independents' music and star, or co-opt the independent, and so re-appropriate their hold on the market. As Simon Frith has noted,¹⁵ this is the American liberal version of the mass culture critique, a classic free-market model stressing the innovative benefits of petty capitalism, with the small capitalist as hero. Despite such ideological interpretation, the dialectic between multinational and small record companies remains a force at the heart of popular music production - one that has been useful in explaining major cultural changes in pop history (rock 'n' roll in the 1950s, rock in the 1960s, new wave and punk in the late 1970s), with each musical innovation resting on an efflorescence of small record labels.

Over the years the multinational record companies have diversified production to control most branches of the music-related 'leisure industries'. Their ownership of both pressing plants and the means of distribution exemplifies the contradictions of the popular music process, since although small record companies depend on the majors for both the manufacture and the marketing of their music, this dependence does not negate the power of the independents themselves as moulders and sensitive barometers of public taste - a power which the majors recognize and even emulate by setting up their own quasi-independent subsidiaries or buying out small labels. But the small companies' role in this process is not static and shifts over time. Frith points out that where the independent labels producing R&B and rock 'n' roll in the 1950s grew to meet unsatisfied consumer demands, the successful 1960s independents (Virgin, Charisma, Island) were extensions of management and production companies, or new distribution means (mail order and illegal importation!); while the independents associated with punk and new wave in the 1970s grew mainly out

of the ambitions of musicians: 'This was less a response to frustrated consumers . . . than the expression of frustrated producers, excluded from record-making by soaring studio costs and by the new "professional" conventions of the rock industry.'¹⁶

In formal terms, the history of popular music is one of accelerating development and variety, of complex aesthetic branchings and fusions. As an indication, one could make a crude and vaguely chronological list of emergent major forms—blues, jazz, tin-pan alley, country and western, R&B, rock 'n' roll, rock, soul, glamrock, heavy metal, teenybop, reggae, punk, disco, electropop. Or one could list the evolutions, some of them parallel, within a form: in jazz, for instance, they would include big band, swing, bebop, cool, progressive, jazz rock, free jazz. Once born, many of these forms continue and their markets coexist. An area of recent attention, integral to mapping out such genealogies and aesthetic differences, is genre definition.¹⁷ Since popular music culture is explicitly multitextual, involving visual and written as well as aural codes, defined by packaging and promotion as well as by performance, the separation of genres and tracing of their meaning is a complex affair.¹⁸ American music trade papers, such as *Billboard*, have long provided weekly breakdowns of figures and charts for each recognized specialist market, but the relationship between 'market' and 'genre' has only just begun to be explored. Of course, all of this contrasts with Adorno's depiction of an unrelenting sameness in popular music, of standardized musical goods which display only sufficient variation to reproduce their consumption by listeners whom Adorno sees as regressed and 'childish, their primitivism . . . not that of the undeveloped, but that of the forcibly retarded'.¹⁹ Rather than in these terms of slight variation and motivated obsolescence, popular culture has been theorized positively, after Benjamin, as embodying a new form of 'distracted' perception and the end of reification of cultural goods - a keynote in postmodern cultural theory.

Adorno's modernist account of popular music, however, which reveals such profound and hostile non-recognition, leads to a paradoxical conclusion: that the relation between modernist and popular music is historically one of *non-relation*. The two stand in a relation of absolute difference. They are mutually 'unconscious'; each is identified by the other as the 'unknown'. Internally, both cultures are differentiated - socio-economically, aesthetically and discursively. But at this level, within each unity, the relations of difference are complementary and symbiotic. Within modernism, they are antagonistic and oppositional, with experimentalism being defined by reaction to post-serialism and vice versa. Within popular music, there is a faster play of difference and synthesis, in which major and independent producers compete with and then feed off each other.

Despite a growing understanding of each of these musical cultures (and the development of popular music studies has been striking), until recently attempts to make sense of the total musical field have been rare - which is why Adorno's work, containing as it does the seed of its own deconstruction, remains exceptional. Adorno developed a sociology-philosophy of modern music which, although polemical, did attempt to understand the complex socio-musical world surrounding him - from Wagner and Mahler, through the serialism of Schoenberg and neo-classicism of Stravinsky, to the swing and big band jazz of the 1930s.

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Moreover, he theorized their *common* transformation by the new means of mass production and reproduction - the commoditization of music. Adorno thus took on both modernist and popular music, analysing them as social and as musical forms. Alone in the history of socio-cultural studies, he addressed contemporary music as a totality. It is remarkable that until the publication in the last couple of years of studies by Jacques Attali and Alan Durant,²⁰ the gauntlet thrown down by Adorno had lain undisturbed for some forty years. In very different ways, both Attali and Durant continue Adorno's project, by analysing music as a socio-historical totality and by touching on the division between modernism and popular music. Why was this problem so long ignored, and why is it being addressed again now?

The answers lie at two levels. First, it is clear that this kind of work has been generated by the impasse, or crisis, of modernism, and intellectuals' need to reassess their world. And this in turn relates to the social and biographical experience of a generation of intellectuals raised on popular *and* modernist culture and music, needing to heal their own cultural schizophrenia: producing modernist cultural theory, consuming popular culture; writing for *Tel Quel*, listening to Jacques Brel (or, more likely, Talking Heads or Michael Jackson).

Second, there has been a largely unacknowledged, and culturally unconscious, intellectual division of labour in studies on music which parallels exactly the modernist/popular split. An interesting recent book by the musicologist Joseph Kerman, amounting almost to a disciplinary confessional, and something of a watershed from the reactions it has received, spells out this state of affairs.²¹ Studies on music have been of two kinds: musicological and socio-cultural. In general, musicological studies have taken the western art tradition including serious modern music as the object of study, while socio-cultural studies have focused on non-western musics (ethnomusicology, or anthropology of music) and, in the past fifteen years, popular music. Thus western art music has been studied almost exclusively as musical text, while non-western, ethnic and popular musics have (until recently) been studied primarily as socio-cultural practice.²²

This dissociation of the musical-aesthetic from the social represents another fragmentation, or splitting mechanism, characteristic of modernism. Kerman's book is important for his attempt at self-criticism, for his call that musicology should concern itself with the socio-cultural. However, he still exhibits a traditional musicological reserve towards studies of socio-cultural 'context'. 'My own hesitation before contextual studies . . . is founded on the impression that they are usually tilted much too far towards consideration of contexts. They usually deal too little with music as music.'²³ Kerman's hopes ride on two studies: Carl Schorske's book on *fin-de-siecle* Vienna,²⁴ a work of socio-cultural history which examines the whole intellectual milieu, from architecture to psychoanalysis to Schoenberg, and attempts some musical analysis; and Charles Rosen's study of the classical style,²⁵ also a broad intellectual history woven around musical analysis, which earns praise for its eclecticism and heterodoxy. But it should be noted that this autocritique by an eminent musicologist, lamenting the lack of socio-cultural perspective, draws primarily on high cultural studies - on intellectual history and the social history of art - rather

than on studies of popular music, which remain beyond Kerman's frame of reference.

Kerman gives insight, sociologically speaking, into two further aspects of the kinship between modernism and a-social musicology. First, he describes the increasing, and bewildering, division and specialization within musicology that has occurred since the Second World War. There now exist three subdisciplines: musicology, the study of western art music before 1900; music theory, the a-historical study of the structure of western art music, mainly after 1900; and music analysis, the detailed 'internalist' explication of the structure of particular compositions, again usually post-1900. Thus music theory and analysis, as well as studying modernist texts, take a more complicit, active role in their construction. Kerman says of music theory that it is not just descriptive, but rather prescriptive: 'much of the power and prestige of theory derives from its alignment. . . with the actual sources of creativity on the contemporary musical scene'.²⁶

Second, this incestuous union of theory and composition was, as Kerman graphically describes, cemented by the post-war academicization of post-serialist music in the USA, a process based in the music departments of the elite east coast universities. The west coast academies looked, significantly, towards the experimentalists - the opposition - with their oriental and populist leanings. Kerman writes of Babbitt, the leading east coast ideologue:

Babbitt at Princeton was pointing out that avant-garde music could find its niche after all - though only by retreating from one bastion of middle-class culture, the concert hall, to another, the university. Like pure science, he argued, musical composition has a claim on the university as a protector of abstract thought. . . . Instead of lamenting the no-doubt irreparable breach between avant-garde music and the public, composers like mathematicians should turn their backs on the public and demand their rightful place in the academy. Otherwise 'music will cease to evolve, and in that important sense, will cease to live'. As a matter of fact, American composers were already in the academy, well in, but apparently further commitments . . . were expected. So Princeton actually set up an academic programme for the PhD degree in musical composition, for which the final exercise consisted of a musical composition plus a theory dissertation or essay. The marriage of theory and composition was legitimized by graduate councils around the country; the avant-garde was house-broken into the academy.²⁷

Clearly little love is lost between Kerman and musical modernism. His book reads like a plea to wrest musicology from its collusion with musical modernism, and to reconstruct it as a holistic and humanistic interpretative discipline. But how do the developments in musicology he describes compare with those in the socio-cultural study of music?

Sociology of music has in the past taken relatively unproductive forms, apart from Adorno's work which shines out with an acute sensitivity to music and to his time. In the hands of earlier social theorists, music provided an extraordinarily 'open' object with which to play. The works of Dilthey, Weber, Simmel and Schutz on music provide evidence of a strange property:²⁸ music

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can be used as a transparent medium through which to project a deeper message, like a blank tape on which to record, or a rhythm track to be overdubbed. Music becomes simply a means to express the writer's particular variety of theory. This quality runs through many kinds of writing about music; it was noticed as early as 1939 in a remarkable book by W. Dwight Allen called *Philosophies of Music History* in which he demonstrates the ideological nature of music historiography.²⁹

This quality, whereby music is a transparent medium and highly susceptible to a kind of theoretical or ideological predetermination, can be linked to its particular phenomenology. Music in itself is alogogenic, completely unrelated to language,³⁰ and it is non-artefact, having no physical existence. It is an *auto-referential* aural abstraction. But music also requires a 'historical phenomenology', which would trace the complex and changing mediations of music - as social and ritual occasion, theoretical text and object of discourse, notated score, musical instrument, commodity form (sheet music, radio, soundtrack, record, tape, computer). These two factors - music's pure abstraction, and its complex historical mediations - may explain why it is a difficult medium to study and, therefore, why it is liable to be treated as a *tabula rasa*.

Mid-century sociology of music, then, was generally a dry, classificatory and abstract affair, hardly getting past the stage of listing its own categories. Compared with this, ethnomusicology was certainly more empirically engaged and interesting, although it was bugged theoretically by being the poor cousin of cultural anthropology, and tended to conform to whatever paradigm - diffusion, acculturation - was fashionable. The Prague school of sociology of music and some mid-century American studies were also more empirically orientated. In the USA, in particular, there was a move towards the study of 'low' and 'deviant' culture in response to the mass culture critique, so that 1950s sociology included work, with a pluralist bent, on jazz, dance musicians and musical taste. A solid body of research has grown up since then around Howard Becker and his students, and the 'production of culture' approach,³¹ in which music is part of a larger sociology of culture and art.

The liveliest development, though, has been the growth, from the late 1960s and early 1970s in Britain and Europe, of a new school of popular culture and music studies, based on a reaction against the mass culture critique and the bland sociology of youth, and on the desire to address cultural forms which were, by then, highly visible and audible. Initially, popular music was simply a component in the neo-Gramscian subculture studies of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies at Birmingham University, which were the main British expression of the new approach. Increasingly, however, popular music studies have begun to develop in their own right, leading from original classic studies by Charles Keil,³² Charlie Gillett³³ and Simon Frith³⁴ to a relatively full body of international and interdisciplinary work consolidated by the founding, in 1982, of the International Association for the Study of Popular Music.³⁵ Subculture theory started as the testing ground for the homology model of class and culture, saw it decline, and nurtured the transition to a new paradigm, spoken through Dick Hebdige's book *Subculture: the meaning of style*³⁶ - although others were converging on the new ideas at the same time.

This paradigm is a new orthodoxy in cultural studies, and I shall call it the *postmodern perspective* (since some of the authors espousing it use those words).

What is postmodernism? The literature on the subject is confusing and polemical, and the character of postmodernism is currently being fought out on the battlefields of cultural theory and art practice. The 'postmodernisms' vying for attention in different areas of cultural production (for example, in serious music, pop music, music journalism, but also literary theory, architecture, visual and film arts) are not unified. There are more and less populist, more and less vanguardist varieties; there are politicized and unpoliticized, 'reactionary' and 'progressive' versions. But the single unifying characteristic of postmodernism, as the name announces, is that it reacts against modernism; and more specifically, against modernism's blindness and hostility to popular culture. Postmodernism is thus defined by negation of a (modernist) negation, thereby reproducing a modernist mechanism and revealing, paradoxically, an essential kinship with modernism - as its heir. The reactive nature of postmodernism is multiple: there is a lateral, discursive affinity between it and other 'post'-enlightenment positions. For postmodern, read post-Marxian and post-structuralist. The politics of postmodernism, when there are any, are pluralist and populist, espousing the 'new social movements'. Jean-Francois Lyotard, the leading postmodern philosopher and guru, understands it to mean the end of the grand narratives of humanism and Marxism, and the proliferation in their place of '*petits recits*', a celebration of heterogeneity.³⁷

Postmodern cultural studies, in their reaction against modernism, started out with a special interest in popular culture, a primary orientation towards *consumption* and an overwhelming *optimism* of tone. In reaction to the pessimism of the mass culture critique, and the Adornian-Horkheimer stress on the cultural commodity as exchange value, postmodernists celebrate use value, the reality of purpose and meaning in commercial popular culture. Writers have turned positively to leisure, to pop texts, wanting to understand (buzz words) 'pleasure', 'desire' and the 'romance' of their consumption. The studies include almost mandatory reference to the work of Benjamin - championed as the dissident member of the Frankfurt school - and of Barthes, coming together with other consumption theories. The point is to blast open the view of commercial cultural goods as closed, univocal and aesthetically impoverished - hence the references to post-structuralist notions of the 'end of the author', indeterminate reading, and the fragmented but active reading subject; to reception aesthetics; and, from semiotics, to the idea of cultural texts as polysemic, open, grasped through a 'struggle for the sign'.

Two recent books which make use of these approaches to popular music in contrasting ways are Iain Chambers's *Urban Rhythms: pop music and popular culture*³⁸ and Dave Laing's *One Chord Wonders: power and meaning in punk rock*.³⁹ Chambers weaves a flowing historical narrative around the major British pop culture and music phenomena from 1956 to the present; while Laing takes one short, significant moment of pop history - punk rock '76 to '78 - and subjects it to comprehensive semiotic and aesthetic deconstruction. The books have many things in common: both feature Barthes and Benjamin as mentors; both provide useful discographies and photographs to give aural and visual

meaning to their text; and both discographies and texts provide rich pickings in genre definitions and pop's meta-aesthetic interrelations.

Both writers also owe much to Hebdige's work, as he created the method that they each use, differently accented - a combination of history, socio-economic analysis and semiotics. But most interesting is Chambers's and Laing's common desire to stick to the *specificities* of 'pop and its own internal realities'.⁴⁰ For Chambers this means popular culture and its intimate interrelations with pop music, their specific movement. For Laing it means, against Hebdige's treatment of punk as a subcultural 'stylistic ensemble', taking punk rock as a specific musical genre and exploring its multitextual forms - the 'punk look', its business structure - and, as music, its relation to previous rock styles. Punk and what happened to it are crucial in understanding why Laing and Chambers want to return to specificities. The discourse that blossomed around punk included the latest, and perhaps the most seductive, version of the 'authenticity' model. Pop music commentary became hot and polarized between those that saw punk and its political style as a direct scream of anguish and frustration by the unemployed lumpenproletariat, versus those who saw it as sheer artifice, a politics of pose manufactured by style svengalis like Malcolm McLaren (the Sex Pistols' manager). Chambers and Laing demonstrate, once and for all, that the surge of moral anxiety, the idealizing political projections, and the press and media storm that together combined to construct punk were nothing unusual. Rather they are a historical constant in the discourse surrounding pop culture and pop music. This mediating discourse, speculating wildly on external causation in pop culture, tends to distract attention from tracing its particular, internal history.

Although there is much that is valuable in these books, they also indicate some of the problems of postmodern cultural theory. I am uneasy, for example, about the way Chambers's rhetorical style glosses over some of the underlying assumptions of optimistic consumptionist theory. Romance is the key word here: 'Pop music is generally used, responded to and each day appropriated through romance. In romance pop acquires its most extensive imaginative resonance'; 'Music is not an "escape" from "reality", but an interrogative exploration of its organizing categories. Imagination and "reality" are brought together in a significant friction and exchange.'⁴¹ This is reminiscent of Angela McRobbie who, writing about girls' romantic fantasies in relation to their consumption of films such as *Fame* and *Flashdance*, makes the case for 'fantasy, daydreaming and "abandon" to be interpreted as part of a strategy of resistance or opposition; that is, as marking out one of those areas which cannot be totally colonized'.⁴² Chambers and McRobbie reject the view of romance in popular culture as escapist, and instead portray it as a site of subversion and imaginative reconstruction: a politics of fantasy/imagination. One problem here is the blurring together of 'fantasy' and 'imagination'; within certain (non-Lacanian) psychoanalytic traditions, these psychic processes are considered to be distinct and opposing, with fantasy as depowering, imagination as empowering.⁴³ Chambers speaks only of 'imagination' and not 'fantasy', yet his message is the same: that there is a subversive politics simply in the experience of consumption of popular culture. In denying 'escapism' and exploring the Utopian projections

and identifications contained in popular culture, it seems to me that Chambers and McRobbie ignore questions which demand attention: questions of power, of different degrees of passivity and activity, and of the differences between consumption and '*self-production*'. Their postmodern optimism for consumption as subversion is as yet unargued.

Another characteristic tension in postmodern theory is revealed by Laing's analysis of the sexual politics of punk. He notes punk's contradictory stances: on the one hand, anti-rock reactions involving a 'deliberate refusal of romance' and of the macho cult of instrumental virtuosity, and an androgynous questioning of gender stereotyping. This was simultaneous with the entry of an unprecedented number of women, who had not played before, into groups - a development with lasting effects in contemporary pop. On the other hand, Laing reminds us that punk lyrics were not in general positively anti-sexist and that its 'anti-elitism did not preclude the reproduction of macho styles in stage gestures and movement'. Laing's final point, however, is that 'it was as if the empty space left by punk's anti-romance and anti-expertise positions made it easier for women performers to themselves work in a radical manner. It wasn't, then, punk rock itself which was positively anti-sexist . . . but its negative operations opened up greater possibilities for such work within popular music.'⁴⁴ In this statement, punk rock and its 'negative operations' suddenly become male-typed, and women musicians epiphenomenal. Women's highly active and visible presence becomes a residual, passive thing: the result of an empty space left for them by men. But surely the contradictory sexual politics that Laing describes so well should also be attributed to women's struggles as important actors within punk? Indeed, with other writers, Laing neglects to trace the broader effects of women's presence on punk's anti-hierarchical and collectivist politics of practice. Despite feminist politics being largely subterranean - a repressed discourse - in punk, these political parallels are not pure coincidence. It is ironic that although he acknowledges Angela McRobbie's critique of male subculture theory, in which women are mentioned as 'the people who were dancing over in the corner by the speakers',⁴⁵ Laing ends by implicitly reproducing the same view: punk is denned as male and women as marginal. In this, he exemplifies a poignant, and telling, contradiction of the postmodern condition: despite the desire to encourage the 'other' to speak for herself, to efface and disown their authorship, ultimately postmodern writers *retain* the power of authorship - the text *has* an author - and so the power of representing the 'other'. Predictably, Laing's representation of punk's sexual politics and his theorization of its effects are inadequate.

A third central postmodern debate concerns the effects of technology and polarizes between a pessimistic scenario of increasing centralization and monopoly control - for example, in Baudrillard's theory⁴⁶ - and an optimistic vision of the power of new technologies in combination with new social forces to decentralize and democratize cultural production. Chambers and Laing both align themselves with the optimists. While Chambers's text simply seduces us into accepting his contrast between a 'dynamic, and potentially more democratic' popular culture and the 'tired conservative prospects it encroaches upon and supplants',⁴⁷ Laing's arguments are based on an impeccable discussion of the

commercial context and production structures of punk: the major/independent record company question, and punk's 'do-it-yourself' ethic. He concludes that:

Certain organisational effects of punk rock may turn out to be harbingers of a future, more widespread medium. In particular, the very small-scale 'do-it-yourself' world of small labels but especially of home-made taped music represented the virtual dissolution of the barrier between performer and audience that was part of the ethos of much punk activity.⁴⁸

We are left convinced, yet aware of the limited and conjunctural nature of the developments.

This part of Laing's work returns us to a valuable legacy of critical theory that has been submerged. The veneration of Benjamin has centred on his ideas of distracted reception and the transformation of consumption, but has largely ignored his concern with changes in the 'production relations' of culture - as Laing puts it, 'what can artists do *as* workers'.⁴⁹ In this, Benjamin was responding to Brecht's theories of cultural work, and, significantly, Brecht too has been neglected by cultural theory, despite his influence on the practice of 1970s left journals and theatre and music groups, who experimented with non-hierarchical and collective work and (even prior to punk) with 'alternative' circuits of production and distribution. The reappearance of interest in 'production relations' in Laing, echoed by Jacques Attali and Alan Durant in their recent books, may reflect the fact that consumptionist theories (such as Chambers's) are stuck in a post-Barthesian, post-Benjaminian impasse. The terms of the debate have become ungenerative and rhetorical.

If the problem of postmodern cultural theory is how to go forward, beyond the crisis of modernism and the modernist/popular divide, Durant's and Attali's books can be seen as a 'second wave' in music studies. The first wave (Laing, Chambers) was a compensatory reflex reaction investing all enquiry in popular culture, to redress that absence from cultural theory. This second wave now tries to analyse the historical totality of music, and its internal divisions, in order to understand what the overall possibilities are.

Durant and Attali approach the socio-musical totality from entirely different directions. Durant's aim is a careful deconstruction of some major beliefs and tenets of dominant musicological, modernist and serious music discourse, with the aim of exposing their partial, historical and ideological nature, their idealizations and omissions. At the same time, he wants to return us to considering the 'material conditions of music-making'.⁵⁰ Attali has a grander project, at once an evolutionary narrative and a meta-theoretical analysis. He uses music as a theoretical tool, since 'music is a herald, for change is inscribed in noise faster than it transforms society. . . . Listening to music is listening to all noise, realizing that its appropriation and control is a reflection of power, that it is essentially political.' Attali's meta-theory proposes that 'music does not just reflect society; it also foreshadows new social formations in a prophetic and annunciatory way'. He finds music a 'prophetic indicator' in two ways: 'in its compositional procedures - the ways in which the violence of noise is channelled or formally controlled - and in the modes of producing, distributing and consuming music'.⁵¹ Attali thus announces, audaciously, his intention to

'theorize *through* music', to use music as a 'credible metaphor of the real', as a medium through which to read history.⁵²

Durant's book is in two parts. The first part travels through his deconstructions of key discursive themes and distorted terms: music and its relation (or non-relation) to language; 'classical' music, the orchestra, and modernism; tuning and dissonance; and, finally, performance, sound and vision, and music reproduction technologies. This part of the book is backed up by a constantly invoked and dizzying range of comparative historical reference, which serves to historicize and to relativize. The second part contains two case studies: an analysis of the English Golden Age of madrigals at the turn of the seventeenth century and a study of 'rock today'.

Throughout, Durant stresses change and transition, the non-fixity of music and its base in social, material and particular historical conditions. Despite its many specific insights, however, the book remains overall abstract and non-historical, without clear direction: an exercise only in extending frames of reference. There is a tension between two implicit audiences for the book. His critique is partly aimed at a conservative academic music orthodoxy, with the air of wanting to bring into this respectable discourse subjects previously off-limits: jazz, rock, technology, the social. At the same time, according to the blurb, the book also aims to have 'direct implications for current musical activity', by which is implied popular music practice. Yet at crucial moments Durant misses the chance to make his argument deeper and more relevant to contemporary producers. For example, in discussing the effects of new music technologies, he evades what he calls the 'familiar questions of royalties and copyright, or of diminished opportunities for musicians of live employment'.⁵³ These are complex and unresolved issues for musicians, raised by practices like home-taping and the substitution of synthesizers and backing tapes for live players - developments with major implications for musicians' property rights and for their control over their own creative labour. They are questions about the 'democratization' of music practice which require urgent attention and which are, incidentally, currently among the main preoccupations of the British Musicians Union.

Durant's deconstruction of dissonance is interesting and through it we can glimpse his own postmodern position. The discussion starts with the historical processes by which sounds and progressions previously considered 'dissonant' have become 'consonant' and 'musical'. Against this Durant explores a range of meanings invested in the 'dissonance' concept: as a polemical term for formless noise; in the modernist ideology of the 'emancipation of dissonance', whereby all notes share equal possibilities of interrelation with others; and dissonance as an aesthetic which mirrors or reflects social relations, 'the chaos and ugliness of the [capitalist] world'.⁵⁴ Durant distinguishes between Adorno's formalist and Hanns Eisler's broader social use of dissonance. For Eisler, 'composers . . . must become aware of the social function for which their music is being produced'⁵⁵ and should agitate for new conditions of musical practice - for example, performance situations less susceptible than the concert hall to idealizing spectacle. Dissonance can refer here to consciousness of contradictions in the conditions of practice, and can lead to critical action. Durant, however,

avoids discussing the major issue arising from the 'reflection' thesis with the dismissal: 'and in any case, there seems no reason at all to believe that the acoustic properties and social resonances of dissonance are so closely linked as Adorno and others have suggested'. He seems to be convinced by Eisler's social analysis and develops his own structural version: 'dissonance can be directed towards displacing idealizations of music as an engrossing, spectacular object; it can prepare reflection *on* social relationships rather than offer a reflection *of* them'. But then he drops this, and returns to dissonance as sound. He cites extended instrumental technique, violence of rhythm and texture, or the electronic distortion of rock, to illustrate dissonance as 'arrangements of sounds for which there are no established conventions of association [and which] open up possibilities for new attachments of meaning and value'.⁵⁶ Finally, rather than a historically specific aesthetic device, dissonance means for Durant a structural potential of sounds themselves to change music by blasting open meanings, defying association - a Barthesian perspective. (I return to this 'structural' reading of dissonance below.)

Attali's sense of postmodern 'relevance' is refracted through an evolutionary prism, his book being in the tradition of speculative Foucauldian historiography. It is, like Chambers's, an extraordinarily seductive and compelling text, both post-structuralist and Adornian in style. The bones of the argument are rapidly drawn. Music 'simulates the social order, and its dissonances express marginalities. The code of music simulates the accepted rules of society.'⁵⁷ But there is more. 'Music is prophecy. It makes audible the new world that will gradually become visible, that will impose itself and regulate the order of things; it is not only the image of things, but the transcending of the everyday, the herald of the future.'⁵⁸

However resistant to linear evolutionism, Attali traces his political economy of music as a succession of three 'orders', 'three strategic usages of music by power'⁵⁹ corresponding to three eras of history. For each, he discerns in its musical practice the typification of the era, and the premonition of the following age. Attali calls the first order, an era before exchange value when music is purely social and ritual, 'sacrificing'. Of this he says: 'Primordially, the production of music has as its function the creation, legitimation and maintenance of order. . . . Music . . . constitutes the collective memory and organises society.'⁶⁰ '[It] is used and produced in the ritual in an attempt to make people forget the general violence.'⁶¹

The second order, 'representing', is the era when money enters society and music is commoditized; the labour of the creation and interpretation of music are valorized. '[Music] is employed to make people believe . . . that there is order in exchange and legitimacy in commercial power.'⁶² The crisis of this era sees the modernist break with tonality, leading to a new 'code of dissonance' - serialism - which announces the 'advent of a power [established] on the basis of a technocratic language'.⁶³

The third order, 'repeating', is the era of industrial capital, mass production and reproduction. Adorno's position is intensified: use value wither away. Music 'serves to silence, by mass-producing a deafening, syncretic kind of music, and censoring all other human noises'.⁶⁴ 'People buy more records than

they can listen to. They stockpile what they want to find the time to hear. Use-time and exchange-time destroy each other.⁶⁵ Of all the four postmodern authors discussed here, Attali alone dares to be entirely negative about popular music; but he is equally polemical about modernism, analysing it, precisely, as the 'B side', the 'other', of mass popular music. It is 'elite, bureaucratic music . . . without a commercial market, supported by powers in search of a language, of a project'. 'The theoretical musician . . . remains a musician of power, paid to perfect the sound form of today's technical knowledge. . . . The absence of meaning is the necessary condition for the legitimacy of a technocracy's power.'⁶⁶

Attali only reaches an optimistic position in his analysis of a fourth order - a Utopian projection of future music and society, based on his analysis of free jazz. This future order is called 'composing' - 'not a new music, but a new way of doing music. . . . Doing for the sake of doing':⁶⁷

This does not constitute . . . a new form of popular music, but rather a new practice of music among the people . . . a day-to-day and subversive practice . . . a collective play. . . . Production takes the form of one collective composition, without a predetermined program imposed upon the players, and without commercialization. . . . No study is required to play this kind of music, which is orally transmitted and largely improvisational.⁶⁸

We see here Attali's theory of a politics of musical practice, a theory heavily indebted to Barthes's short essay of 1970 called 'Musica practica', which was in turn influenced by Brecht. This is a neglected side of Barthes's work on music, compared with the semiotics of 'The grain of the voice'. Attali closely echoes Barthes's vision of two musics:

the music one listens to, the music one plays. . . . The music one plays comes from an activity that is very little auditory, being above all manual (and thus in a way much more sensual).⁶⁹

Barthes says that 'playing has ceased to exist', and with it the role of the 'amateur' who touched off in us 'not satisfaction but desire, the desire to *make* that music'.⁷⁰ Barthes predicts the future rediscovery of 'musica practica' in which 'to compose . . . is *to give to do*, not to give to hear but to give to write'. The concert will be a workshop 'where all the musical art is absorbed in a praxis with no remainder'.⁷¹

From Durant's 'dissonance' and Attali's 'composing' we can take up two central postmodern themes: first, the nature and place of the avant-garde, and of avant-garde aesthetic/cultural political mechanisms - shock effect, dissonance, negation; second, the question of the 'production relations', or social practice, of culture. These two themes are not just analytic tools. Rather, they embody postmodern scenarios for going beyond, or reintegrating, the modernist/popular divide. In other words, and most important, they together express ideas at the heart of analyses of contemporary socio-cultural *change*, and in doing so they carry strong ideological resonance. Thus, the two themes often appear in Utopian resolutions of the modernist problem: first, in the idea that a contemporary synthesis of the avant-garde and the popular is possible or has

been achieved; and second, in the decentralization-democratization thesis. I want to look critically at both of these arguments.

In the first part of this article I analysed negation as a basic defining characteristic of the modernist avant-garde, reproduced, paradoxically, in postmodern discourse. In depicting a postmodern synthesis of the avant-garde and the popular, writers often fail to note that there are two sides to that process - that the avant-garde becomes integrated into popular culture, and vice versa, that popular culture becomes part of the (postmodern) avant-garde. But before assuming a synthesis, questions arise. Are the avant-garde, and negation, *historically specific* aesthetic/discursive phenomena embedded in modernism? (One could also ask whether cultural and discursive forms defined by negation - deconstruction, for example, or Barthes's *jouissance*, desire beyond and outside culture - are themselves embedded in, and limited to, a modernist cosmology.) Or are they 'structural constants', cyclic positions or moments, in all cultural change? In either case, have they any relevance for understanding change in *popular* culture and music?

References to the avant-garde often overlook three characteristics that together combine to define it. The characteristics emerge from studies - those by Renato Poggioli⁷² and Francis Haskell,⁷³ for example - charting the historical rise of 'the concept of the avant-garde' in art practice and critical discourse. First, the avant-garde should be seen as a small group in relation to a dominant larger whole. Second, the avant-garde takes on a self-consciously 'critical' function (aesthetic, political, or both merged) towards the dominant whole. And third, the avant-garde group claims a leadership role, with associated commitments to conversion and to the pedagogic and prescriptive functions of art - functions which bring full circle the contradictions of the avant-garde, since successful conversion is incompatible with a marginal, critical position and with being socially outcast.

In writing about popular music, there seem to be two positions on the avant-garde and its mechanisms. The first approach, found in Chambers and Laing and common in pop journalism, is to delineate an avant-garde *within* popular culture. The implication is that a postmodern *rapprochement* - consisting of a 'mixed' aesthetic and economy of pop and (postmodern) avant-garde - is in process, at least on the side of pop music.

The second approach is taken by Laing and Durant on, respectively, the shock effect and dissonance. Both discuss these mechanisms, derived historically from modernism, as *structural* and cyclical, trans-historical strategies, invoking the modernist connotation of them as aesthetic but also 'critical' cultural political devices. Thus Laing cites Walter Benjamin's idea that the 'avant-garde movements of one artistic form are the heralds of a future cultural medium'⁷⁴ in which the shock effect will be more naturalized. This is akin to Lyotard's view of postmodernism as a structural moment within modernism, such that there is no historical break: 'In an amazing acceleration, the generations precipitate themselves. A work can only become modern if it is first postmodern. Post-modernism thus understood is *not* modernism at its end, but in the nascent state, and that state is constant.'⁷⁵ Both Laing and Durant also explore shock effect and dissonance as possible social-organizational strategies, linking them in

that way to the second theme of production relations in culture. Laing's example is that 'the punk opening up of self-production and distribution represented a relatively painless achieving of something avant-garde rock bands of a few years earlier had to go through debilitating tussles with record companies to get'.⁷⁶

Durant links his structural concept of dissonance as 'sound outside meaning', and thus a critical force for change, to Barthes's 'geno-text': 'music's capability . . . to overflow conventionally attributable meanings in an access to traces of the body and of desire'. Just after this, Durant suggests a critique of Barthes that applies to the general position, including his own, but he fails to follow it through: 'But it remains nevertheless a weakness of these observations, when reworked as a more general critical orientation, that what is sought everywhere is a kind of musical modernism.'⁷⁷

The idea of the avant-garde and its mechanisms as 'structural' - the second position above - can have a weak or a strong version. The weak version consists of Laing's proposal, or Lyotard's, that small-scale social and cultural experiments can be influential on later forms and can even become dominant. This is analogous to a market model of commercial development and innovation and can be subsumed within theories of fashion. The concept of an 'avant-garde' is so weakened as to be meaningless. Alternatively, the strong version of the argument is that modernist aesthetic and discursive forms based on negation *always* constitute both a critical position in relation to extant cultural forms, and also a premonition, a cutting edge of what is to come. The strong version *universalizes* certain historically specific modernist characteristics, and grants them discursive and epistemological privilege. It splits off the avant-garde and negation from the discourse of their birth - modernism - to be treated as structural, trans-historical and trans-cultural mechanisms. This bid for universality, for strategies beyond culture (Barthes), is clearly a bid to retain some power for modernism. One could ask: why bother? More analytically, the splitting and universalizing are symptomatic of a profound ambivalence towards modernism - an ambivalence based on a sympathy for its Utopian, transgressive and alienated beginnings, as against aesthetic dislike, distrust of its rhetoric, and disillusion at its later co-optation and hegemony.

The first position above - the suggestion of a synthesis of avant-garde and pop in some pop music - is less imbued with modernist ideology than the 'structural' position, and is useful once it is integrated into a socio-historical analysis. Allied to the new enquiries into the role of art schools in British pop culture (and situationists in punk),⁷⁸ this suggests the mundane hypothesis that the influence of modernism in pop is a highly self-conscious cultural allusion or reference, by pop practitioners, to an earlier art and politics of transgression and negation. It is a reference that has occurred at certain conjunctures in pop history, and has affected only certain limited areas of pop music and culture. This implies, further, that the critical and premonitory functions supposed to be inherent to negation and an avant-garde stance, once they become pure historical allusion, have no more necessary effect on the larger aesthetic and political evolution of pop music and culture than any other stylistic and educational device.

But there are other developments, different processes, going on under the

smooth rhetoric of postmodern *rapprochement*. It is also important to look at the 'other side' - serious contemporary music. Having sketched a social analysis of avant-garde influence in pop, we should now consider the 'populist avant-garde': serious composers who are trying to effect a reunion with pop music and who, in doing so, identify themselves as postmodern composers. These developments are mainly associated with the 'unserious' post-Cage experimentalists, and especially with systems and minimalist musicians who, inspired by ethnic and eastern musics, use bare modal and tonal harmony, and simple cyclic and repetitive structures and rhythms. Since the mid 1970s, composers such as Philip Glass, Steve Reich and their English counterpart Michael Nyman have been claiming to bring elements of pop into their music and have produced records that they try to market commercially. They are thus keen to be accepted as popular musicians. In fact, they still inhabit a mixed economy of art and commerce. Unlike most pop musicians, for example, Glass has his work performed at the English National Opera; he also has a lifetime record contract with the CBS Masterworks label - an honour shared only with Stravinsky and Copland. Aesthetically, too, these postmodern composers remain distinct from popular musicians. They do not (and cannot) work within, or respect the integrity of, extant pop music forms. Their attitude is one of borrowing, using pop music as a source for transformation and, especially, as a source of devices and techniques (of instrumentation, voice production, studio techniques) to bring to their own music. This is, aesthetically, a pseudo-reconciliation, a wielding of empty signs. Even with a rhythm section added, Nyman's music has no rhythm.

There *are* some new musicians who are increasingly skilled across the musical divide. In Britain they come from improvised music, and they appeared at a juncture in the mid 1970s when the politicized post-experimental avant-garde met free jazz, met the new wave and punk. These musicians - people like David Cunningham, Steve Beresford and David Toop - still support themselves in a mixed economy, partly from subsidized performances, partly record production and partly guest involvements in pop. Toop has moved from ethnomusicology to improvisation to producing albums by the Frank Chickens and reviewing records for *The Face*; Cunningham from Maidstone Art College to systems music to producing albums for Wayne County and the Electric Chairs and his own group, the Flying Lizards. It is interesting to note a tendency for these musicians to regard their skills in various musics - improvised jazz, electro-funk - as *separate*, to keep their musical selves fragmented and compartmentalized, with each genre remaining internally intact. The music behind these developments, black American free jazz, is, as we have seen, Attali's microcosmic model for 'composing'. 'Free jazz, a meeting of black popular music and the more abstract theoretical explorations of European music, eliminated the distinctions between popular and learned music, broke down the repetitive hierarchy.'⁷⁹

It is also worth noting a counter-phenomenon of equal and opposite weight: a new generation of composers inhabiting the serious contemporary music networks who listen to the Police and Laurie Anderson while espousing postmodern rhetoric. Regarding their own production, they say that their music

is beyond modernism and that they have a relationship with popular music - that the concept of a division between the two is archaic. Yet their compositions, combining orchestral with computer resources, remain resolutely modernist in aesthetic, circulate at festivals like the Venice Biennale, win prizes at Darmstadt and are produced in the computer music studios of MIT, IRCAM in Paris⁸⁰ and similar institutions.

In the light of this discussion of the deeper character and limits of avant-garde pop and of the populist avant-garde, it is odd and significant that music is so often cited as the success story of postmodern reintegration, particularly by American writers but also, for example, by Chambers.⁸¹ Effectively, these cultural theorists collude in asserting that the postmodern *rapprochement* has been achieved; but, as I have tried to show, there are implicit assumptions in such an assertion that need questioning. It is only by ignoring the hegemonic 'other' of powerful, contemporary high culture, and failing to deconstruct its rhetoric of *rapprochement*, that writers have arrived at their optimistic and Utopian postmodern perspectives. The assertion that modern music culture is moving beyond the modernist/popular divide to achieve a postmodern synthesis or reintegration must be based on empirical study of what that process involves, in pop music and in serious music, popular culture and high culture, commercial and public spheres. In order to understand how music is changing, rather than making facile assertions, it is necessary to analyse real socio-economic and aesthetic differences that exist, differences that are in some senses multiplying, and the directions in which they are actually moving.

Turning to the second major theme of postmodern theory, the production relations of culture, we can take Attali's story of black American free jazz as the clearest illustration of the optimistic decentralization-democratization thesis. Attali describes the emergence of black free jazz from the late 1950s as a struggle against 'the organized and often consensual theft of black American music . . . a profound attempt to win creative autonomy, to effect a cultural-economic reappropriation'.⁸² Attali emphasizes first the economic structures: the development of a 'parallel industry' to produce and promote new music, since the record companies excluded black musicians and 'covered' black music by employing white musicians. Then the aesthetic: free jazz as a complete break with the 'cautious version of jazz that had gained acceptance . . . a truly spontaneous music of immediate enjoyment that escaped all crystallizations and used instruments in new ways'.⁸³ And the link to politics: 'Thus free jazz very quickly became a reflection of and a forum for the political struggle of blacks in reaction against their insertion into repetition . . . in opposition to the censorship of the official industry.'⁸⁴ All of this leads to the point: new democratic cultural practices in the business organization and in the music - for example, from 1965 in the work of the Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM) of Chicago. The AACM was a co-operative structure of about thirty black musicians, which organized to defend professional interests and to foster musicians' interaction, and took on educational functions in the black community.

Attali cites another group - the Jazz Composers' Orchestra Association (JCOA) - as the most interesting attempt by musicians to become more

independent of capital. The JCOA tried to develop a production and distribution network for records and concerts that was outside the main structures of the music industry. This 'made it possible . . . to work without being obliged to record purely commercial records at too fast a pace'.⁸⁵ Ironically, the JCOA was no longer a black musicians' organization; it was the next generation east coast alternative jazz co-operative, by then part white and also motivated by aesthetic exclusion from the 'mainstream'. The JCOA pooled royalties and shared out equally its total earnings, including university and foundation support. Other similar cultural organizations sprang up, self-managed and collective. But Attali recognizes their limits: ultimately free jazz 'failed as a takeover of power' despite creating 'locally the conditions for a different model of musical production'.⁸⁶ His response is to mythologize: free jazz and its improvised and collectivist practices become the 'herald' of his Utopian order.

Two things are noticeable here. First, Attali's analysis bears remarkable similarity to Dave Laing's model of decentralization and democratization in punk. Another version has been argued by Chris Cutler and others⁸⁷ in relation to European experimental rock of the early 1970s, which generated a co-operative organization with political aspirations called 'Rock in Opposition' and developed small-scale alternative circuits, self-managed record labels and so forth. In all three cases, small-scale alternative structures of production and distribution are linked to a critical, negative aesthetic, unacceptable to the majors and mainstream, and to a politics. My second observation is that all three examples correspond to my characterization of the avant-garde. Does this mean that all three musics arrived at their common avant-garde stance through unconscious structural influence, that (as the Barthesian view would seem to have it) the impulse to negation is a trans-cultural politics at the level of perception? Not at all. In fact all three of these musics may have been consciously influenced by modernism. Further, and more specifically, we can certainly trace a genealogy of direct influence between the three musics (1960s free jazz to 1970s experimental rock to late 1970s punk and new wave). But it is only by recognizing these musics' conscious discursive allusions to the historical avant-garde and its devices, and to prior musics referring to the 'avant-garde', that we avoid reifying those devices as somehow 'structural' or perceptually universal. Instead, we have a more prosaic view: that all three musics were petty capitalist forms of enterprise in the small-scale sector, engaged in reproducing their position as small and specialist markets, with political rhetoric, avant-gardist styles and semiotics as their selling points. This dispassionate, sceptical view of the 'avant-garde' and of 'critical' politics in pop is necessary to counterpoint the Utopian weight invested in them by writers like Attali and Cutler. It remains to be argued what actual aesthetic or political effects these musics have beyond their ideological aspirations and marketing⁸⁸ - or whether change in popular music has anything to do with modernist ideas of an avant-garde and its 'critical' position at all. The point is that aesthetic and socio-economic innovation in popular music cannot be understood in those old terms, borrowed from a discourse which was itself founded on implicit, but absolute, negation of just those commercial forms. We require an entirely distinct theory,

which will itself lead to a more objective reading of contemporary cultural history.

The other assumption of the decentralization-democratization thesis is that certain popular musics are changing the social relations of cultural production: hence free jazz's collective and co-operative structures, avant-garde rock's collectivism, punk's anti-hierarchy and de-skilling - all of which are distilled into Attali's socio-musical Utopia. This continues the Brechtian-Benjaminian theory of experiment in cultural work, crossed with broader influences of black and feminist politics. Such developments are explained by reference to the musics' small-scale networks on the one hand, and to new music technologies on the other. Laing, for example, demonstrates that there are qualities of small organizations that do allow for greater democracy of decision-making, more control by the workers and musicians, and less pressure from the profit imperative. But none of this *necessarily* follows from small enterprise, just as it does not necessarily go along with an avant-garde aesthetic. It is also worth noting that music production cultures other than pop are currently undergoing critiques of their social relations.⁸⁹ So we are left with two questions. Does petty capitalist pop music enterprise, or small-scale organization, have any special or necessary role in the politics of transforming contemporary music practice? And can they have any more than a limited effect on the larger industrial and public structures of music production?

Another aspect of this debate, touched on by Durant, concerns the transformation of the creative process by music recording technologies. Writers have argued, from observation, that the recording and mixing processes in the recording studio necessitate an aural and collaborative group practice, a socialized labour process and division of labour which are potentially democratic and non-hierarchical.⁹⁰ These are undeniable forces changing the heart of contemporary music practice: they only occur in popular and improvisational musics and are necessitated by the technological production processes of music. At their most hopeful, these ideas root Attali's Utopia of future socio-musical practice in the technological present. The proliferation of new music technologies in every part of the production process and at every price level is, equally, taken to democratize the circulation of music. The consumption of electronic instruments, cassette and tape decks, mini-mixing desks, ghetto-blasters, turntables, digital synthesizers, sequencers, samplers, computers and so on, also makes possible new forms of 'self-production', of an original tape or sound to be consumed. The line between consumption and production thus becomes blurred, as Chambers and others have argued in relation to rap, scratching, disco, dub, as well as punk.⁹¹

This extraordinarily open and volatile access, the closeness of consumption goods to 'cultural means of production' and the possibilities that gives for decentralized production, are - so far - unique to music. But there are, at the same time, enormous forces for music-technological centralization and omnipotence. Just as they fail to address the high cultural sphere of modern music, the postmodern optimists draw conclusions without addressing the other end of the spectrum in technological differentiation: that is, high technology. Examples are the appearance of 'super' music computers such as IRCAM's '4X'

(in its time 'the most powerful realtime digital synthesizer in the world'), and its nearest rival, the 'ASP' - the ultimate expression of the new computerized mixing desks - produced by Lucas Film Corporation (of *Star Wars* fame).⁹² The 4X has a highly significant dual existence both as a means of production for elite, internationally select serious composers such as Boulez, and as a simulator of aircraft noise for training pilots, for which it was sold to the giant arms company Dassault - the only company that was interested in industrializing it. The ASP is, appropriately, more at home in the entertainment industries. It was designed to be the first machine to produce and process an entire film soundtrack, thereby replacing a human chain of skilled labour, and is now being sold to other major film companies. These developments, and the powerful public and private institutions which conceive and nurture them, represent the future of music just as much as street culture and scratch mixing. And despite being musically irrelevant to the majority of people, it is a nasty irony that this high music technology may affect people's lives indirectly but powerfully in other, less pleasant ways - through hidden links to defence technologies, for example.

Although Attali and Durant address music as a socio-historical totality, they lose touch with 'history in the present'. Their methods could generate work with immediate relevance, but in fact their involvement with current issues and experiences is weak. Attali's work approaches past history in a new way, but he conceives the present in what can now be seen to be a re-reading of old Adornian themes plus a libertarian vision. As with Barthes, the transition between the two is not explained. Durant's work remains an anti-doxa and fragmented; while Chambers and Laing remain focused within the borders of pop music and culture. In exploring modernist and/or popular music cultures, these theorists have not as yet fully grasped either their specificity and absolute difference or, therefore, the complexities of their interrelation. I have tried to show reasons for casting a critical eye across the totality: to stop perceiving contemporary realities through the lens of modernist discourse, so as to be clearer about postmodern and pop possibilities. The feedback loop between practice and theory needs to be made shorter: cultural theory should therefore take on the complex present and leave behind its baggage of modernist yearnings. Announcing the 'end of cultural hegemony', helping and colluding in that announcement (just as sociologists colluded with the 'end of ideology'), simply disguises the continuity, and the new forms, of power. A century of socio-cultural division doesn't just end like that. To understand the present, it is necessary to look closely at the changing forms of power, and particularly at the new relations between the commercial and the public - their opposition and their newfound co-operation. That means critically taking on phenomena across the modernist/popular divide, and asking whether 'reintegration' of such different and historically autonomous cosmologies is possible, and if so how; or whether - and for whom - it is even desirable.

NOTES

My thanks to Simon Frith for his help and encouragement throughout the development of these ideas.

- 1 Literature is the other medium in which modernist and commercial popular forms developed concurrently. However, until recently the commercial structure of popular literature could not match that of popular music for volatility, for degrees of oligopoly and yet differentiation.
- 2 Video, in itself and in its relation to film culture, is the medium closest to recorded music in its potential for developing a differentiated commercial structure, allowing space for a small-scale production sector which can affect major forms - an aspect of video usually neglected in trying to account for its inherent kinship with popular music.
- 3 See P. Bourdieu, 'Intellectual field and creative project', in M. Young (ed.), *Knowledge and Control* (London: Collier-Macmillan, 1971); 'The production of belief', *Media, Culture and Society*, 3, 3 (1981); *Distinction: a social critique of the judgment of taste* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986).
- 4 At its simplest, serialism involves the creation of a 12-note 'row', using each of the twelve diatonic notes once, which becomes the seed of a composition. The row is treated to four basic structural transformations, thereby creating four cells - the original row, the inversion, the retrograde and the retrograde-inversion - which can all be transposed and subdivided. This series of transformations generates a set of materials that can in turn generate the larger work.
- 5 T. Adorno, 'On the fetish-character in music and the regression of listening', in A. Arato and E. Gebhardt (eds), *The Essential Frankfurt School Reader* (New York: Urizen Books, 1977). For Adorno's views on musical modernism, see his *Philosophy of Modern Music* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1973).
- 6 For influential early attempts to develop popular music aesthetics, see C. Keil, 'Motion and feeling through music', *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 24 (1966), and A. Chester, 'Second thoughts on a rock aesthetic: the Band', *New Left Review*, 62 (1970).
- 7 See R. Middleton, "'Play it again, Sam": some notes on the productivity of repetition in popular music', *Popular Music*, 3 (1983).
- 8 P. Anderson, 'Modernity and revolution', *New Left Review*, 144 (1984), 105.
- 9 The major account of experimental music is M. Nyman, *Experimental Music: Cage and Beyond* (New York: Schirmer, 1974). Relevant sources on modernist and avant-garde music are P. Griffiths, *Modern Music: the avant-garde since 1945* (London: Dent, 1981) and *New Sounds, New Personalities: British composers of the 1980s* (London: Faber, 1980); P. Boulez, *Boulez on Music Today* (London: Faber, 1971) and *Orientations* (London: Faber, 1986); and P.-M. Menger, *Le Paradoxe du Musicien: le compositeur, le melomane et l'état dans la société contemporaine* (Paris: Flammarion, 1983). C. Hamm's *Music in the New World* (New York: Norton, 1983) is exceptional in dealing with both serious and popular music.
- 10 The leading experimental composers Frederic Rzewski, Christian Wolff and Cornelius Cardew tried, in different ways, to develop a political music by integrating Marxist political convictions with their musical practice. Cardew's Marxism-Leninism became crudely determinist in his late work with People's Liberation Music.
- 11 P. Burke, 'The "discovery" of popular culture', in R. Samuel (ed.), *People's History and Socialist Theory* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981).
- 12 See P. Tagg and D. Horn (eds), *Popular Music Perspectives*, 1 (Exeter: International Association for the Study of Popular Music, 1982) for a discussion of 'what is popular music?' in relation to a mass/popular debate; for example, C. Hamm's forceful argument in favour of a commercial definition.
- 13 See C. Gillett, *The Sound of the City: the rise of rock 'n' roll* (New York: Dell, 1970);

- S. Frith, *Sound Effects: youth, leisure and the politics of rock & roll* (New York: Pantheon, and London: Constable, 1983); D. Laing, *One Chord Wonders: power and meaning in punk rock* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1985). Part 2 of Frith (especially ch. 5) is a useful summary of the debates about popular music production. For a comparative global perspective, see R. Wallis and K. Malm, *Big Sounds from Small Peoples: the music industry in small countries* (London: Constable, 1984).
- 14 R. Peterson, 'Cycles in symbol production: the case of popular music', *American Sociological Review*, 40 (1975) and R. Peterson and D. Berger, 'Entrepreneurship and organization: evidence from the popular music industry', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 16 (1971).
- 15 Frith, op. cit., 90.
- 16 *ibid.*, 156.
- 17 See F. Fabbri, 'A theory of musical genres: two applications', in Tagg and Horn, op. cit.; and Fabbri, 'What kind of music?', *Popular Music*, 2 (1982).
- 18 The classic reading of style/genre is D. Hebdige, *Subculture: the meaning of style* (London and New York: Methuen, 1979).
- 19 Adorno, 'On the fetish-character . . .', 286.
- 20 J. Attali, *Noise: the political economy of music* (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, and Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985); A. Durant, *Conditions of Music* (London: Macmillan, 1984).
- 21 J. Kerman, *Musicology* (London: Fontana, 1985).
- 22 In fact, some ethnomusicology has been concerned with analysing the music itself. Equally, the new field of musical semiotics includes studies which try to reconcile the musical and the social by analysing the musical text itself, and not just the extra-musical, as bearer of social meaning, ideological connotation. See, for example, P. Tagg's influential study, *Kojak: so seconds of television music* (Gothenburg: 1979); and also J. Shepherd, P. Virden, G. Vulliamy and T. Wishart, *Whose Music? A sociology of musical languages* (Eastbourne: Transaction, 1977).
- 23 Kerman, op. cit., 180.
- 24 C. Schorske, *Fin-de-Siecle Vienna: politics and culture* (New York: Knopf, 1980). On the Viennese modernists, see also O. Neighbour, P. Griffiths and G. Perle, *The New Grove: second Viennese school* (London: Macmillan, 1983) and C. Rosen, *Schoenberg* (London: Fontana, 1976).
- 25 C. Rosen, *The Classical Style: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven* (New York: Norton, 1971).
- 26 Kerman, op. cit., 15.
- 27 *ibid.*, 101.
- 28 See, for example, M. Weber, *The Rational and Social Foundations of Music* (Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, [1921] 1958) and A. Schütz, 'Making music together', in *Collected Papers*, vol. 2 (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1973)-
- 29 W. D. Allen, *Philosophies of Music History: a study of general histories of music* (New York: Dover, [1939] 1962). Interestingly, Kerman, citing Allen, also argues that the musicological disciplines that he discusses 'should not be defined in terms of their subject matter . . . but rather in terms of their philosophies and ideologies' (Kerman, op. cit., 15).
- 30 I am indebted to Philip Tagg for this point. Durant's first chapter (op. cit.) is a useful discussion of the vexed question of music's relation to language.
- 31 For an overview of the 'production of culture' approach to popular music, see *Journal of Popular Culture* (Fall 1982).
- 32 C. Keil, *Urban Blues* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966).
- 33 Gillett, op. cit.
- 34 S. Frith, *The Sociology of Rock* (London: Constable, 1978).

- 35 For details of IASPM, contact Andy Linehan, National Sound Archive, 29 Exhibition Road, London SW7, UK; or Lawrence Grossberg, Department of Speech Communication, University of Illinois, USA.
- 36 Hebdige, op. cit.
- 37 J.-F. Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: a report on knowledge* (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, and Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984). For debates on the character and varieties of postmodernism, see also J. Habermas, 'Modernity versus postmodernity', *New German Critique*, 22 (1981); and the special issue of *New German Critique*, 33 (1984) on 'Modernity and postmodernity', especially F. Jameson, 'The politics of theory: ideological positions in the post-modernism debate' and A. Huyssen, 'Mapping the postmodern'.
- 38 I. Chambers, *Urban Rhythms: pop music and popular culture* (London: Macmillan, 1985).
- 39 Laing, op. cit.
- 40 Chambers, op. cit., 205.
- 41 *ibid.*, 207-9.
- 42 A. McRobbie, 'Dance and social fantasy', in A. McRobbie and M. Nava (eds), *Gender and Generation* (London: Macmillan, 1984), 134.
- 43 See S. Robinson ('The art of the possible', *Free Associations: Psychoanalysis, Groups, Politics, Culture, Radical Science Journal*, 15, 1984) on the difference between fantasy and imagination. Robinson's approach draws on British post-Freudian developments, notably the work of D. W. Winnicott and Melanie Klein, which have been comparatively neglected in recent cultural studies.
- 44 Laing, op. cit., 125.
- 45 A. McRobbie, 'Settling accounts with sub-cultures: a feminist critique', *Screen Education*, 34 (1980), 43.
- 46 See J. Baudrillard, 'Requiem for the media', in *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign* (St Louis, MO: Telos Press, 1981).
- 47 Chambers, op. cit., 207.
- 48 Laing, op. cit., 78.
- 49 *ibid.*, 127.
- 50 Durant, op. cit., 56.
- 51 Attali, op. cit., flyleaf.
- 52 *ibid.*, 4-5.
- 53 Durant, op. cit., 109.
- 54 Durant (quoting Hanns Eisler), op. cit., 78.
- 55 *ibid.*, 83.
- 56 *ibid.*, 82-5.
- 57 Attali, op. cit., 29. For another perspective on music as encoding the dominant social order, see J. Shepherd, 'The musical coding of ideologies', in Shepherd *et al.*, op. cit.; and 'A theoretical model for the sociomusicological analysis of popular music', *Popular Music*, 2 (1982).
- 58 Attali, op. cit., 11.
- 59 *ibid.*, 19.
- 60 *ibid.*, 30.
- 61 *ibid.*, 19.
- 62 *ibid.*
- 63 *ibid.*, 83.
- 64 *ibid.*, 19.
- 65 *ibid.*, 101.
- 66 *ibid.*, 113, 112.

- 67 *ibid.*, 134.
- 68 *ibid.*, 140-1.
- 69 R. Barthes, *Image, Music, Text* (London: Fontana, 1977), 149.
- 70 *ibid.*, 150.
- 71 *ibid.*, 154.
- 72 R. Poggioli, *The Theory of the Avant Garde* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap/Harvard, 1982).
- 73 F. Haskell, 'Enemies of modern art', *New York Review of Books* (30 June 1983).
- 74 Laing, *op. cit.*, 77.
- 75 Lyotard, *op. cit.*, 74.
- 76 Laing, *op. cit.*, 78.
- 77 Durant, *op. cit.*, 91.
- 78 For the influence of art schools on British pop music, and of situationists on punk, see Laing, *op. cit.*, ch. 7; Chambers, *op. cit.*, ch. 7; S. Frith and H. Home, *Art into Pop* (London and New York: Methuen, forthcoming); and J. A. Walker, *Cross-overs: thirty years of art and pop music* (London: Comedia, forthcoming).
- 79 Attali, *op. cit.*, 140.
- 80 IRCAM (Institut de Recherche et Co-ordination Acoustique/Musique) is the music wing of the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris. It is a large, ambitious computer music research centre, handsomely endowed by the state, and directed by Pierre Boulez. IRCAM produces computer music hardware and software as well as new music itself - strictly serious, avant-garde music. It is the largest such European institution and is part of a network of high-tech computer music centres, the majority and most powerful of which are North American - for example, Stanford University's Centre for Computer Research in Music and Acoustics, or MIT's recently opened Media Laboratory, an art and technology centre, which includes a revamped Experimental Music Studio. (This article forms part of my research into modernism and postmodernism in music, which focuses on an ethnographic study of IRCAM and its milieu.)
- 81 Postmodernists claim, often in significant throwaway remarks, that in music modernism and the popular are reconciled, that modernism has come in from the cold and disowned its elitist and alienated past. For example, Fredric Jameson's more optimistic argument hinges on a reference to 'the synthesis of classical and "popular" styles found in composers like Phil Glass and Terry Riley, and also in punk and new wave rock' ('Postmodernism, or the cultural logic of late capitalism', *New Left Review*, 146 (1984), 54). See also G. Ulmer, 'The object of post-criticism' (on Cage), in H. Foster (ed.), *Postmodern Culture* (London: Pluto Press, 1985), published in the USA as *The Anti-Aesthetic* (Port Townsend, WA: Bay Press, 1983); S. McClary, 'Afterword: the politics of silence and sound', in Attali, *op. cit.*; J. Rockwell, *All American Music: composition in the late twentieth century* (New York: Vintage, 1984).
- 82 Attali, *op. cit.*, 138.
- 83 *ibid.*, 139.
- 84 *ibid.*, 138.
- 85 *ibid.*, 139.
- 86 *ibid.*, 140.
- 87 C. Cutler, *File Under Popular* (London: November Books, 1985), chs 5 to 7, and 'Technology, politics and contemporary music: a theory and a project', in *Popular Music*, 4 (1984); M. Paddison, 'The critique criticised: Adorno and popular music' and P. Wicke, 'Rock music: a musical-aesthetic study', both in *Popular Music*, 2 (1982).
- 88 This kind of politics of popular music is relativized particularly by the recent reaction

against it expressed in Band Aid and similar developments, a reaction towards a populist politics of what might be called moral internationalism (or imperialism?), based on the recognition of pop music's enormous power to create a sense of 'community' and to raise money.

- 89 There is some evidence that even orchestras - embodiments of romantic individualism and a hierarchical division of labour - are 'collectivizing' commercially and modifying their authoritarian communicative practice. In addition, within the classical music teaching profession there are moves to lessen the authoritarian nature of teaching and organizations are developing to fight against competition as the major dynamic of the career structure.
- 90 On the division of labour in the popular music recording process and its implications, see Cutler, op. cit.; A. Hennion, *Les Professioneh du Disque* (Paris: A. M. Metailie 1981) and 'The production of success: an anti-musicology of the pop song', in *Popular Music*, 3 (1983); J.-P. Vignolle, 'Mixing genres and reaching the public: the production of popular music', in *Social Science Information*, 19, 1 (1980); E. Kealy, 'The real rock revolution: sound mixers, social inequality and the aesthetics of popular music production' (unpublished PhD thesis, Northwestern University, Evanston, 111., 1974).
- 91 See, for example, D. Toop, *The Rap Attack: African jive to New York hip hop* (London: Pluto Press, 1984); on New York disco culture and DJs, see S. Harvey, 'New York City's disco underground', *Collusion*, 5 (September 1983).
- 92 Despite apparent dissimilarities, IRCAM and Lucas Film Audio Division have rival yet close relations, swapping personnel and research. There is a certain contemporary significance in this competitive but also co-operative, symbiotic relationship between a pre-eminent European state cultural institution and one of the most commercially successful American entertainment corporations - two powerful institutions epitomizing, respectively, the domains of cultural and economic capital.

The pop culture has been reflected in our society through the arts and the history of this art style. Trends (or fads) can create a positive influence or negative influence on society. Kanye West Album Cover. Website related to historical events and pop culture through history. News, Popular Culture, Prices and Technology. I See, I Think, I Wonder - Free Art Worksheet. "Love" used by Museum of Modern Art 1965 Christmas card. A best-selling United States Postal Service stamp (1973). Made sculpture translation of LOVE into AHAVA (Hebrew) and AMOR (Spanish). Classical Music versus Pop Music Classical music and popular music are both genres of music that have been in existence for a long time and listened to by the entire populace. Classical music is more complex and appeals to the older population while pop music appeals to the younger population. There are benefits associated with classical music and it is of general opinion that it requires more attention to details than pop music because of its complexity. It is a known fact that music is a form of art whose medium is sound. Its common elements are pitch, rhythm, and dynamics. A better term for modern music would be contemporary popular music. But, to answer your question, it is largely a matter of s... What you consider pop is like trivial music from the past the moment it pops up on the radio or on YouTube. Jazz. Well. That is a modern form of music which you will also hear in the music of those modern composers I gave you in a couple of seconds ago. Jazz is very transcending to be honest. And despite the fact it could be labelled as true American Art Music (as we see it done with European Art Music) it is still very modern. Jazz is the best example of modern music because it is not just music. It is an idea. the Only thing modern pop music stands out from other areas is its ease. Not particularly tricky melody and simple rhythm diluted, most often, in plain text, which, moreover, can be a bit silly in the rhymes and refrains. It would seem that the influence of pop music on people should be as easy and unobtrusive, but as it turns out, far from it. Scientific experimentally proven that during a time listening to pop music person becomes stupid, and the effect continues after another hour. In any case, any modern music designed especially for certain occasions when its impact will only benefit. So, pop music is ideal for creating a festive atmosphere at any event, whether it is a party with friends or corporate.