ion of thought. But what are they really doing when they find their signifiers, their flickering ideas?

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Critical thinking which would posit such an opposition comes under attack in Polan’s seminary essay, “Brief Encounters: Mass Culture and Theatrical Performance.” Polan argues that advancement in critical theories of cultural studies is blocked by the re- tention of binary oppositions. In his assessment of Roland Barthes’s 5Z, Polan is critical of Barthes’s adherence to the high art/mass culture split in his formulation of readersly and writerly texts. Polan contends that the notion of popular culture is eXisted only when the mythic, spiritual, trans- cendentalist experiences are aXigned to high culture can also be projected on to them.

Polan’s insight into this problem is temporarily arrested in a section of his lengthy essay which provides an analysis of the immoderately banal comic strip Blondie which he asserts contains some of “the most directly, literally, qualities of experi- mental art.” Polan admits his point that this comic strip is “Sandful” (actually, it’s incredibil- e), but gives it as evidence that the “Sandful” (actually, it’s incredible), but gives it as evidence that the “Sandful” is everywhere in this moment of late capitalism. Postmodern- ize, Polan contends, is characterized by excess, by “incoherence” as part of the norm. His concern is that there is a “fundamental weirdness” in contemporary mass culture. In order to account for this, Polan turns, along with Gay Debold, “the age of the Society of the Spectacle,” Polan’s essay which makes it clear that we seek a “totalizing” method of analysis, which will incor- porate several systems of knowledge, to comprehend this “weirdness” of late capital- ist society.

Late in his paper Polan names feminism as an admirable beginning to his grand theo- retical enterprise, and which Modleski supports in her introduction. A caution, however, must be voiced at this point. Neither Polan nor Modleski seem to realize that the construction of a theoretical framework which contains all social theories without its boundaries amounts to nothing more than a new dominating discourse. A symptom of this belief, that one can speak for all, is contained in Modleski’s introduction where she de- scribes the women’s movement as one voice (p.45) and also in her mention of feminist crit- ical thinking as if it were a homogeneous unit. Although one essay in the collection, Jean Franco’s “The Incorporation of Women: A Comparison of North American and Mexican Popular Culture,” provides a glimpse of women in working class Mexican culture, the final essay in the collection, a study of women’s fashion of “The Great Male Renunciation” of the eighteenth century. This was the time at which men gave up their foppish ways and adopted the “clo- d”ative dress to the ladies. The impetus Silverman cites for this new male modesty is the emergence of the middle class with the growth of industry. The sign of a man’s wealth became focused on the appearance of his wife, who retained (with or without consent) the old aristocracy’s claim to leisure and to extravagant dress. In this shift lies a decisive step toward women’s inherited position as spectator.

Also in her discussion, Silverman makes the claim that the distinctive dress of a subculture or subordinate class is appropriated by the fashion industry it is a triumph on the part of the subculture. In Silverman’s words, “its ideological force and form- belia” can no longer be ignored.” Silverman tends to be a persuasive writer and Williamon’s reading of a fashion advertisement leaves her argument intact. Using Williamon’s model, such appropriation is another act of colonization of other. As Williamon points out, “It is fine fashion to wear a turban and to wear a turban, even though in British India, who wear turbans for religious reasons are subject to much racist abuse.”

Three of the eleven essays in the collection are not engaged in a feminist study. “The Television News Personality and Creditability: Reflections on the News in Transition” by Margaret Morse is flawed because of Moore’s attempt to define the entire history of television news in a few pages. The result is a wandering, circular discussion in need of clarification of key issues. “Theatre, Adorno Meets the Cadillacs” enters a direct dialogue with the John Logan Baird Centre for Research in Television and Film. The Centre’s Director at the time was Colin MacCabe, who is also the editor and a contributor to High Theory/Low Culture.

Another crossover text to the text, also in High Theory/Low Culture, is Taan Skirrow’s "Defining Pop Culture: An Analysis of Video Games" which includes some interesting re- search into the history of video games, but then makes a silly application of psychoanalysis (via Melanie Klein) upon the playing of the games. As an example of the kind of work that does not play video games. A boy who plays is attempting to re- enter the mother’s body with fantasy, phallic weapons in or- der to continually act out his own. Skirrow’s successful appearance in Studies in Entertainment, and her unconvincing discussion in High Theory/Low Culture, suggests a fascination with the general co- herence as opposed to High Theory/Low Culture, which is predominately unstructured bable.

High Theory/Low Culture is a collection which includes both American and British studies. It comes out of a seminar on “High Culture/Low Culture” 1986 at the John Logan Baird Centre for Research in Television and Film. The Centre’s Director at the time was Colin MacCabe, who is also the editor and a contributor to High Theory/Low Culture. In his brief, prefatory essay, MacCabe outlines the three themes of the collection. They are, that the study of popular culture concern itself with politics, that the creations of art do not accept the dichotomy between high art and mass culture. These are essentially concerns as Studies in Entertainment. MacCabe’s own essay, “Defining Pop Culture: An Analysis of Video Games,” on these three also contains the same semiological and analytic critical, aXirmed, un- successful, sad, and all. American movies are not useful to Hollywood film, television, which is more a reason for mea- ning regarding semiotics. This is important because it would be no use in his explanation specific failures.
with politics, and with considerations of gender, and that it
do not accept the opposition between high art (high theory)
and realism. These are essentially the same concerns as those
expressed in Media and Culture, but in a less finely tuned form.

MacCabe's own essay, "Defining Popular Culture," presents itself with
an engaging commentary on these themes. Yet it also contains
the curious claim that the development of modernist critical
approaches, admirably successful in dis
"Defining Popular Culture," is an engaging commentary on these themes. Yet it also contains
an interesting claim that the development of modernist critical
approaches, admirable in success, is not helpful in defining popular
culture. This essay attempts to redefine modernist approaches
and to examine their relevance to the study of popular culture.

The essay begins with a discussion of the relationship between
the two approaches: modernism and realism. Modernism is
characterized by its emphasis on abstraction and formalism,
while realism is characterized by its emphasis on the
representation of reality. MacCabe argues that these two
approaches are not necessarily at odds, but rather that they can be
seen as complementary. He argues that modernism provides a
framework for understanding the nature of reality, while realism
provides a way of representing that reality.

MacCabe then goes on to discuss the role of the artist in the
production of popular culture. He argues that the artist has
the responsibility to challenge the dominant cultural norms and to
create works that are both aesthetically appealing and
politically relevant. He cites examples of popular culture works
that have had a significant impact on cultural and political
consciousness, such as popular music, film, and literature.

In conclusion, MacCabe argues that popular culture is a
complex and multifaceted phenomenon that cannot be reduced to
simple oppositions between high art and realism. Instead, it is a
space where different approaches can coexist and interact to
produce new meanings and ideas.

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Another crossover contributor to this page, along with Gillian
Crowther, is Tanya Modleski. In "Femininity (sic) as Masculinization: A Feminist
Approach to Mass Culture," she examines the orthodox position
of the feminist critics, who often reduce the study of mass

turn to analyzing the role of popular culture in society. She argues
that the focus on class and gender divisions is too narrow and
that a more comprehensive approach is needed.

Modleski then goes on to discuss the role of the filmmaker in
the production of popular culture. She argues that filmmakers
have a responsibility to challenge the dominant cultural norms
and to create works that are both aesthetically appealing and
politically relevant. She cites examples of popular culture works
that have had a significant impact on cultural and political
consciousness, such as popular music, film, and literature.

In conclusion, Modleski argues that popular culture is a
complex and multifaceted phenomenon that cannot be reduced to
simple oppositions between high art and realism. Instead, it is a
space where different approaches can coexist and interact to
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