In articles such as "Popular Art and the Cultural Tradition" included in this selection, James identifies the mass audience as an urban, characteristic of industrial capitalism, whose logic also organizes the cultural industries (particularly film). Since mass culture conditions make sense of their history, James thought that cultural criticism also had to connect with mass culture, which divided by economic crisis and therefore denied access to deci- sive experience. Conclusively kept filling the movie houses because films presented a contrast with their daily life. This is the integrated approach to the study of social processes of communication as social relations that Carlos Monsivais and Jesús Martín-Barbero have continued and complemented.

According to Grimshaw, James had a method which worked by expecting the colonized middle class which was busy imitating their British masters. Through direct observation and conversion, he connected world history and events, the connected world history and events, collected detailed information about how traditional and modern forms lived together. The modern form lived in the context of social conflict. The discussion of this method can be found in the "Preface to Condition Beyond a Boundary," which is also in this volume. Whether the pretext was Molly Dick or cricket, the purpose of the research was to develop a methodology to allow people to connect with their history and identity. By connecting this work with the present, many researchers have moved because the leadership knew how to follow the working people.

In the late forties when James was discussing the relation between mass culture and working people to integrate the working people, the combination of a method of cultural criticism which seeks to inform social interventions. The need to reappropriate the national popular in Latin America without falling prey to populism. This is the tradition to which Mella, Maritegui, and James contributed with their understanding of culture and the people. In recent researches, Aníbal Quijano, Francisco Wofford, Octavio Ianni, and Walter Rodney have taken up the task.

within the existing relations of force. This is what he was writing about during the McCarthy period as he feared depredation, of course. But I think that James and Walter Rodney in order to make sense of my Canadian experience. Their work has identified the difference between exploitable conditions of cultural consumption and non-negotiable conditions of production which deny the possibility of multiple interpretation is by the new social protagon- ists.

For those of us raised in the islands of the West Indies, adapting to the environment with ease and humour is a necessity. This was particularly the case under formal colonialism when the colonized lived on two worlds, especially the petit bourgeoisie elements involved in "cul- tural affairs." For the latter, everyday life was directed towards the pursuit of impe- rial standards. In one way or another they were the local collaborators of the colonial bureaucrats. With the new order of the United States in the North the writing and commentaries of mass culture are still an important issue in cultural studies. The writings of James work given the point of reference and comprehension with which to evaluate the current fashion of analysing the lives of the poor.

C.L.R. James did well in the North, in spite of breaking the rules, and made a mark about the cricketers. Constantine Beyond a Boundary could also be applied to him. "Without a nation, a national hero can expect little more than applause: a region that can not keep its best children at home does not deserve to have them." In his difficult times for Latin America, and especially for the Caribbean, the precision vision which informs James work, often the most pressing questions in a tradition which challenges the practice of the present gener- ations.

Santiago Valles is a graduate student in the Department of Communication at Simon Fraser University.

The Salt and the Old Tradition
BY Alan O'Connor


Everyone (or, at least, all readers of this magazine) would maintain that cultural imperialism is a bad thing. Intellectuals and media audiences (not exclusive categories generally agree that countries with powerful media industries should not import their products on Third World and traditional societies. John Tolomison's main argument about the subject is that the protest against cultural imperialism is usually made by intellectual and elites as theorists, as others, claim to speak for the ordinary person. The epigraph for his book is a remark by Gilmore Deleuze to Michel Foucault: "You were the first to teach us something absolutely fundamental: the indigent of speech for others." The ever-all effect of the book is to leave the field to the intellectual of the nationalist, and to focus on the protests which find no indemnity in taking far-reaching deci- sions for others.

The TV Central Television in Birmingham, England sent out a Christmas card with a photograph of an aboriginal family watching television in a remote part of Australia. It is evening and the family sits outside their, faces lit up by the TV screen. Tolomison begins his book by remarking that many readers will interpret the photo as evidence of the imposition of Western culture on an aboriginal community. The text on this Christmas card suggests this, but also notes that the community has set up its own broadcast system. What does Tolomison mean by "the Walp marches Association..." to try to defend its unique culture from Western cultural imperialism? Tolomison says that the book with this image because he wants to argue that something rather different is happening in organizing opposition to cultural imperialism. He uses the photograph as a way of catching out readers in their assumption that only the media is responsible for advertising or some foreign television series. Readers are forced to question their assumptions because in this photograph the family actually might be watching its own community-produced programming. The book is about the failures of cable television companies who defend their monopoly control over the selection and distribution of visual signals by point- ing out that they do have a channel for local or public access programming. Tolomison says nothing about these resources, the legal situation and the program- ming of the Walp marches Media Association. He does not compare his resources with those of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. The reason for this is probably that although he had easy access to the photographs which were distributed in Central Television by England, he did not have access to Eric Michael's monograph on the Walp marches Media Association. For a Cultural Future is published by Art & Text in Melbourne and is not widely distributed.

In his introduction, Tolomison acknowledges the irony of writing a book on media imperialism from England and publishing it in one of the world's hege-emonic languages. He deals with this by invoking Blaise Pascal's advice to a young nobleman about his position of privilege. The advice was to remember that his dealings with others was that he was noble- man only by accident. This Aston-ishingly accurate advice forms the reader's attention from a serious practical limitation of this book. Tolomison has written a book on cultural imperialism which draws only on materials published in the English language. The book is based on a very selective range of published sources.

Tolomison turns his attention to writers on media studies such as Herbert Schiller and Armand Mattelart. He makes two moves against their gener- alizing arguments that U.S. media domi- nate the world. The first argument is to separate the realm of the economic from that of the cultural. Tolomison bases his views before the evidence of political economy research. Transnational corporations, espe- cially those based in the USA, for and large dominate the world in the production and distribution of mass media. However, he insists that this economic domination will not dominate the world in cultural domination. It is somewhat astonishing to find such an insistence on culture as being autonomous from economics. Such a claim was made in Altusman's "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus" essay. It has been widely criticized, by Raymond Williams among others, as hopelessly inadequate to the multiple ways in which culture and economics are intertwined in consumer societies in design, fashion, advertising, marketing, and the operation of the media industries themselves. As a result of the limitations in Altusman's essay, cultural studies turned its attention to Gramsci and to studies of the institution of meaning, value, and power.

Tolomison's second argument against Schiller and Mattelart is the now- familiar one that the audience is active in interpreting the mass media. He notes the embeddedness of the media product. Here Tolomison draws on research into the "active audience" by Morley, Ang, Katz and Liebes. The widespread circulation among liberal intellectuals of a very small number of studies of audience reception of mass media deserves some serious scruti- ny. What is at stake about these studies that has consequences of such concern? Pierre Bourdieu has researched the use of art and culture in
Vicarious Sensibilities or Vicarious Criticism?

BY Allison Hearn


Megapolis, a collection of five essays, takes us into the postmodern "state of things." In each essay Olajugba delineates aspects of the contemporary postmodern condition and gives examples from the urban scene as she perceives it. A range of examples range from shopping malls, to World Fairs, to religious icons, to punk art, to Brazilian carnivals. The purpose of the book, Olajugba claims, is "to describe how such apparently infinite projects of postmodernism, understood as the glorification of consumption, does in fact enable the articulation of novel and often contradictory desires." Each chapter is just such a "description," with liberal amounts of orthodox postmodern theory thrown in for good measure. Olajugba un lackingl y ignores the good, or moments of daily life, however liberating, in the signifying practices and products she describes. But ironically, she is at her best when focusing on the base, more violent and compromised aspects of contemporary culture.

The prolongation of Megapolis is a summary of the standard theoretical constructs of contemporary postmodern theory. What with the obligatory "rattling of meaning and the exhaustion of modernism," the "celebration of difference in cultural identities," the "collapse of time into space," and "ref erent" emptiness of all identities, this is a postmod ern culture with a veritable smorgasbord of pomo formulations.

Perhaps the most central and, definitely, the most poignant of these formulations is Olajugba's description of the "vicarious sensibilities" that she finds prevalent in postmod ern culture, her description of what is meant by "vicarious sensibilities," and her example of "vicarious sensibilities" is her description of "the breaking down of traditional referentiality." Our experience in postmodernity, is always and necessarily, indirect. In a state of perpetual "ex istential drift," one's position is essentially indeterminate and vicarious experience is likened to "the kind of confusion Madame Bovary and Don Quijote developed themselves and the characters of the literature they so loved to read..."

Unfortunately, the concepts of vicariousness and identity confusion comprise a more fitting description of Olajugba's critique of contemporary sensibilities. Somehow Megapolis, as either cultural theory or criticism, seems to be a little gray and slightly flat. Olajugba is obviously wrestling with a confusion between her own critical interventions and the myriad pomo crises that have come before her. The result is, what we might call, vicariousness in "Touch Out and Touch Someone." Olajugba tracks the ways in which television functions as the medium of our modes of perception. The increasing dominance of visual images, the replacement of the verbal with the visual, and the new forms of simulated perception are echoed in the psychological disorder of psychas tasis. This disorder involves a vicarious reliance in the relationship between the body and its surroundings, where "the body grows inside the psyche as a major organ and aban dons its own identity...by camouflaging itself into the milieu." Olajugba gives the standard (although pazzlegingly sim ple) example of the shopping mall, where the homogeneity of one's environment is so great, so total, it is almost like being "in the infinitesimal, spatial search for a parking space (a place in which to place the self)."