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Introduction

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In what remains one of the most cogent meditations on the arrival of cultural studies in North America, Fredric Jameson (1993) pointedly refers to the field as "the desire called Cultural Studies" (16), emphasizing the degree to which it was constituted more by its aspirations than by its actual achievements. In particular, Jameson isolates two strands of that desire—first, the desire that cultural studies has had to be politically relevant or efficacious and, second, its desire to have an impact on forms of disciplinary knowledge and on the formations of the academy. Jameson's wariness about the field has turned out to be wise in the sense that cultural studies did not really become the radical intellectual movement that upset disciplines and reformulated knowledge; nor did it eventually open out onto some thriving area of politics and the public sphere beyond the academy. While Jameson suggested that cultural studies would be better off constituting some sort of new social consciousness or social bloc than establishing some new discipline in the academic realm, the latter arguably has happened more readily than the former, and it is from that observation that this anthology starts out.

Jameson's essay is, in fact, a review of the 1992 anthology *Cultural Studies* (Grossberg, Nelson, and Treichler), one of several mega-anthologies of the moment that, for all practical purposes, served to lay out the ideology and define the ethos of the then burgeoning field. Such anthologies and the kind of work they represented—and then generated and encouraged—were marked by a kind of libertarian approach to cultural studies, and

this approach has become the standard for most practitioners in this country (and is very often the stick used to beat cultural studies by agnostics and opponents). The opinion leaders in the field in the 1990s instantiated and encouraged the views that just about any cultural text, object, or event could be constituted as a proper object of study for cultural studies; theoretical consistency or cohesion was unnecessarily constrictive and even authoritarian, or an act of policing; and little, if any, attempt should be made to specify methodological procedures—beyond, perhaps, the unstructured and unregulated process of interpretative "reading."

It is not hard to see where the early U.S. importers got this sense of cultural studies. During several decades of growth around the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) at Birmingham University, cultural studies had gradually developed an increasingly pluralist, laissez-faire kind of approach and character. This pluralist tendency overtly valued and promoted what it saw as the openness, looseness, or unfinished nature of cultural studies work. Stuart Hall explicitly speaks out against the "codification" of cultural studies and warns us that there can be no final paradigm for the field (in Grossberg 1996, 150). Even with respect to a basic understanding of its object of study—culture—Hall appears happy enough with the idea that "no single, unproblematic definition of culture" would underpin the operation. Rather than working toward any logically or conceptually clarified notion of culture, the CCCS functioned as a point of convergence for what Hall calls "interests" (Hall 1980). That kind of sentiment is taken to its extremes by the editors of the anthology that Jameson was critiquing: "Cultural studies has no guarantees about what questions are important to ask within given contexts or how to answer them; hence no methodology can be privileged or even temporarily employed with total security and confidence, yet none can be eliminated out of hand" (Grossberg, Nelson, and Treichler 1992, 2). Cultural studies as a field was thereby absolved from elementary intellectual tasks and obligations in the name of a purported but largely unspecified "political" or "resistant" mission.

This anthology aims to reveal such ideas as wholly out of date and problematic, in an effort to help define a new kind of identity for cultural studies. After two or three decades of cultural studies work in the United States, the time has come to refute the shibboleth that "codification" necessarily implies some sort of authoritarian policing. In the interests of intellectual and methodological integrity, this anthology tries to point rather more sensibly to the necessity of identifying both the procedures and the objects that cultural studies will take on and that it will work with consistently and foundationally.

One perhaps predictable result of all the recommended looseness and all the striving for "the political" in U.S. cultural studies is that for many years the field has been echoing with the seemingly endless repetition of its

own question to itself: What is cultural studies? This anthology—with its roots in the conviction that the field has changed radically since the days of the mega-anthologies, which, for all intents and purposes, can be said to have installed cultural studies in the United States—strives to put that history behind us. I intend this anthology to stand as a statement about the field that not only represents some of its best current-day thinking but also will help redefine and renew it. Like most of the contributors to this volume, I operate on the assumption that it is time for cultural studies to be done with that old repetitive question and to move on to the next one: What can and should cultural studies be doing right now? The tasks of defining our object(s) of study, establishing theoretical common ground and methodological consistency, and providing reproducible methods and protocols all need to be undertaken sooner rather than later. This anthology is an attempt both to promote those tasks and to begin them.

The time is ripe for this kind of project for a number of different reasons, several of which are addressed directly by the contributors. But perhaps the most important is the simple empirical fact that cultural studies in the United States is no longer a kind of unattached, floating field of endeavor run by academic libertarians and maverick geniuses. Rather, for better or for worse, cultural studies has become substantially institutionalized. This has happened in a series of overlapping developments. Most notably, since the early 1990s we have seen the birth and development of a large number of undergraduate and graduate degree programs, alongside various minors, diplomas, concentrations, and certificates. Simultaneously, the field has become more and more professionalized in conventional ways. Practitioners can now be represented in disciplinary organizations, most notably in the U.S. Cultural Studies Association, and in both national and international bodies such as the Association for Cultural Studies with its biennial Crossroads conferences. There is now no shortage of print and online journals that identify themselves either as cultural studies or closely allied with cultural studies, and the majority of academic publishers feel the need to have some sort of presence in the field.

For the purposes of this anthology, the most salient among these factors is that cultural studies has by now taken its place in the academic institutions of the United States. Whether this phenomenon is good or bad is perhaps still an open issue, but it seems to me an inescapable fact—and one that ought to entail an automatic reconsideration of the old libertarian ideologies. Cultural studies now participates in the intellectual community as constituted in the U.S. academy, and it purports to train students there at both the undergraduate and the graduate levels. This accession brings increased responsibilities: notably, the definition of the field, its assumptions, its proper objects of study, and its methods and methodologies. It equally demands that we pay attention to the legitimate interests of our

students who will be getting degrees and certificates in cultural studies and who need to be able to tell the world what that means when they enter the job market (academic or nonacademic). It also requires that, at the programmatic and intellectual levels, we have the ability to define and establish the relationship of cultural studies to neighboring disciplines (particularly cognate disciplines and those with overlapping concerns) within the university and college context.

Chapters 2 and 3 (by Nick Couldry and Carol Stabile, respectively) open the discussion by broadly setting out some of the terms of this new context for cultural studies and, from differing points of view, attempting to ask and answer the appropriate questions about the future of the field and its current and ongoing obligations. These prefatory efforts are followed by essays that take on the issue of how cultural studies can and should address both the theoretical and the pragmatic fact of its increasing presence in the curricula of universities and colleges. Three essays then address curriculum and teaching issues—Chapter 4 from the hardly insignificant point of view of graduate students in the field (Randall Cohn, Sara Regina Mitcho, and John Woolsey), Chapter 5 from the director of one of the country's newest stand-alone Ph.D. programs in cultural studies (Henry Krips), and Chapter 6 from a teacher of cultural studies undergraduate courses (Julie Rak).

The early claims and discussions about the disciplinary—or cross-disciplinary or antidisciplinary—status and effects of cultural studies have not gone by the wayside yet, but they surely need to be inflected and revised in the new circumstances that cultural studies finds itself in and that it is willy-nilly forming. The next several essays in this anthology thus take up more closely a number of questions about the relationship between cultural studies and the other disciplines and about the place of existing and evolving methods and methodologies. That is, this part of the book is devoted to various discussions of how cultural studies can or should relate to other disciplinary practices in the humanities and social sciences and what methodical and methodological identity it is developing or needs to develop. The starting point of this examination is a pair of propositions: (1) that, even as cultural studies fast becomes institutionalized and begins to look more "disciplinary" in its own right, it cannot proceed or advance without clarifying, maintaining, and strengthening its relationship to those various disciplines and fields and (2) that clarification of what methods and methodologies are accepted and acceptable in cultural studies will be necessary in order to confirm the self-identity of the field and make it comprehensible to cognate disciplines in the academic environment.

To address these issues as efficiently as possible, I have included essays on several topics that I see as particularly crucial here. First, cultural studies in its current modes is often still an interpretative exercise, owing much to the traditional literary disciplines and methods. Chapters 7 and 8 (by

Denise Albanese and Deepika Bahri, respectively) thus take up the interrelated issues of textuality, interpretation, audience, and aesthetics and their relevance to a renewed cultural studies. Also, the influence of those quasi-philosophical discourses that have come to be known as "theory" in the humanities has been both wide and sustained in cultural studies; thus, Clare Birchall and Gary Hall investigate the nature and potential use of such theory in Chapter 9.

Second, cultural studies has had a particularly close connection to the field of media studies—a field that is itself now changing and adapting to the advent of the so-called new media. In Chapter 10 David Golumbia analyzes the issues that the new media have raised for cultural studies, while in Chapter 11 Sharon Willis examines the persistence of the "old media," cinema in particular. In Chapter 12 Matthew Tinkcom explores the relationship between media studies and cultural studies.

Third, the social sciences have always been a crucial point of reference for cultural studies thinking; thus, two essays explore the relationship between these two areas and what that relationship implies about the future of cultural studies. As George Marcus suggests in Chapter 13, the relationship has involved a shared search for consistent practical methods, and cultural studies often invokes ethnography in this regard. In Chapter 14 Lisa Breglia examines and makes some recommendations about the use and usefulness of ethnography in cultural studies research.

Fourth, from its British beginnings, cultural studies has consistently entertained questions of historicity and faithfully proclaimed the importance of historical work; at the same time and with a few notable exceptions, very little theorization of the role of historical work in cultural studies has been undertaken and even now there is not much cultural studies scholarship that could be called historical. Indeed, it is all too familiar at this juncture to see cultural studies scholars slough off the question of history by making a quick appeal to the notion that cultural studies is always in the business of construing "the history of the present," in Michel Foucault's famous formulation. It is clear that the renewal of cultural studies will, of necessity, include a concentrated critique of the role of history and historicism. Michael Denning tackles this topic in Chapter 15.

Fifth, the place and role of political economy—and more specifically, of Marxist theory—within cultural studies has been, to say the least, consistently vexed. I would argue that the development of British cultural studies is a narrative of ever-increasing suspicion of Marxist thinking (see Sparks 1996) and that such suspicion was helpful and congenial to the early practitioners of cultural studies in the United States—where the intellectual environment has always been more openly hostile to Marxism. I have argued elsewhere that such an antipathy to Marxism "has helped lead [cultural studies] into numerous dead ends and crises and held it back from

realising its best intellectual and political aspirations" (Smith 2001, 339). This anthology generally assumes that an increased attention to political economy is a sine qua non for a revived cultural studies. Two essays argue that point directly (Chapters 16 and 17, by Max Gulias and Randy Martin, respectively), while others clearly depend on Marxist methods and protocols (e.g., Chapters 20 and 26, by S. Charusheela and Michelle Yates, respectively). The least that can be said is that it is time to reassert the claim that to "rehabilitate a set of ideas and methods which are associated with Marxism would not make Cultural Studies Marxist per se. But it would mean that Cultural Studies could no longer afford an antipathy to Marxist theory" (Smith 2001, 339).

Sixth, although Jameson (1993) was right to point out that there were "urgent international dimensions still missing from Cultural Studies" (49), questions of postcolonialism, transnationalism, and globalization have by now become inescapable for most practitioners. Thus, a number of essays here register the fact that in recent years perhaps the strongest pressure on cultural studies to rethink its constitution and its aspirations has derived from those ever more dominant processes. A number of the contributors address the ways that cultural studies must reimagine itself in order to take account of the increasing transnationalization of economies and cultures—and indeed of cultural studies itself. Thus, I have included a unique view of the general theoretical condition of cultural studies with respect to the issue of diasporas (Chapter 18, by Grant Farred), along with essays focused on Asia (Chapter 19, by Eric Cazdyn), Latin America (Chapter 21, by Sophia McClennen), and "beyond Europe" (Chapter 22, by Mahmut Mutman).

Seventh, the purview of cultural studies has always determinedly included aspects of the sociopolitical world—to which it has reached out sometimes successfully, sometimes less so. The nub of the political desire that has been present in U.S. cultural studies resides in that determination. The final few essays in this anthology tackle some of the areas and issues that seem to me currently on the agenda for a renewed cultural studies. Chapter 23, by Marcus Breen, proposes the need for cultural studies to revisit and revise the interest that it has sporadically had in public policy and policy making. In Chapter 24 Timothy Luke examines the pressures on U.S. cultural studies from the point of view that the nation has been at war for most of the first decade of the twenty-first century. In Chapter 25 Vincent Mosco calls for increased cooperation between academic cultural studies and workers in the culture industries. In Chapter 26 Michelle Yates argues, from a decidedly Marxist framework, for the necessity of including a viable ecological sensibility in cultural studies' image of itself as a political project.

Chapter 27 closes the book with a conversation I had with Andrew Ross that arose from the shared concerns and yet differing foci of the cultural studies and the American studies contexts in which we respectively work.

Specifically, we reflect on what I refer to here as the "phantom limb" of cultural studies—that is, the desire that Jameson isolated as the longing for political relevance and activism, or the question of what could be called activist knowledge. The conversation touches equally on a large number of the other issues that appear elsewhere in the book, and it serves as a kind of afterword to the volume as a whole.

The image of cultural studies that this anthology offers is, clearly, not the only one available. Many different and differently affiliated institutional spaces exist from which and in which cultural studies now operates, and each stands in different relationships to and at different distances from established disciplines and from specific institutional contexts. Nor is the image offered here completely without its own internal contradictions and its own set of debates (given the large number of contributors, all reacting differently to this tendentious editor's whip hand, this is perhaps not surprising—and, in fact, some disagreement was actively encouraged in the editorial process). Inevitably, there must also be some significant lacunas. Some of the many issues and many relationships that cultural studies takes up and participates in have not been addressed here. No doubt, many cultural studies practitioners exist who identify with fields and disciplines or with specific topics and themes that this anthology does not cover extensively.

But even with its blind spots and omissions, this is nonetheless an image that has certain consistent features. With due reference to the CCCS origins of cultural studies, the point of this anthology is to try to overcome that family history and look very critically at its influence. The book passes beyond the "looseness" that U.S. cultural studies has presumed to take from the British version of cultural studies and thus aims to go beyond the chronic claims to random or wildly eclectic methodology. And it moves beyond what I call the thematization of the field initiated in the British tradition's work (see Smith 2001), especially because such thematization often takes for granted the status of particular preimagined categories of cultural identity and/or the privilege of particular kinds of popular cultural topics and objects.

This anthology imagines a version of cultural studies that, even as it tries to formulate and codify its procedures and even as it takes stock of its institutional status, would not remain static. We need to take seriously Lawrence Grossberg's insistence over the years that cultural studies responds most importantly to conditions outside itself. This imperative to respond does not, however (and, as I think Grossberg often implies), legislate against the need to formalize the cultural studies method and approach (see, e.g., Grossberg 1997). Responding to changing material conditions is perhaps a task better undertaken from a firm and shared set of underlying assumptions than as an ad hoc or improvised performance. Thus, the image of cultural studies offered here, while aiming to retain and encourage the far-reaching

adventurousness that has characterized cultural studies at its best, suggests the need for more rigorous understanding of the underlying assumptions of the field and the need for us to take on a more coherent and reproducible identity

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