

# EVERYDAY LIFE INVENTED AND REVISITED

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*Elizabeth B. Silva*

Ben Highmore, *Everyday Life and Cultural Theory: An Introduction*, Routledge, London and New York, 2002; 200pp; £12.99 paperback, £45 hardback. Ben Highmore (ed), *The Everyday Life Reader*, Routledge, London and New York, 2002; 373pp; 373pp; £16.99 paperback, £55 hardback.

The sun rises and sets every day. Every day our bodies get hungry, sleepy, cold, tired, hot, satisfied with food, energetic or comfortable. We relate, communicate, dream and reflect. These natural rhythms and needs do not relate to a particular social class or group. But the ways in which social groups attend to their needs day by day are full of significance. What they signify and how they can be presented and represented have been key concerns of Everyday Life studies throughout the twentieth century.

These two books by Ben Highmore critically discuss this 'invention' of the everyday by revisiting various approaches to the study or the presentation of everyday life. Their publication adds to other recent titles indicating a growing concern with the category of everyday life in contemporary social thought.<sup>1</sup> In both these books, Highmore's concern is with the links between culture and the everyday. Can everyday life provide the re-imagining of the study of culture? Is the everyday a useful problem through which to approach questions of social and cultural life? In asking these questions Highmore is seeking to ground the study of culture in concrete phenomena, something he regards as seriously missing from most approaches in the field of cultural studies.

*Everyday Life and Cultural Theory* is presented as 'an introduction' because 'work on the everyday is ... only just beginning' (vii). But such a description hardly fits with the content of Highmore's discussion. In the *Introduction*, six out of nine chapters are dedicated to authors and movements from the late nineteenth century to the mid-1980s, and in the *Reader* thirty-six texts are assembled, sixteen of them published before 1970, and as many as twenty-nine before 1990. Highmore's assessment of everyday life studies as a field 'just beginning' perhaps has more to do with his enthusiasm and hopes for further developments in the area. These sentiments are apparent in the work of both volumes.

Highmore's key argument in *Everyday Life and Cultural Theory* is that the diverse range of temporalities borne in the idea of the everyday makes it impossible to think of 'modernity' as a straightforward narrative. Modernity has distinct significance in the work of Mass Observation, Walter Benjamin,

1. See for example Rita Felski, 'The invention of everyday life', *new formations* 39 (1999-2000); Michael Gardiner, *Critiques of Everyday Life*, Routledge, London, 2000; Judy Attfield, *Wild Things: The Material Culture of Everyday Life*, Berg, Oxford, 2000; Harry Harootunian, *History's Disquiet: Modernity, Cultural Practice, and the Question of Everyday Life*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2000; *Mass Observation*, special issue of *new formations* 44 (Autumn 2001); Tony Bennett and Diane Watson (eds), *Understanding Everyday Life*, Blackwell Oxford, (in association with the Open University), 2002; David Chaney, *Cultural Change and Everyday Life*, Palgrave, Basingstoke, 2002; and Elizabeth B. Silva and Tony Bennett (eds) *Contemporary Culture and Everyday Life*, Sociology Press, Durham, forthcoming 2002/3.

Georg Simmel, Surrealism, Henri Lefebvre and Michel de Certeau. While a concern with rescuing the everyday from conformity prevailed throughout the twentieth century literature, the crucial role of the everyday in cultural theory has been to make the particularity of lived culture inescapable. How has the everyday been a problem for theory?

Highmore's introductory exploration of this question begins with Simmel, who contributed to a nascent sociology at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. His culturalist perspective centred on the idea that the everyday must be made to give out the secrets of sociality (37). Following Highmore's chronological account, the 1920s and 1930s saw the development of the Surrealist movement concerned with finding the marvellous in the everyday, and with seeking pleasure as an antidote to the everyday perceived as mundane. The assessment of Surrealism's 'failure' is, according to Highmore, linked to a critique of its lack of attention to the historicity of the modern experience. Walter Benjamin is a major critic of this 'failure', and he attended to the historical in the everyday by placing ordinary bodies and landscapes alongside the experience of the new industrial world of modernity. There is in Benjamin's work a nostalgia for a lost landscape, one destroyed by modern industrial warfare. Yet, as in the work of Simmel and the Surrealists, the everyday that appears in Benjamin is a modern, urban and male experience, one demanding new forms to represent and register its particularities.

A shift is to be found in the work of Mass Observation, which started in Britain in 1936, and was very active up to and during the Second World War. This involved ordinary people observing aspects of their own everyday lives and of the local and wider contexts in which they lived. The attention to the everyday was uneven, allowing for a wide range of cultural practices to emerge. Mass Observation was seen as a politics of everyday life, serving as part of a practice of transforming the everyday. Social class was a major focus of its orientation, but class was viewed across economic and cultural categories, 'organised round the poles of historical memory and social desire' (104), in order to explore what the experience of class 'felt like'. This was a heterogeneous practice, just as the everyday was also found to be heterogeneous.

The stress on the transformative potential of the everyday was also a tonic in Henri Lefebvre's work in the 1950s and 1960s. However, the urban, capitalist and modern everyday found in Lefebvre is a totality pulling towards an increased homogeneity in everyday life through a process of the standardisation of objects and work. Paradoxically, this homogenising tendency is combined with a deepening and extending of differences in social class, race and age. Time, space and knowledge also appear to be fragmented, increasing alienation. The imagination of a world outside these particular terms and conditions is promised in the everyday, in a creative process of transcendence. But centrally organised societies have to decline if everyday life is to 'become a work of art'.

In the 1980s Michel de Certeau's work confirmed the impossibility of a full colonisation of everyday life, stressing that resistance is continuous, since creativity is an essential constitutive aspect of the everyday. As in 'bricolage', the application of resources (what have I got?) and their methods of use (what and how will I do?) does not have a pre-defined model: individuals arrange resources and choose methods through particular practices, 'making do' with culture in creative arrangements.

Through the twentieth century the everyday moved in and out of focus within cultural theory in a movement connected to social events like the severing of official colonial ties, the student movement of 1968 and the women's movement. Highmore stresses the impact of these within a process of modernisation addressed in the literature he surveys. In the last couple of pages of *Everyday Life and Cultural Theory* he argues that everyday life theory, which he wants to see developed, should build on the inventiveness of cross-cultural research for the identification of 'a common global "invisibility" to everyday life', connecting people across the world (177).

This book provides a well-informed discussion of everyday life studies. Highmore justifies his decision not to consider authors like Erving Goffman, Harold Garfinkel, Martin Heidegger, Agnes Heller and Dorothy Smith, among others, on the grounds that they do not 'deal with the *everyday as a problematic*', but 'with problematics *and* the everyday' (viii). While I agree that some sort of boundary of exclusion needed to be erected for the book to encompass some particular set of studies, I find it difficult to grasp the distinction concerning the privileged focus on the everyday in the works selected. The theorising by Simmel, or Benjamin, or Mass Observation, to consider just three, are *not* more problematically engaged with the everyday than the work of Smith or Goffman for example. And, although excluded from Highmore's authored book, these authors are included in the *Reader*.

Selecting a limited number of key articles for a *Reader* of this kind is never as easy as it might appear, particularly when the literature is as extensive as it is in the case of everyday life. Highmore is therefore to be congratulated on bringing together a collection that offers an overall view of the debates that have occupied many scholars of the everyday, on his introduction to the volume which acts as a starting point for analysis, and on his introduction to each of the extracts which highlights the context of its production - including a short biography of the author - and offers further reading suggestions. The selection of articles draws on a comprehensive knowledge of the English language literature on the everyday, particularly in the cultural studies area.

Five themes run through the book, and in each theme the extracts are arranged in chronological order. The first, 'Situating the everyday' includes extracts by Freud, Benjamin, Braudel, Goffman, Friedan, de Certeau, and Kaplan and Ross. In 'National culture' we find Trotsky, Williams, Marling, Ross, Harootunian and Tang. The third theme addresses method under the title 'Ethnography', and includes Malinowski, Mass Observation, Morin,

Bourdieu, Perce, Kelly, Godard and Miéville, and Minh-ha. In the fourth theme entitled 'Reclamation work', extracts by Lefebvre, Debord, Rancière, Hall, Steedman, Smith and Willis are presented. And in the final section, 'Everyday things', the focus is on work by Simmel, Kracauer, Barthes, Baudrillard, Giard, Spigel, Miller and Connor. Of course there might be other ways of classifying these texts, but Highmore's classification works. His selection demonstrates a concern in each case to highlight the significance of the author's intervention in the field. For example, Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* is represented by the piece on the 'problem with no name': the invisibility of American suburban housewives in the 1960s with their lives centred on the domestic. Equally, Raymond Williams's 'culture is ordinary' argument is perfectly portrayed in the extract selected. Yet these are samplers, and it is difficult to get a proper feel for the nature of the respective author's contribution to the field. While the impression is of a concept of everyday life forged from a wide range of themes - from the kitchen to the street - some texts appear like journalist's reports because they are fragments of readings, and often too short to enable an appreciation of its significance. Simmel is given three pages, Malinowski two and Barthes only one, while Spigel has twelve, and Kelly twenty-one. The longer articles are generally more pleasurable, since the warm-up to the issues is sufficient to enable a proper appreciation of its inclusion.

These two volumes will act as valuable sources for teachers and students for the foreseeable future. Researchers and those more familiar with the field will enjoy finding in these books important reminders of tremendous contributions to making the everyday visible as both a problem and as possibility. However, Highmore's agenda is wider than the words 'Introduction' and 'Reader' might lead one to believe. He is concerned with the development of 'everyday life studies' as a particular theoretical area linked to the study of culture. He seeks a 'theoretical articulation of everyday life' which would include not just systematic interrogations but also poetics and other forms of invention to register the everyday (*Reader*, 3). But what remains unclear is why this is actually needed. What is the argument for a discipline of 'everyday life studies' at the beginning of the twenty-first century?

Highmore explores why the problem of the everyday is a useful approach to questions of social and cultural life. That the everyday is a productive problematic is a case well established in the sociological literature, and both Highmore's volumes bear witness to this. But why this concern should need to develop further as a particular field of enquiry is not well explained. He argues for the need for human sciences to move towards something like 'the return of the real' (*Reader*, 29), a concern which reflects the need for grounding the study of culture on empirical evidence. While I share this concern, I am reminded that the concrete ground for the study of culture can be achieved in different ways. One way could be through the exploration of concrete forms of expression of everyday life, as proposed by Highmore.

Others might take a more traditional route in the social sciences by exploring particular areas of everyday life through quantitative and qualitative methodologies.

I am sceptical about the usefulness of a specific theoretical exploration of everyday life as an academic area. Everyday life is too wide and fragmented a concern to be expressed in a singular field or approach. It is best to let it flourish in its many diverse areas. Visual cultures, ethnicity studies, lifecourse and lifestyles, technologies, gender cultures, sports and leisure, cultures of care, culture and the economy, politics and cultural practices are some of the fields of research on the everyday. The affiliation of particular studies to bodies of knowledge that can most productively nourish understanding of the problems they seek to address may not be as generic as 'everyday life'. Indeed, multiple affiliations often enrich investigations by posing questions from different angles, while a more in-depth concern within the particular field of enquiry - like ethnicity, place, the body, gender, or 'family' - assist with validating the arguments.

Highmore argues that the foundations of modern thought are to be found in the writings of Marx and Freud. For both, the everyday is not what it appears. I agree with the argument, and I find that their works make great reading from an everyday life perspective. But would they have achieved the knowledge they did in the fields of political economy and psychoanalysis if their concerns had been with the problematic of everyday life *per se*? I don't think so. Equally, when Dorothy Smith writes about 'the everyday as problematic', she doesn't focus exclusively on the everyday, and thereby offers a feminist political economy and epistemology which challenges the 'everyday' of power and knowledge creation. Such a politics of the everyday is embedded in the great majority of the feminist literature, particularly since the 1970s. Just one quarter of the extracts selected in Highmore's *Reader* are by women. The voices in the book mainly reflect 'him in the everyday', with not much from, or about, 'her'. Yet a feminist perspective provides me with a deep embeddedness in the everyday, and my own passion for the field of everyday life reflects the ways in which the everyday is expressed - just as much as gender - in all kinds of enquiries. Likewise, perhaps it made sense to create a discipline of everyday studies while interrogating the repetitive and standardised life styles brought about by urbanisation and industrialisation in the first half of the twentieth century. But contemporary life in the industrialised world is increasingly marked by fragmented disruptions; routines are sought, not fought, precisely to enable creativity. Social patterns and movements as we enter the twenty-first century are far more diverse than those in which the problematic of concerns with the everyday originated. The current challenge is to capture the significance of our lives in a new everyday context. And we need to invent new plural and multifaceted models to do this.

## DECADE GRANDEUR

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*Esther Leslie*

Michael Bracewell, *The Nineties: When Surface Was Depth*, Flamingo, London, 2002, 373pp; £12.99 hardback.

More than most, this book uses its dust jacket for protection. Across the front swipes astral praise from the pop singer Morrissey, and diagonally swooshed across the back Jonathan Coe gushes that 'Bracewell is nothing less than the poet-laureate of late-capitalism'. On the inside flap pre-emptive strikes are made: 'What were the 1990s? For one thing, they were so drenched in irony that it's very hard to make them out. It's easier to see and say what they weren't than what they were.' Truly, Bracewell spends much of his time talking about what the nineties were not, or rather talking about anything other than the 1990s.<sup>1</sup>

1. Expectations that the book is about the 1990s are avoided in the US version, which is titled *When Surface was Depth*, with the ambiguous subtitle *Death by Cappuccino and other Reflections on Music and Culture in the 1990s*.

The 1970s is Bracewell's favourite decade. It features as a time when an innocent youth were confronted suddenly with the audacious sexuality of The Velvet Underground, glam rock and David Bowie. This clash of morals released energies that could never be witnessed again - naivety was lost forever. The major debauchers of youth were 'auto-factors', self-creators who count amongst their forebears Oscar Wilde, Charles Baudelaire, Arthur Rimbaud, Andy Warhol and Quentin Crisp. Captivated by this shock of the seventies, Bracewell repeatedly returns to it and to its products - Marc Bolan, Kraftwerk, Roxy Music and Brian Eno, the Sex Pistols and punk, Patti Smith, Howard Devoto. Of course all this stuff has an afterlife in the 1990s (not least through revivals, retrospectives and re-packaging). But the real reason that these seventies phenomena feature so strongly here must be because they emerged during the 'years of discovery' for someone born in 1958. Those vicious women on TV's *What Not To Wear* may be right: all of us have our own 'fashion moment', which will more or less trap us. Each time we look in the mirror, wearing styles in which we once felt really chic, we won't see ourselves as we look now, but rather glimpse something of how we looked then. Bracewell cannot look at the nineties without seeing the seventies (except for those moments when it is the sixties' avant-garde grabbing his attention). And now, O Lucky Man, he gets paid by newspapers to interview stars of the past, like Malcolm McDowell, Yoko Ono, Michael Caine, Richard Carpenter.

For this is the book's genesis, its pages worked up from features in the British feuilleton press. The throwaway origin shows in the mixture of tenses, the jumble of times, the slips into outdatedness, references to 'the latest advertising campaign' now long superseded, the 'forthcoming album' or 'just-released film' that has been out for a couple of years, so and so's 'soon

to be published' memoirs, already remaindered.

Bracewell hopes to make a virtue of his presentist (journalism-derived) style, citing a passage from Greg Dening as the book's opening motto:

Try writing what you have written in the past tense in the present tense and you will see what I mean. What we have to do is to give back to the past we are writing about its own present tense. We give back to the past its own possibilities, its own ambiguities, its own incapacity to see the consequences of its action. It is only then that we can represent what actually happened.

In this book, though, rather than reintroducing the exciting rush of openness and possibility to the past, the present tense is an irritation. It is never present enough. For readers always know 'what happened next', because it only happened yesterday, because Bracewell's 1990s subjects are celebs who are only as interesting as their latest Max Clifford-placed publicity gambit, or their most recently reviewed album/book/show. What's the point, right now, of reading an extended interview with Ulrika Jonsson on her plans and thoughts, dating from the pre-Sven Erikson days? Such a figure is not particularly remarkable in herself (at best she is an exemplar of the prevalence of blonde presenters on British TV in the 1990s), and the only thing that recommends her to public attention is the next much-reported 'scandal' of an affair or some other 'scoop'. Everything else is just one of those brain-cluttering memories that should have faded already, as should the memory of 'boyband sensation' Hanson (given twelve pages here), or the fact that Duran Duran were making a surprise comeback in 1993.

It is not that Bracewell likes this stuff - for him all the 'truly' 1990s phenomena are vacuous and dull pastiches, sapped of energy. They exist to provide distraction for the infantilist, who, as the eighties became the nineties, substituted the fad of irony with the fad of 'authenticity'. Britpop, a new wave of TV comedians, 'lads' and 'ladettes', public confessionality and reality TV shows are its symptoms. However, in his various interviews with the perpetrators of 1990s authenticity and retro-kitsch, he is courteous to a fault (perhaps because these pieces were originally commissioned for mainstream publications). The bile of his more densely written, hyper-descriptive intertexts - with their efforts to coin striking descriptors of the age - spews up only in the book's interstices. And description is what it is. This is a swirling, rambling commentary, not a critique. There is no Frankfurt-Schoolish analysis of why particular culture-industry formats emerge at certain moments. There are no graphs of profit rates in the various economic and financial sectors of the media or telecommunications, boom industries in the 1990s. There is no presentation of data from the sociological bible *Social Trends*. Apart from a few interesting pages on contemporary management culture, the cult of neuro-linguistic programming, and the banality of office environments, presented here is only the preening self-

reflection of the age as it appears on screens, in magazines and advertisers' dreams. This is truly the surface that substitutes for depth, replicated on the pages of the book. Fashion, it would seem, is a law unto itself. Things move in and out of being (fashionable), and Bracewell coolly observes their passage. Many things flicker across the screen, but too much is out of range. Even in the rendition of the past, a style-veneer is smoothed on. Bracewell's 'punk' is an art school fashion influenced by glam and Bowie, rather than the punk of Oi! or the anarchos. Violence appears in the celluloid shape of *A Clockwork Orange* and Lindsay Anderson's *If*, but absent is the real-world violence of the Gulf War (and all the other 'New World Disorder' conflicts that marked the decade), or the repression of the poll tax demonstrators, or the end-of-the-decade avenging violence of Seattle. Young British Art is represented - an interview with Tracey Emin, reflections on Damien Hirst - but Brit Art's 1990s' nemesis in the shape of K Foundation and its extraordinary and unpalatable stunts, including anti-pop industry animal sacrifice, a 'Fuck the Millennium' campaign and the 'burning of a million quid', are cast into oblivion. Bret Easton Ellis makes a showing (because Manhattan appears to be one of the few places where the 1990s happened), but there is no mention of Iain Sinclair, whose indigestible and paranoid rants about London's corruption, trash, spooks, absurdities and fantasies will surely be a resource for any future historian of our epoch. Still, perhaps those of us who spend our days in culture's underbelly should be grateful for the passing references to such media-unfriendly types as Stewart Home, or the art collective Inventory.

It is difficult to write about the recent past. It is never past enough, and the reader's memories interfere awkwardly. Bracewell comments on this in an aside on the discrepancy between today's retro-version of the 1970s and the actual audiences that can be seen on re-runs of *Top of the Pops* (and presumably remembered by those who were part of them - or does the past indeed only reside on celluloid?). The reality is way too unhip to emulate faithfully. But isn't that also the problem of this book? The 1990s had more textures, more unevenness, more unfashionableness than Bracewell is able to chart. What we see here of the 1990s - and the sixties, seventies, and eighties - is already, so quickly, a tarted-up, cooled-up, style-mag revamp, a surface so glossy it blinds us to the rest.



## ETHNICITY BEYOND THE PALE

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*Eleanor Byrne*

Diane Negra, *Off-White Hollywood: American Culture and Ethnic Female Stardom*, Routledge, London and New York, 2001; 232pp; £50 hardback, £15.99 paperback. Ruth Adams, Kathy Battista, Chris Hight, Lorens Holm, Travis Miles, Mark Morris, Charles Rice, David Tang, John Tercier, Michael Uwemedimo, Diana Yeh (eds), *Whiteness (Room 5 vol. 1, no. 1)*, The London Consortium/Lawrence and Wishart, London, 2001; 224pp; £14.99 paperback.

In the introduction to his book length study *White* (Routledge, London, 1997), Richard Dyer expressed concern over the kinds of academic enquiry that his project of theorising whiteness might inaugurate or contribute to:

My blood runs cold at the thought that talking about whiteness could lead to the development of something called 'white studies', that studying whiteness might become part of what Mike Phillips suspects is 'a new assertiveness ... amounting to a statement of white ethnicity'. (10)

While Dyer's work has proved immensely useful in opening up questions around the visibility, normativity or implicit economy of violence surrounding constructions of whiteness, his vision of an undifferentiated phenomenon of 'white ethnicity' betrays a terror that speaking of whiteness might somehow involve a complicity with such violence. However Diane Negra's nuanced and carefully argued account of the representation of white female 'ethnicity' in Hollywood cinema provides a very compelling example of the significance of reading constructions of 'ethnicity' as they pertain to 'white' people. Negra's book examines Euro-American constructions of whiteness through a series of case studies of 'ethnic' female stars in three different film eras, Colleen Moore and Pola Negri from the silent film era, studio era stars Sonja Henie and Hedy Lamarr, and contemporary stars Marisa Tomei and Cher. Negra's approach succeeds through her combination of theorised historical analysis, based on US consumption of these films, and in-depth research into the journalism and publicity that surrounds her chosen stars, following very much the approaches of Ruth Frankenberg, Lata Mani and Vron Ware.

In her discussion of Hedy Lamarr, 'Ethnicity and the Interventionist Imagination', for example, she considers Lamarr's status as 'continental exotic' for a generation. She notes that whilst imported femininity signified the return of the vamp for a US audience (a synonym for the woman who launches ships, wrecks homes and sends countless men to glory or to doom),

Lamarr became a figure through which the US rehearsed its move away from isolationism to interventionism. Reading films such as *Dishonoured Lady* (1947) and *My Favourite Spy* (1951), a Bob Hope comedy, Negra finds that Lamarr's roles combine serving as a reward for male patriotism with being a desirable but self-destructive European in need of US male protection from European paternalistic war-making patriarchal culture.

Negra argues convincingly that these studies provide a critical index for the examination of how American culture has expressed and negotiated gender and ethnicity in its narratives of national identity and cultural history. The significance of these particular 'white ethnicities' is the ways in which the female stars both 'delight and trouble the national imagination' as represented in Hollywood cinema.

Central to Negra's thesis is the focus on an interrelationship between whiteness, gender and nation in the conceptualisation or recognition of 'ethnicity'. Negra proposes that 'white ethnicities have consistently emerged as representationally useful in defusing social tensions by activating assimilation myths' (3). As Negra notes, this contributes to an understanding of whiteness not as a racial truth but as a construct which shifts boundaries and categories to reflect and consolidate political positions. She demonstrates the ways in which those ethnic stars associated with Europe dramatised and staged a changing view of Europe, as an Old World site that is 'alternately decrepit and vibrant in the American imagination'.

As befits the product of collaboration between Birkbeck College, the Tate, the Institute for Contemporary Arts and the Architecture Association, the collection of essays in The London Consortium's publication *Whiteness* is wide-ranging and eclectic. The essays cover a wide range of visual media and the work of artists such as Mary Kelly, Steve McQueen and John Hilliard, as well as a number of avant-garde films including *The Flicker* (1966) and *Suture* (1992). Again this collection appears to owe much to the seemingly cataclysmic arrival of 'whiteness' as a category of inquiry in the Western academy in recent years. The collection highlights both the strengths and weaknesses of whiteness as a broad umbrella term. An inquiry into the significance of the white walls of the art gallery and the role of Mary Kelly's exhibition *Post-Partum Document* sits alongside an analysis of racial identifications and constructions of the black artist Steve McQueen, raising questions about modes of inquiry and aesthetic and political understandings of whiteness - either as a constructed category of racial differentiation or a quality of light or colour; in this respect reproducing the problems of Richard Dyer's influential book.

Mark Morris's discussion of Michael Jackson, 'NoTown: The Face of Michael Jackson', provides an interesting counterpoint to Negra's final chapter on Cher, 'Stardom, Corporeality and Ethnic Indeterminacy'. Interestingly, both authors begin their analysis by taking issue with Dyer. Morris alights on Dyer's comment, 'Few things have delighted the white press as much as the disfigurement of Michael Jackson's face through what have been supposed to be his attempts to become white' (57) - a departure

for his own highly provocative and engaging reading of the same face. Negra takes issue with Dyer's positing of the white body as the 'denied' body, arguing that stardom 'continuously threatens to disturb this understanding by putting the celebrity body on display' (164). Cher and Michael Jackson, both authors note, share a certain synonymy with 'exorbitant' plastic surgery, the altered nose occupying the privileged signifier. However, the meanings of both these 'relentlessly self-constructing' celebrity faces according to Negra and Morris exemplify some of the problems of understanding race which critically emerge as 'faciality' - as Christopher Hight asserts, following Deleuze and Guattari, in another essay in this collection, 'Metal Machine Music' - or physicality. Michael Jackson's alteration of his appearance has been read almost exclusively as disfigurement, motivated through aspirations to racial transformation. Cher's has been read ambivalently in popular culture, as symptomatic of her gender and star status, associated at turns with perfection and longevity and occasionally self-butchery imposed by dominant cultural models of femininity, but rarely connected to questions of race.

Morris takes issue with media narratives of Michael Jackson's supposed decades-long project of self-transformation from black to white. He argues that rather than attempting to imitate white features, Jackson wishes to 'abstract' his face, as drawable, reproducible and iconic, the face of the performer literally transformed into a mask. Morris looks to a range of sources for the use of white masks or face-paint: Pierrot, Japanese Kabuki and Noh theatre. He argues that all three forms are referenced by Jackson in his music videos and accompanying artwork, as well as pointing to Jackson's admiration of Marcel Marceau. The particular effects of Pierrot's mime face, as Morris notes, have been extensively theorised in Derrida's critique of Mallarmé's *Mimique*. Derrida's assertion 'There is no imitation. The mime imitates nothing' could usefully be applied to Jackson, the whitening of the face serving not to reference a white face at all, but the face of one who writes himself 'upon the page that he is'.<sup>1</sup> Reading Jackson as a postmodern performer at the intertext of multiple performance modes knowingly utilising the mode of Pierrot in order to be self-referential certainly transforms his popular image. But narratives of self-construction are just as implicated in discourses of race and ethnicity, as Negra's discussion of Cher elaborates.

Negra argues that discourses on Cher's transformable, constructed body have persisted through nearly her entire career. Focusing on what she calls Cher's multi-ethnicity (French, Armenian and Cherokee), she sees Cher's early career (especially her time on *The Sonny and Cher Show*) as exemplifying attempts to present an idealised and governable multi-ethnic female body. Negra argues that Cher's 'ethnic mutability', as well as her association at different times with both 1970s 'hippy' and 'white working class' cultures and her 'blending of the real and unreal' (notably in her wig collection), need to be read together in order to reveal how in Cher's case 'multi-ethnicity' has mutated into discourses of an unruly, transgressive, unnatural and exorbitant female body.

1. *Dissemination*, Barbara Johnson (trans), Athlone, London, 1981, p195.

## FANDOM RESISTANCE

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*Mark Perryman*

Anthony King, *The End of the Terraces: The Transformation of English Football in the 1990s*, Leicester University Press, London, 2002; 242pp, £18.99 paperback.

Most academic writing on football is underpinned by familiar tools of sociological explanation. This is a sphere of public life heavily marked by the faultlines of race, gender, class, deviation and marginalisation; an unhealthy appetite for criminalisation; and a dose of globalisation. Most of this body of work foregrounds the make-up of the group cultures that constitute modern fandom; the contributions of John Williams exemplify this approach. Steve Redhead starts from a similar point, though flirts more with the postmodern in his conclusions. Redhead's work is more obviously rooted in the cultural studies tradition than most academic writers on football; for him French flair is as likely to mean Baudrillard and Virilio as Cantona and Thierry Henry. A more recent group of writers, spearheaded by the prolific and productive Gary Armstrong and Richard Giulianotti, have pioneered a different, more anthropological mode of interrogation, taking an internationalist approach in exploring the means and the experience of being a football supporter by combining studies from countries across the sporting globe.

Anthony King draws on this heritage, and more. But he takes his study of football in the 1990s in a subtle new direction by situating his work firmly in the context of the political terrain of the period. A sociologist by trade, King is at his original best when providing the big picture against which the actions of the proverbial twenty-two blokes in funny shorts and their followers take place. He is surely correct in explaining football's entrepreneurial takeover through the rubric of a 1980s Thatcherism: a period when greed was good, the state needed rolling back, and as for society, what was that? But King isn't fooled by the mantra of people's game nostalgists either. He has a fine eye for how a 'traditionalist' view of the past can be constructed out of the being and nothingness of political rhetoric. Football has for a long time been effectively run like a business; the blazered amateurs of yore might not have been as ruthlessly efficient as the sharp-suited types of today with their eye on the share price and multimillion sponsorship deals, but profit ruled their clubs all the same.

King is at his best as he surveys the political and ideological backdrop to how football has changed over the past decade or so. He dishes it out to fellow writers who he feels have underplayed this way of understanding the changes to the game. He is sometimes reckless in his denunciations, but he

makes a good case, and it is refreshing to read an author who doesn't write in code in a half-hearted attempt not to offend sensibilities. He recounts the rise of Thatcherism, explaining how it contributed to the privatisation of ideals and ethics while strengthening the forces and legitimacy of law and order. In retelling the outcome of the Taylor report that followed the 1989 Hillsborough Stadium disaster, he uncovers how the horrors of that day not only led to safer stadia, but saw a rare defeat for a Tory policing measure - the proposed ID card scheme for supporters. He also examines the difficult balancing act between public safety and risk management that may lead to a sanitising of the untidy edginess at the core of football's raw appeal.

It is when King moves off the solid ground of political commentary that some of the flaws in his argument become apparent. His interview sample, given the importance he invests in it, is remarkably limited: one club, Manchester United, and a set of fans drawn primarily from a single supporter-activist group, the Independent Manchester United Supporters Association (IMUSA). One of the problems for football researchers is that a crowd consists of many different sorts of audience and experience. King recognises this, and helps the reader to account for the causes of that variegation. But his actual sample is not augmented by any consideration of who or what they represent. Activist groups in football play a vital role in voicing the concerns and representing the interests of supporters who feel threatened by clubs and governing bodies. IMUSA has been one of the most effective of these groups, in particular as part of the successful defeat of Rupert Murdoch's attempted takeover of the club. But most of those involved with the group would recognise that they are not 'representative', in any meaningful sense, of the vast numbers of Manchester's 'Red Army'. Fans, however hard-pressed, don't go to football to serve on committees and stand outside the ground with leaflets at the ready. Resistance is at a much more informal level; it is only the rare few who become part of the process of formal campaign groups.

The selective nature of King's interview sample nevertheless has some worth, as it helps us to understand those who do join up and see this kind of activity as a natural part of responding to a fandom under threat. However, King has a view of the evolution and stratification of this fandom which appears to strip bare his eloquent arguments about the Thatcherising of football. He suggests that any commercial efforts on the part of fans is in essence Thatcherite, selling their souls to the profit game. Fanzine editors are pinpointed as in some sense seduced by the need to make money, rather than stand with their fellow supporters. This is a bizarrely utopian denunciation of any entrepreneurial activity. The survival of an independent fan culture via the infrastructure of magazines, websites, book publishing, T-shirts and the like, certainly depends on a series of ethical-entrepreneurial negotiations. Outside the cosy world of state subsidisation, this is what enables them to keep on keeping on. The continuing existence, dogged

idealism, and commercial success of the fan magazine *When Saturday Comes* - in a period when multinational publishing companies BBC, IPC and Future have closed down the titles *Match of the Day*, *Goal* and *Total Football* - is testament to the magnitude of that achievement.

This misunderstanding of the dynamics that enable ventures within a subordinate - in this case fan - culture to prosper is framed by King's occasionally one-dimensional picture of class relations amongst the supporter audience. No writer has yet successfully explained the complexity of this framework; King has made a better effort than most, but still the treatment remains inadequate. King goes further than simply ticking off the post-World Cup '90 litany of gentrification-evidence. But to categorise new and excluded fans in simplified class terms is inadequate. Take any league club, follow them on an away-trip, and the obvious working-class masculine dominance of that culture will become apparent. Similarly, in most inner city urban areas support for the local team will be avowedly multicultural. Inside the stadium, however, the crowd is mono-cultural - a huge visual celebration of whiteness. Explaining this exclusion remains a hugely important research priority, one begun recently by the innovative research work of Les Back, Tim Crabbe and John Solomos.

King is too quick to draw the 'e bourgeoisie' conclusion without giving sufficient weight to the contradictions and opportunities afforded by football's transformation. His analysis of the causes of this process is outstanding, and his construction of the context is excellent, so it may be unfair to question his explanation of how the consequences unfold; after all, they undoubtedly remain in motion. Indeed this book is in part a rewrite of an earlier edition published four years ago. In that time Boston United have made it into the league, and England have beaten Germany 5-1, so we know that in this most beautiful of games nothing is constant but change. Who are we to criticise the odd misapprehension of a cultural imperative or two?

## BOOKNOTES

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Gregg Lambert, *The Non-Philosophy of Gilles Deleuze*, Continuum, London and New York, 2002, 196pp; £16.99 paperback.

*The Non-Philosophy of Gilles Deleuze* begins with a series of careful provocations. The first is the title itself, a strikingly negation-bound formulation when applied to such an affirmative philosopher. The preface then proceeds to state that commentators on philosophical works are often in bad faith insofar as, while posing as explicators, they are in fact problematising the direct relationship between writer and reader, inducing a kind of counselling dependency amongst aspirant readers. How, then, does this commentator aim to sidestep the tendency? First, he aims to echo Deleuze's own declared intention of engaging with another's work 'from behind', taking it in new directions unforeseen by the writer. (Of course, Deleuze also mitigated this at times, stating more than once that he would never wish to cause a writer to weep at the (ab)use of his own work). Second, Lambert dispenses himself from any attempt to 'clarify' Deleuze's work, seeing this as a futile enterprise in the case of a thinker who 'does not proceed methodically, but more like a dog chasing a bone, in leaps and starts' (pxiv).

Lambert's own 'leaps and starts' are equally unpredictable, but equally fascinating. As with the tourist who thought that 'Pas de Calais' denoted all those parts of France which are 'not Calais', the field of 'non-philosophy' is infinite. This study takes Deleuze seriously in his belief that, in an epoch when notions of universal values, 'common sense', or 'truth' have been irrevocably splintered apart, it is incumbent upon philosophy to engage with other forms of creativity, such as music, art, cinema, and literature. Among the practitioners Lambert discusses at length are Klee, Borges, Eisenstein, Kafka, and Artaud. There is a rich and sustained consideration of Alain Resnais's filmed adaptation of Marguerite Duras's *Hiroshima mon amour*. Over much of the book broods Leibniz. Anyone who heard Deleuze's lectures in the 1980s would be aware of the extent of his fascination with Leibniz, and indeed Lambert argues that Deleuze's study of him was 'a radical turning point' (73) in terms of suggesting responses to the question: 'How does one live in a world without principles?'

This is not a book I would recommend to newcomers to Deleuze, since it takes much for granted in terms of familiarity with his work. (In this connection, the bibliography is not as helpful as it might be; some of Deleuze's works [for instance *Différence et Répétition* and *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?*] are listed both in their original French and in their English translation, while others [such as *Critique et Clinique* and *Mille Plateaux*] are listed only in translation). On the other hand, the presuppositions made

enable the analysis to 'take off' in unexpected and innovative directions. Personally, I would have welcomed more overview of the many other fields of 'non-philosophy' which Deleuzian analysis has energised, and some conjecture as to what this expansiveness might *exclude*. (For example, Deleuze's remarks on '*bad* literature' are to my mind illuminating). Nevertheless, this book makes no claims which it cannot fulfil. It is written engagingly and often seductively. The writing on Leibniz is particularly fine. Despite the author's justified caveats about 'commentary', this rhapsodic study is one which I believe Deleuze would have welcomed, and which, perhaps more importantly, is truly 'Deleuzian' in stamp.

*Mary Bryden*