

would be the two greatest names in English literature, Sir Isaac Newton and Mr Locke” (Williams 188). Literature, in other words, was once implicitly interdisciplinary, encompassing, as Hazlitt indicates, science as well as philosophy. Yet as Williams remarks, in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the *literary* became both exclusive and overspecialized, exclusive because overspecialized. Since then, literature and the literary have been “increasingly challenged, on what is conventionally their own ground, by concepts of *writing* and *communication* which seek to recover the most active and general senses which the extreme specialization had seemed to exclude” (187).

Cultural studies—if one can use such a generic term for such a wide range of practices—is a direct response to this process of superspecialization. The crucial period is 1957–64. The first moment, which derives from the dual discourses of Leavisism and British Marxism, accords with a now canonical set of texts: Richard Hoggart’s *Uses of Literacy* (1957), Williams’s *Culture and Society* (1958), and E. P. Thompson’s *Making of the English Working Class* (1963). The second, slightly later moment of cultural studies, which marks a shift from author function to institution, text to social formation, is generally associated with the founding of the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, in 1964. In his inaugural lecture at the center, Hoggart, whose own work on literacy repeated even as it radicalized Leavis’s, programmatically defined the trivium of cultural studies as the sociological, the historical/philosophical, and, most important, the literary critical (Patrick Brantlinger, *Cruel Footprints* [New York: Routledge, 1990] 60). But if “Hoggart assumed that the best method of reading and evaluating the cultural or social text was literary-critical,” as Brantlinger chronicles, “his students and successors disagreed” (61).

A glance at the contents of *Reading into Cultural Studies* (1992), a collection of essays edited by Martin Barker and Anne Beezer on the key texts of the second generation, registers this intellectual shift. The topics vary from prime-time soap operas like *Dallas* to the politics of “mugging” and “moral panic”; from subcultural style to the social history of Victorian class and leisure; from the “Bond phenomenon” to the “really bad news” of BBC news programming; from mass-market romantic fiction to the “meaning and ideology” of advertising codes; from male working-class culture—“learning to labour” in the West Midlands—to the mundane and familial rituals of watching *Nationwide*.

In sum, second-generation cultural studies was interested less in the literary as such—as the work in *Reading into Cultural Studies*, composed between 1977 and 1986,

illustrates—than in “writing and communication,” especially mass communications and writing in the general-economic sense. (*Of Grammatology* first appeared in *English* in 1976.) Literature is still, to be sure, an object of analysis, but it is literature with a small *l*: “spy-fi,” the Gothic novel, Harlequin romances. More generally, cultural studies today understands the literary—and even the literary-critical practice of textual analysis—as one discourse or mode among a constellation of other media and discourses, methodologies and social formations. In this sense (and here one might think of Galileo, if not Newton), literature is simultaneously deprivileged and rehistoricized.

Now, this state of affairs may seem revolutionary to those who see Literature as the foundation of society and consider cultural studies yet another accomplice in the current retrogressive mutation from a print to a televisual culture—from the Bard to Beavis and Butt-head. But my sense of things is rather more utopian: cultural studies is not some Frankensteinian monster come to vanquish literature (unless, of course, one reads Frankenstein as the return of the mass-cultural repressed and Literature as the embodiment of classical bourgeois culture). Rather, cultural studies, as intellectually partisan and methodologically motley as it sometimes is, should be considered part of a larger process of regeneration, where regeneration for both literature and cultural studies is only possible when there is a thorough acknowledgment of the past as well as the present future in all its sociological and philosophical, even scientific, aspects. Indeed, at least as I read it, the literary will continue to live on—will remain alive (*It’s alive! It’s alive!*)—only insofar as it remains, like cultural studies, a vital part of this historical process.

ROBERT MIKLITSCH
Ohio University, Athens

If people rue the loss of the literary in the emergence of cultural studies, I suggest they look on their separation anxiety as they would their feelings at the marriage of a beloved child: they are not losing literature; they are gaining culture. After all, the literary was really not a very good concept in the first place. I always associate the word *literature* with Lionel Trilling’s pronunciation of it. In his courses at Columbia University, he would rise up on the tips of his toes and articulate the word as Laurence Olivier or Lionel Barrymore might have, the staccato trumpet of the consonants giving way to the languorous, anglicized diphthong. *Literature* was destined for a British pronunciation (even though Trilling, as it turns out, attended the same public high school in the Bronx that I did). The isolation and fetishism of the liter-

ary served to make kids from the boroughs, like Trilling and me, aspire to higher patrician values (and accents), leave behind the organic intellectuals of street culture, and rise on the tide of high modernism with a cold eye cast backward at the literary movers and shakers of the past.

Cultural studies begins in the 1950s by making this antielitist point. Raymond Williams and E. P. Thompson, forerunners of cultural studies, came of age in communist history-study groups in the late 1940s and taught in adult education programs. Williams's *Culture and Society* (1958) and Thompson's *Making of the English Working Class* (1963) were landmark books that rethought culture, arguing that it included working-class experience and was made by, not bestowed on, society. These projects were clearly Marxist, tied to other kinds of labor-related, class analyses, like those of Ernst Bloch, Georg Lukács, Talcott Parsons, Christopher Hill, and others. Continental scholars contributed to the genesis of cultural studies, particularly those associated with the Frankfurt school and the journal *Annales*. Richard Hoggart, whose *The Uses of Literacy* (1957) analyzed the growth of mass media and working-class culture from the mid-nineteenth century, founded the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (the name of which paralleled that of the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research) in 1964. *The Popular Arts* (1964), by Stuart Hall, who followed Hoggart as head of the center, and Paddy Whannel, aimed to include radio, cinema, and recorded music in the canon of texts worthy of detailed analysis.

This pocket history is intended to point out that cultural studies is not a fad that critics have the option of wishing dead. It was long in the making, originating out of political and social praxis and pursuing a definite goal. There is as much inevitability in cultural studies as there was in literary studies. Thus, to ask whether there should be a turning away from the literary is as pointless as asking whether there should have been a turning away from the epic to the novel. The practice of cultural studies is a historical fact in the making like any other fact of intellectual history.

The unacknowledged political assumptions behind literary studies are no longer shared by most intellectuals in the United States or in the world—are indeed insupportable if not grotesque. These assumptions include the greatness of only certain national literatures, the genius of preselected (usually white) male (and occasionally female) writers, the unity and perfection of texts, and the seamless transmission of a tradition begun by “the Greeks” and handed down directly to people like E. D. Hirsch, Jr., and Dinesh D’Souza. New Criticism, which embodied and promulgated many of these assumptions,

was championed by mostly conservative, antimaterialist patricians with a definite anti-working class, antileftist bias. The effort of cultural studies to displace these practices and assumptions is therefore a logical retaliation. After all, literary study is not a monolith of perfection whose passing must be mourned but a kind of criticism conducted for a while by a definable group of people with certain aims.

That cultural studies has become associated mainly with the analysis of popular culture—mass media like television and advertising—has become a limitation to its practice and to the perception of its project. The argument against cultural studies gets shaped as, “Are you for Shakespeare or for rap music?,” a *reductio ad absurdum* that people like William Bennett have repeated so many times that the practitioners of cultural studies have begun to think the argument relevant. As one of the founders of the Group for Early Modern Cultural Studies, I can say definitively that cultural studies includes all canonical and uncanonical writers. The hundreds of scholars who have attended our conferences for the past four years would attest that cultural studies does not mean the jettisoning of literature. Rather, literature becomes, as it should be, one practice among many, a way of witnessing human experience and conflict that is no more sacred than any other.

This perspective has various advantages. It allows a sense of the complexity of symbolic production within a culture. Cultural studies brings into view social groups who may not have created much literature but who have clearly participated in cultures—the poor and illiterate, the working classes, slaves, peasants, women, people of color, people with disabilities, the deaf, and so on. Investigations of culture lead to questions about the peculiar divisions that make up specializations and areas of expertise and thus to the recognition that branches of knowledge derive from historical moments and political assumptions worthy of interdisciplinary, dialectical study.

Anguished nostalgia for the literary is fundamentally anxiety over a loss of faith. Why was it ever thought one had to devote oneself to literature as to a religion? Is turning away from the literary an act of apostasy? If so, against what or whom?

LENNARD J. DAVIS

State University of New York, Binghamton

Cultural studies extends critical focus to the material circumstances and (self-)signifying practices of popular culture; of minority discourses of gender, ethnicity, and political class; and of (post)colonial writing. In so doing, cultural studies seeks to decenter the Euro-American