

section of my university's library and are never checked out, except by the intrepid literary scholar. Conversely, the works quoted in "cultural" journals line the literature sections of the library and enjoy occasional outings. I believe that cultural studies should be viewed as an area of interest separate from but cognate with literary studies. If literary studies should motivate interest in the factors influencing the constitution of texts, cultural studies should yield an even larger picture, which exposes the agencies affecting the emergence of other art forms and reveals the connections between these forms. The indistinct intermingling of the cultural and the literary may be very "cultural," but it is not particularly helpful for achieving the aims of either cultural or literary studies.

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There is evidence for the old idea that some literature transcends culture: works have been read with delight in different periods. Shakespeare was warmly received in a nineteenth-century America that hated kings, although there are few "Americans" in Shakespeare, few characters below the aristocracy, almost none with ideals of social mobility. And what of the reception here of Jane Austen, whose novels include almost no characters below the landed gentry? Perhaps the nineteenth-century Americans who enjoyed Shakespeare and Austen were ignorant of cultural studies and thus could encounter European class assumptions without disgust. The bliss of reading involves a good deal of ignorance—or of imagination, of suspension of disbelief. The teacher of literature, as a teacher of pleasure, can set the weight of the world aside.

Literature that does not transcend culture may benefit greatly from cultural studies. The appreciation of satires, epigrams, and sermons from earlier periods depends on historical notes, a kind of attenuated cultural studies. One might argue that cultural studies tends to turn all literature into satire or sermon. *Measure for Measure*, which does not transcend its context, can be read as satire or as commentary on the spousal Canons of 1604 or on the change of reign. The issues in the play—handfast marriage, sexual passes or harassment, and the change of political authority—make *Measure for Measure* teachable. My freshman students delight to recognize some of their concerns in it. But *Othello* is not on my freshman reading list, because in transcending culture the work forgoes this appeal.

Literature that transcends culture may be damaged or undermined by cultural studies. I think this has happened to Austen, whose early admission to the canon made academic rediscovery impossible. And it has not helped her

recent fortunes that Austen's main, almost her only, subject is the marriage of true minds. I believe that Austen now is less assigned (in high school and college), though more read, than ever; film has "taught" her works in a way that our classrooms cannot. One could argue that film and TV set the curriculum now. No wonder cultural studies seems important: it shows how culture dominated literary production and reception in the past, just as media culture controls us.

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I have a career in English largely because I serendipitously mentioned my interest in British cultural studies when I went on the job market in the mid-1980s. The literary academy was just discovering the work of the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, as the sessions on cultural studies organized by the Sociological Approaches to Literature group for the 1988 MLA meeting signaled. I had been drawing on Birmingham cultural studies since I read a review of Dick Hebdige's *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* in *Trouser Press* in 1979, and the appearance in *PMLA* of my article featuring the Sex Pistols, in 1991, might have seemed a sign that cultural studies had influenced literary studies. In fact, I was realizing that cultural studies was dead on arrival in the United States.

The effort to relate cultural studies and the literary, which has largely been futile, started at least with Raymond Williams's *The Long Revolution*, in which Williams held that "it is with the discovery of patterns" running through a variety of texts "that any useful cultural analysis begins." The goal of reconstructing these patterns should be to "reveal unexpected identities and correspondences in hitherto separately considered activities" ([Penguin, 1965] 63). The subsequent effort of British cultural studies to enlarge the range of cultural forms that counted was a political intervention, intended to counteract the views of other leftists—including, ironically, the founder of the Birmingham center, Richard Hoggart—that youth culture was worthless. In *Hiding in the Light*, Dick Hebdige describes a general "cartography of taste," in which "by pursuing a limited number of themes . . . across a fairly wide range of discourses it may be possible . . . to modify the received wisdom," both within the academy and outside it ([Routledge, 1988] 48). When confronting the literary, cultural studies ought to reveal "the extent to which one of the major functions of literary criticism as an institution" is to cordon off "those cultural forms based on mechanical and electronic reproduction" (Colin MacCabe, *The Linguis-*