

events, or the coalescence of public attention around subversive sites, these techniques from literature have proved invaluable. Cultural studies methodology has then helped me apply my insights to the subtle power dynamics involved and to their effect on individuals' subjectivity. By this combination of literary and cultural approaches, I have been able to study the connection between internal cultural events in the United States and international politics without falling into simplistic cold war postures, such as J. Edgar Hoover's constant claim that communist agents, trying to influence and bring down the federal government, were behind teen rebelliousness, violent comic books, Hollywood liberalism, civil rights agitation, and any other cultural movement that went against his political aims.

Finally, I must admit I like cultural studies. Although I could continue to give scholarly or academic justifications for doing it, I confess that at heart my reason is that it is fun. For me, cultural studies is a site for free play of the mind, for games of intellectual what-if. And though some use cultural studies repressively, merely replacing one hierarchy of values with another, its spirit can be equalizing: the interpreter is not automatically placed above either producers of texts or participants in events but is acknowledged as another subject involved in a cultural practice, with just as much or as little agency. Cultural studies has emerged forcefully because the awareness of positionality, context, and difference is endemic to this historical period. The need to acknowledge that there are limits to our models of the world and to think paradigmatically is a gauntlet thrown down by our historical situation, not just by cultural studies. There is plenty of work still to do. I hope to see additional cultural studies of literature and literary studies of culture, for the relation between the literary and the cultural spheres in any period has yet to be adequately articulated.

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For the relation between literary and cultural studies to be productive in Hawaii, students and teachers alike must reckon with the powerful colonial history that continues to shape life on these islands. Despite its place in the American imaginary as a kitsch icon of paradise, Hawaii remains an occupied territory, where Native Hawaiians struggle to gain back land and sovereignty. On the North American continent there is widespread coverage of the same-sex-marriage case in Hawaii but relatively little attention to a state-funded referendum (widely disputed among different sovereignty groups) that asks those with Hawaiian blood, "Shall the Native Hawaiian people elect

delegates to propose a Native Hawaiian government?" For Hawaii's residents, who are far outnumbered by tourists, life is no vacation. Hawaii's image as a haven where those tired of life in the transnational fast lane can escape has been carefully fostered in literature, film, and more ephemeral media, but it has also motivated writers, filmmakers, and activists to produce counterhegemonic representations of these islands.

The legacy of dominant representations of Hawaii requires attention to issues that include but also exceed the literary. For that reason, a number of English faculty members, including me, proposed (and our department passed) a graduate-level concentration on "cultural studies in Asia/Pacific." Without rehearsing all the familiar debates over the inclusion of a cultural studies concentration, I want to focus on two objections. First, there is a mistaken tendency to view cultural studies as the same as interdisciplinary projects traditionally done in literary studies and to claim that it needlessly renames a long-standing practice. While this perspective renders cultural studies less threatening and invites more faculty members to participate, it potentially strips away the field's intellectual history and theoretical commitments, particularly to Marxism. The second objection conflates the emergence of cultural studies with the growing emphasis on theory, with the inclusion of popular literary forms in the curriculum, and with the study of marginalized writers. This definition elides differences among courses on, for example, African oral narrative, protonationalism in early modern texts, and Asian-American literature, compressing these subjects into a narrow version of cultural studies that is contrasted with the broad author, period, and genre offerings of traditional literature classes. Then a "flavor of the month" cultural studies is said to encroach on the domain of literature, which is being eroded by new approaches and media. This position masks the anxious awareness that traditionally constituted English departments may soon be rendered obsolete as technological advances in information delivery continue to transform literacy and the conditions under which knowledge is generated and conveyed. More important to me than such professional anxieties and the policing of disciplinary boundaries are the student and faculty projects that might be better enabled when literary and cultural studies are put in tension and when both must take account of their locations.

A more productive anxiety is the concern that course content have some relevance to students' lives. Instead of shutting out traditionally defined literary texts, as some of my colleagues fear, cultural studies approaches at my university can potentially reveal the relevance of these texts to the Hawaiian context. For example, a course that

focuses on the construction of touristic destinations could profitably bring together Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, E. M. Forster's *A Room with a View*, and popular iconic and textual representations of Hawaii. Moreover, in extending the range of objects admitted into academic investigation, cultural studies can situate literary texts within the discourses that produce the objects, images, and texts that fill students' everyday lives. One of my colleagues demonstrates the complexity of Western representations of South Pacific otherness by pointing out continuities among figures of the cannibal in Melville's *Typee*, Paul Theroux's *Happy Isles of Oceania*, and a 1996 advertisement for the Polynesian Cultural Center. Some students note the ways in which oral narratives of the plantation both resist and reinscribe the rags-to-riches trajectory of many American novels and in turn how nostalgic images of the plantation past are deployed in local political campaigns in Hawaii. By examining one of the few genres that privilege the Pacific region—cyberpunk fiction—students can gain a nuanced understanding of the economic and political relations between the Pacific Basin and the Rim as well as raise vital questions about their own positions in the technological and transnational future. In order to counter the tendency in academic discourse on transnationalism to naturalize the scale of multinational corporations and their reach into global markets and labor pools, I have turned my close-reading skills to analyzing the ways in which the corporate history of Dole Hawaii draws on traditional narrative forms such as the bildungsroman to fuse individual, colonial, and corporate developments.

While I remain optimistic about the potential for cultural studies to enhance teaching and research in my department, I cannot forget that this work will be carried out within an institutional apparatus heavily invested in the reproduction of colonial relations. Perhaps the most significant challenge to cultural studies in Hawaii remains the fact that less than seven percent of the students at my university are Native Hawaiians. Since its beginnings in adult education programs in Britain, cultural studies has always had—and, I believe, must maintain—a commitment to ensuring open access to education, even as it seeks to transform teaching and learning.

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Many contemporary scholars have argued that literature is dead. More accurately, literature and the criteria that have upheld it have come under fire from literary and cultural theorists. At the same time, the recovery of "lost" texts and their writers has renewed interest in literature

and will continue to do so: for example, I am teaching Grace Lumpkin and Edwin Rolfe, two nearly forgotten mid-twentieth century writers, in a lower-level English class, and one of my graduate student colleagues is attempting to recover some seventeenth-century female epic poets.

The emphasis of cultural studies on music, art, film, and television broadens the field of literary inquiry. Borrowing methods of new historicism and cultural materialism, cultural studies attempts to look at different literatures and cultures in their historical, social, and political contexts (from postmodern and Marxist theoretical perspectives, respectively). In particular, the field has stimulated interest in "popular" literature past and present. Nineteenth-century Americans, for instance, read women's-magazine stories, dime novels, and sentimental novels that have been relegated to the dustbin of history. Similarly, present-day popular fiction, or genre fiction, has been denied a place in academic literary study mostly because of its lack of "literariness."

Genre fiction offers speculations on possible worlds. Genres like the romance provide a way to understand gender, the act of reading, and audience response. Tales of horror, fantasy, and science fiction posit utopian and dystopian visions of the past, present, and future. African American and women writers who practice these genres often question and reconceive the normative forms. Poppy Z. Brite, Melanie Tem, and Kathe Koja have rewritten the clichés of horror fiction (ghost towns, haunted houses, werewolves and vampires), giving increased importance to issues such as pain, desire, death, memory, and family. Elizabeth Moon and Mercedes Lackey have transformed the traditional male fantasy hero (usually straight and sexist). Moon's *Deed of Paksenarrion* cycle (1992) is a series of novels about a farm girl who runs away to become a mercenary and eventually a paladin. Lackey's hero in her *Last Herald-Mage* trilogy (1989–90) is a gay mage who becomes a powerful and legendary figure in his world's history. By broadening the field of available texts with which we can work, cultural studies has contributed much to the survival of literary study.

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Interconnections

For much of this century literary studies has been successful at absorbing, even co-opting, all the theoretical