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Behind, the Road is Blocked: Art Education and Nostalgia

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Abstract

Proponents of high culture have trusted its power as an antidote to contemporary social ills. However, art educators should be aware that the history of such attempts is a history of failure. It is a history of gradual marginalisation, both of the critique and the critics, and of increasingly conservative political reaction. The critique represents, today as it has always done, a nostalgia for an idealized past. But the failure of the critique suggests that there can be no going back. It is argued that the increasing failure of this critique to positively influence social and cultural life is a warning that the future of art education lies elsewhere. As representative of this critique, this paper discusses the English cultural critics Edmund Burke, Matthew Arnold, F. R. Leavis and T. S. Eliot; the Frankfurt School Marxists Horkheimer, Adorno, and Marcuse; and the Postmodern French critic Jean Baudrillard. Finally, guidelines for a future, contemporary art education are advanced.

Behind, the Road is Blocked: Art Education and Nostalgia

From the Picture-Study Movement of the 1920s to the proponents of DBAE with a neo-conservative agenda (Greer (1984), art educators have attempted to offer high culture as an antidote to contemporary social life[1]. Such efforts include, for example, Kauffman's (1966) defence of fine art against popular art and Smith's (1986) promotion of the humanist ideal of artistic excellence. These proposals share a long and impressive history which includes many fine and courageous minds. But I will argue that the history of the intellectual forerunners of a high culture version of DBAE and associated proposals offer no hope for the future of art education. It is a history of failure, and it should act as a warning to seek the future of art education elsewhere.

I am referring to the tradition of high culture criticism which, as traced by Williams (1958) and Johnson (1979), involves offering high culture as a remedy to the ugliness of the physical environment as well as to the atomization, alienation, standardization, and brutality which is said to have characterized social life for the past 200 years. The high culture social critique has long been a determining factor in the climate in which art education has been theorised and practiced. Pearson (1994) writes that high culture forms the underlying paradigm for art education.

I will concentrate on the original proponants of high culture rather than examples of the derivitive form it takes in art theory and art eduction The intellectual bankruptcy and social irrelevance of the critique is made especially clear in this way, and the implications for art education that much more stark.

The High Culture Critique

The notion of high culture began as part of wide and general movements in thought and feeling, as a response and contribution to pressures associated with the Industrial Revolution. Principally, these involved mechanization, urbanization (Bigsby, 1975, p. 6), the development of class consciousness, and agitation on behalf of democratic representation (Williams, 1958, p. xviii). It was part of the separation of certain moral and intellectual activities from the impetus of a new, identifiably Modern society. The words *industry* and *art* had previously referred to human attributes now came to signify specialised, and opposed institutions. Industry, which had once meant sustained application came to mean manufacturing and productive institutions. And art, which had once denoted skill, came to mean a particular group of skills concerned with the imagination and creativity. *Aesthetic*, had once denoted sense activity in general, the dulling and lulling included, but came to refer to the fine and beautiful, and, by association, to art (Williams, 1983). *Culture*, previously a word signifying a process of human training, became an abstraction, a thing in itself (Williams, 1983). At the same time, democracy and class emerged from specialised use to focus attention on major realities of social life. Industry, class, and democracy came to describe the external terms of modern life: while culture, by contrast, referred in terms of opposition to an area of personal experience, as did the new conceptions of art and the aesthetic.

In its continuing invocation by art educators, the same dynamics are discernible. There appears to be the same desire to create a calm space within an alleged impersonal and superficial social life for the contemplation of aesthetic objects and human ingenuity. It is easy to translate the earlier opposition to democratic impulses to read the current suppression of other cultural voices. It is equally easy to translate for the ugliness and dehumanization of industry, the current impersonalization of high technology, social fragmentation, and information overload.

The History of High Culture Criticism

In the historical development of the concept of high culture and its continuing relations with the above social dynamics, three interrelated themes emerge. Each offers a warning to proponents of an art education based on high culture. The themes are: the gradual marginalisation of high culture social analysis; the gradual marginalisation of high culture critics from centres of power and influence; and the reactionary, anti-democratic political positions adopted by both socially progressive and conservative critics. These themes will be highlighted below by examining the tradition of English literary critics, in particular Edmund Burke, Matthew Arnold, F.R. Leavis and T.S Eliot. Also considered are the Frankfurt School Marxists Marcuse, Horkheimer and Adorno. Finally, the French postmodern critic Jean Baudrillard will be examined. These critics are rarely identified in art education literature although Ralph Smith (1992) refers to himself as "an Arnoldian, pure and simple" (p. 72) but their contributions to the history of the high culture critique are seminal. They have been chosen as representative because each has made a substantive contribution to the history of the critique. While very different in orientation, each shares major characteristics of the high culture social critique: a distain for their own cultural period, contempt for ordinary people, and a regressive and pessimistic view of history characterised by nostalgia for the past[2].

The critique characteristically views contemporary times as a marked decline from previous high standards and a more integrated and personally satisfying society in which these standards are alleged to have flourished. The point of loss varies considerably. For the German Neo-Marxists Horkheimer & Adorno (1972/1944), it was pre-Fascist Europe, for Marcuse (1964) it was a pre-technological 19th century, for T. S. Eliot (1948) it was the old American South. Often it is associated with the 18th century, although for 18th century writers like Edmund Burke it had already passed (Williams, 1958, p. 259-260). Always, conditions conducive to high culture have been eroded (p. 259).

Since the ideals of this critique belong to previous periods, the critique is nostalgic for the past and melancholic about the present. In this, the espousal of high culture has impressive precedence. In classical times, nostalgic melancholia was associated with intellectual life, and in the 17th century nostalgia was regarded as a moral virtue of the intelligent person who, in response to the horrors of the world, withdrew into melancholic despondency (Stauth & Turner, 1988). Reflecting this view, Nietzsche saw intellectual life as "a restful response to the everyday world of taste, emotion, feeling and reciprocity" (p. 519). For Nietzsche intellectual life was motivated not only by a desire to discriminate, but resentment towards the masses. And, as described below, as the golden age of the high culture critics diminishes farther and farther and present conditions increasingly worsen, melancholia deepens, resentment increases, withdrawal accelerates, and hope diminishes until, with Baudrillard, there is nothing but disgust, despair, and apathy. In diagnosing our own times, Baudrillard (1988) unwittingly says much about his own critique: "When the real is no longer what it used to be, nostalgia assumes its full meaning. There is a proliferation of myths of origin and signs of reality" (p. 171).

The English Literary Critics

In England, these general developments can be illustrated with reference to just four of its most prominent critics. As Williams (1958) shows, Burke was among the first of the English literary critics to offer the critique (p. 3). Writing in the late 18th century when only the first signs of industrialisation and democratic agitation were apparent, his critique was offered in terms of an older England, though one still within living memory, and the temper of his comments is affirmative (p. 11). Burke was a political conservative, and his espousal of refined sensibility was part of his condemnation of both the call for democracy and the progress of the industrial revolution; his critique involved an attack on individualism and advocacy of the benefits of political gradualism and social constraint. A true believer in the original Enlightenment project, his goal was human perfectibility (Williams, 1958, pp. 3-12). Such is his confidence that he identifies the upholders of traditional standards with the existing state,

albeit somewhat idealized (pp. 120-123). No such confidence is shared by his predecessors.

What for Burke were misgivings about the potential of industrialisation and agitation on behalf of democratic representation were, for Arnold, developing but already pervasive social realities. Arnold's tone is consequently altogether more defensive, at times unworthy of his own ideals (pp. 116-117). Writing in 1869, he frequently adopts a priggish even malicious tone. And although his vision is grand, liberal and optimistic about the possibilities for social change, it is linked to a reactionary view of the need for political repression. For Arnold, culture was foremost a means of controlling growing social unrest among the working class through ideological incorporation (Johnson, 1979, p. 26). Its purpose was to subvert dissent, as religion had done previously (Thompson, 1963). By entwining itself with the deepest roots of humanity, culture was to become the new religion (Eagleton, 1983, pp. 23-24). Arnold envisaged withholding democratic rights from those who sought such rights until they were brought into a basic ideological accord with those currently in power.

In *Culture and Anarchy* (1869/1891) Arnold argued that culture represents "the great hope out of our present difficulties" (p. viii), a way "to safety" (p. 157). He advocated culture as a defence against the rampant, anarchistic individualism of both the middle class and working class (p. 10). As well, culture was conceived as a buttress against "outbursts of rowdyism" (p. 38) from the working class in their pursuit of democratic rights. The title of his text focuses his position, contrasting the goal of collective perfection with individualism and mob rule. Culture is offered as the solution to the social fragmentation, banal standards, and mechanical ways of thinking said to follow from industrialisation and the decline of religion. It is also the solution to the dangers inherent in what he fears is a person's "right to do what he likes; his right to march where he likes, threaten as he likes, smash as he likes" (p.37).

There could be no question of identifying the existing state with the custodians of culture. His ideal state was to be comprised of a "remnant", of "aliens", who had escaped the habits of class

prejudice. He seems to have believed that such a state was achievable, and he placed great store in education as a means of achieving social reconstruction (Johnson, 1979, pp. 34-38).

Like Burke there is no doubting the breadth of Arnold's vision. Culture involved "a harmonious expansion of human nature" (Arnold, 1869/1891, p. 10) through the study and pursuit of perfection. Although the direction of the Enlightenment project had become less direct than it was for Burke, Arnold is its heroic champion. He exhorted his contemporaries to study and pursue human perfection

> by getting to know on all matters which most concern us the best which has been thought and said in the world, and through this knowledge turning a stream of fresh and free thought upon our stock notions and habits. (p. viii)

He sought culture "through reading, observing, and thinking" (p. 49) with "a passion for pure knowledge, but also the moral and social passion for doing good" (p. 6).

His was an altogether grand view, but in dealing with the present and immediate future Arnold did not escape the prejudices of his own class. He advocated equality, and although his attitude toward the working class was ambivalent (p. 25), he feared them deeply. Democracy, he argued should be gained only "by the due course of the law" (p. 161). Even while acknowledging the plausibly good cause of the working class, he felt able to write that

> monster processions in the streets and forcible irruptions into the parks ... ought to be unflinchingly forbidden and repressed. (p. 158)

Leavis' vision is altogether more restricted than Arnold's. Writing from the early 1930s into the 1970s, he was by comparison backward looking, deeply embattled, and largely pessimistic about the future. For Leavis, the Enlightenment project had

become highly problematic. The temper of his writing was that of a pseudo-aristocratic authoritarian (Williams, 1958, p. 257). Over the years, as industrialisation and democracy where felt to threaten his position even further, his work was "marred increasingly by a sense of frustration and desperation" (Johnson, 1979, p. 93). He condemned contemporary society without qualification, a position which offered no means of social engagement (Eagleton, 1983, p. 43).

In *Majority Civilization and Minority Culture* (1930) Leavis reduced the notion of culture from a general sensibility to specific works. While his cultural minority was charged to profit by work expressing the finest consciousness of the age (p. 4), the emphasis was placed on the responsibility "to keep alive the subtlest and most perishable parts of tradition" (p. 5). Leavis believed that the "plight of culture .... [was] much more desperate" in his own time than in Arnold's, comparing the environment in which Arnold had worked as "uncongenial" with his own as "hostile" (pp. 3, 25). Faced with powerful institutions producing the modern press, advertising, broadcasting, films and consumer durables (pp. 6-10, 20, 24), he saw culture on a "downward acceleration", in "a crisis" and "cut off as never before from the powers that rule the world" (pp 31, 5, 25).

Animating Leavis' critique is a contrast between a small minority culture and a society where industrialisation and democracy were equally triumphant. Mass society was standardized, Americanized, and characterized by a general "levelling down" of standards and the "deliberate exploitation of the cheap response" (Leavis, 1930, pp.8, 11).

In consequence, Leavis is unable to conceive of anything so splendidly speculative as a classless remnant. His cultural minority is an educated elite concerned with acquiring taste (Leavis, 1930, pp. 4-5, 11-25). And instead of looking to a future ideal state, Leavis fights a rearguard action, seeing no real signs for a better future (pp. 31-32).

His later work involves a fierce hostility to popular education and implacable antipathy to the "transistor ... and student participation in higher education" (Eagleton, 1983, p. 43). While Arnold admitted no distinction between culture and democracy, Leavis' first allegiance was to culture.

Eliot's allegiance to high culture is even more specific than Leavis' and his tone is even more sour, at times "dogmatic to the point of insolence" (Williams, 1958, p. 232). Eliot's (1948) critique is arrogantly elitist for his primary concerns are to protect elite culture from "deterioration in the upper levels" (p. 6) and to reestablish an authoritative, guiding role for the intellectual cultural producer in society (Johnson, 1979, p. 129). Adopting an essentially feudal vision of society, he sought to legitimate the cultural dominance of an older ruling class (Johnson, 1979, pp. 125-129). In essence, his critique was an authoritarian, right wing, fantastical mythology which was utterly unrelated to social realities (Eagleton, 1983, pp. 39, 41). Eliot (1948) believed that it is an essential condition of the preservation of the quality of the culture of the minority, that is should remain to be a minority culture. (p. 107)

As a class based society was "natural" (p. 20), high culture and egalitarianism were necessarily opposed (p. 16). Consequently, he envisaged a cultural elite which was to be attached to, and interactive with, the dominant social class (p. 42) in an organically functioning, hierarchically ordered society. He proposed

> a form of society in which an aristocracy would have a peculiar and essential function, as peculiar and essential as the function of any other part ... in which there be, from "top" to "bottom", a continuous gradation of cultural levels. (p. 48)

The upper levels would not possess more culture than lower levels, but rather would represent a more conscious and specialised culture (p. 48). The elite was to be composed, like other social and cultural levels, of "groups of families persisting

from generation to generation each in the same way of life" and settled in the same geographic locality (p. 52). The different levels were not to be shared, but would nourish the others (pp. 35, 37), just as different regional cultures were to "enrich neighbouring areas" (p. 54). The overall organizing principle was to be "unity and diversity" (chap. 3), with just sufficient "friction" to ensure "creativeness and progress" (pp. 58-59). Each class, cultural level and geographic area were to function for the benefit of the whole.

In short, a feudal aristocracy was once again to be responsible for the moral and social welfare of its people (Johnson, 1979, p. 125). Eliot stridently opposed meritocracy and uniform education (1948, pp, 36, 101) and focused his critique against a welfare state, the mass media, and working class institutions and ideas. And whereas Leavis and Arnold held liberal sympathies towards what they regarded as the social oppression and cultural devastation of ordinary people (Swingewood, 1977, p. 10), Eliot, despite occasional references to exploitation and usury (1948, pp. 65, 104), conveyed a distinct lack of concern for anyone other than those on top of his social and cultural hierarchy (Johnson, 1979, p. 126).

Thus can be seen from these four examples, which span nearly two centuries, a growing sense of despair, brave, albeit narrow visions, which finally dissipated into fantasy. The critique follows this road: from the enlightenment of the many to the enlightenment of the few, to an apartheid of the enlightened few from the many.

The Frankfurt School Marxists

The most developed Marxist onslaught on contemporary life from a high cultural perspective is that of the Frankfurt School (Laing, 1978, p. 106). Like their English counterparts discussed above, their influence on social criticism has been profound. As Neo-Marxists these critics too were heirs of the Enlightenment project, but writing during the middle of the 20th century they, like Leavis and Eliot, knew it to be highly

problematic and limited. They attacked technological progress, holding it responsible for alienation and one dimensionality (Marcuse, 1964). Traditional transmitters of cultures, particularly the family, were thought to have been weakened (Swingewood, 1977, p. 14), and, lamentably, the moral organisational strength of the working class was thought to have dissipated (Laing, 1978, pp. 106-107).

For Horkheimer and Adorno (1944/1972), this critique is an integral part of their attempt to reconcile the contradiction that while according to Marxist orthodoxy the timetable for the collapse of capitalism was well nigh, the European proletariat of the 1930's was further than ever from a revolutionary consciousness. In liberal, capitalist democracies the fire for socialism had waned, while elsewhere it had been subverted altogether by Fascism. Atomized and amorphous, the working class had proven easy prey to irrational persuasion. Indeed, fascism seemed to derive its support from below, from within the masses.

Horkheimer and Adorno generalised from German Fascism to capitalist, liberal democracies as a whole, arguing that what the fascist state did through force, though in collaboration with the masses, the capitalist did through the "culture industry" (Swingewood, 1977, pp. 12-18). They regarded the media as a major weapon in the struggle to conceal the contradictions inherent in capitalism and to legitimate the capitalist's dominant power. The media achieved ideological incorporation by supplying an unrelieved diet of anaesthetizing, distracting and falsifying fare from which all oppositional ideas were excluded. The media was considered imposed from above, although the masses were seen as willing dupes (Swingewood, 1977, p, 13) in the sadomasochism with which the media held their audiences (Laing, 1978, pp. 9, 107).

> Donald Duck in the cartoons and the unfortunate in real life get their thrashing so that the audience can learn to take their own punishment. (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1944/1972, p. 112)

The only realm in which opposition was thought to still exist was among the artistic avant-garde and those who maintained an uncontaminated, traditional culture. Culture was viewed as

> a protected realm in which ... tabooed truths could survive in abstract integrity remote from the society which suppressed them. (Marcuse, 1964, p. 64)

Thus, for the Frankfurt School, like their 20th century English literary counterparts, the guardians of high culture were a small and embattled minority. Both the Frankfort School and the English literary critics were nostalgic for past times and pessimistic about the future.

Baudrillard

All previously discussed critics were indebted to the Enlightenment project, however increasingly limited they considered it, and following this each explicitly assumed a distinction between high and popular culture. Baudrillard does neither, and ostensibly his position is the antithesis of high culture criticism because he claims to reject completely any remnant of the Enlightenment project and with it any socially redemptive role for the high arts (Harvey, 1989).

However in several ways he is the heir of the high culture tradition. He uncompromisingly denigrates the "masses" and develops an historical narrative whereby present conditions have displaced periods of greater certainty and hope. Throughout, Baudrillard's tone is that of the most profound repulsion. In these several ways a regressive view of history, condemnation of ordinary people, and a repulsed tone his criticism of contemporary social life can be seen to stand at the end of the same tradition as discussed above.

Unlike Eliot and Marcuse, however, who sought to erect walls to help preserve their precious high culture from contamination, Baudrillard is forced by the reality of his cultural

period - in common with most postmodern theorizing (Harvey, 1989) - to acknowledge that the walls have tumbled down and that distinctions between high and low culture no longer make sense. There is no longer a high culture to which one can seek to return.

Whereas Eliot was able to fantasize, however bizarrely, about a minority culture, and the Frankfurt School Marxists pinned their hopes on the avant-garde, Baudrillard feels so overwhelmed by the plethora of disconnected images that characterize our time that he offers nothing but resignation and self-indulgence. Thus, he marks what seems likely to be the last gasp of the high culture critique and with it, its demise into utter futility. In offering no hope for social intervention, the critique finally renders itself incapable of offering a response to contemporary life other than apathy and excess. Indeed, he sees apathy as the sole remaining means to resist the perpetrators of popular culture (Baudrillard, 1988, p. 208).

Baudrillard's original contribution is to proclaim the dissolution of the distinction between the real and the illusory. Once, he argues, culture reflected a basic reality, then it hid that basic reality, then it hid the absence of reality, but now culture signifies nothing (1988, p. 170). All that now exists is representation. One of his chief arguments is the proliferation of the popular arts (1986), and their ability to seduce, overwhelm, intoxicate, and deliver us into a state of "hyperreality." Everyday life has become aesthetized, enveloped in an aesthetics of the surface where discrimination has been replaced by revelry. Baudrillard too seems nostalgic for the past. He rages against what he considers the passing of meaningful and depthful experience.

Baudrillard (1986) relentlessly castigates postmodern times and vilifies the users of contemporary mass culture. In *The Ecstasy of Communication* (1986), contemporary culture is repeatedly seen in terms of "pornography", "obscenity", and "excrement". Television is "like a microscopic pornography of the universe, useless, excessive, just like the sexual close up in a porno film" (p. 130). In terms that owe much to Horkheimer and

Adorno, Baudrillard (1983) sees the masses as blindly consuming all that is offered and as having nothing to say in response. They are "spongy", representing "a social void", in a state of "inertia", and like an "opaque nebula whose growing density absorbs all the surrounding energy and light rays, to collapse finally under its own weight, a "black hole which engulfs" everything (pp. 1-4). The black hole absorbs all meaning, information, and communications and renders it meaningless. The masses refuse to accept and produce meaning; in the face of constant bombardment by television, newspapers, cinema, videos, spectacles and so on, the masses are as indifferent and apathetic as the cultural material they absorb is meaningless.

Baudrillard is ostensibly from the left he was originally a Neo-Marxist but his work readily serves the interests of reaction. As Harvey (1989) argues, when critique dissolves into apathy and ethics dissolve into aesthetics, charismatic politics are unhindered and fascism is not far from the door. As Sietz (1990) has asked, "Is it possible that some clever postmodern expert at the CIA (or KGB) invented 'Baudrillard'?". Like Arnold and Leavis, both liberals, whose work was marred by reaction, Baudrillard's critique is easy prey for the forces of repression he would presumably abhor. Thus does the tradition of high culture begin with a conservative politics and increasingly move, either explicitly as with Eliot or by consequence as with Baudrillard, toward fascism.

Summary

Baudrillard's metaphor of a black hole is more aptly aimed at the invocation of high culture. For those who would turn to high culture as a remedy for contemporary social ills, the history of the high culture critique offers a salutary lesson. To promote high culture in opposition to democratic impulses and the plurality of other voices, as a safehaven from an otherwise unsafe world, is to be marginalized ever more from an engagement with the cultural life of our period. It is a nostalgic indulgence in an ideal which on examination melts into air, a withdrawal into a past which never existed. Not only is the road behind us blocked, there is nothing to which we can return. We need to face the present. Arnold (1869/1891) was right in this: "We need to turn a stream of fresh and free thought upon our stock notions and habits" (p. viii).

Free and Fresh Thought

What today would constitute free and fresh thought for art education? If high culture represents a dead end, what road are we to travel upon?

I have elsewhere explored the signposting for an art education which would offer positive ways to engage with our cultural epoch (Duncum, 1990, 1993). Positive engagement means being viewed by television-wise, computer-literate students as having something meaningful to say in the world they inhabit. In place of high culture, I offer the semiotic view of culture as those artifacts and practices through which we make meaning on an everyday basis.

In my view the road ahead is signposted with propositions like the following: Different cultural forms should be seen as categories not evaluations. Simple and hierarchical distinctions between high and low culture must give way to an understanding that cultural forms serve a multitude of often subtle and complex functions for different people in different contexts. A broad, inclusive definition of the visual arts is necessary. Rather than confined to the fine arts, visual arts education needs to become what Pearson (1994) has called an "education in pictures". Instead of viewing art as socially privileged, we need to view our subject as the pictures which saturate and inform our students' lives. Instead of art being regarded as something special, imagery should be considered as ordinary as everyday speech. Like ordinary language, it is through commonplace imagery that the real battlegrounds for people's hearts and minds are fought.

Instead of viewing cultural forms omnipotently, they need to be viewed from an insider's position. If students are to take notice of our views and value our knowledge, we must be

familiar with their own views and their often prodigious, albeit decontextualised knowledge about imagery.

Rather than culture being imposed from above, culture should be seen to emerge from and serve people's fundamental needs. People should be seen not as passive consumers of culture, but as active discriminators. Instead of seeing contemporary life as atomised, cultural life should be understood as profoundly social, or as Enzenberger (1974) puts it, "a social product made up by people; its origin is the dialogue" (p.5).

In place of seeing contemporary life as marking a decline in social and cultural standards, it needs to be acknowledged that contemporary cultural forms have numerous precedents. There is nothing new in celebrating the trivial, sensational and absurd. Similarly, the fine arts have no monopoly on the profound.

Furthermore, it should be acknowledged that present times are informed by far more enlightened views than in the past on a wide range of issues, including religious affiliation, race, age, gender, and sexual preference. Far from representing a decline, present times present new challenges. These include new technologies and pluralist and fragile social formations, as well as enormous concentrations of media power. We are challenged to critically embrace television, video and computer games, for example, and to be ready for the information highway. We are challenged to accommodate numerous competing voices literally images from different groups as they vie for power and influence. Rather than privileging aesthetic delight, the visual arts need foremost to be seen as sights of ideological struggle in which art educators have the potential to play a central role.

The road ahead is strewn with difficulties, but in negotiating them lies our future. And besides, there is no choice. The road behind is blocked.

Notes

1. I do not wish to imply that nowadays all proponents of DBAE can be seen as neo-conservatives. Rather, I wish to indicate that earlier formulations of DBAE were deeply conservative in both content and mode of delivery.

2. Other features of the high culture critique which they each share is an outsider's perspective to the culture they condemn and their propensity to rely on rhetoric rather than facts. The highly literate Arnold had assumed that an illiterate culture was inferior; Adorno, the European, classically trained music critic, condemned American Jazz (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1944/1972); and the French intellectual Baudrillard (1988) condemns American culture in general and Disneyland in particular (pp. 171-172). The English literary critics as much as the Frankfurt School failed to define their basic terms. Arnold spoke frequently of "sweetness and light" as defining terms of culture but nowhere defines these terms (Johnson, 1979, p. 33). Eliot's definitions break down because he is unwilling to illustrate (Williams, 1958, p. 231) and Leavis and Marcuse both assume the reader simply understands what is meant by culture (see Leavis, 1930, p. 5; Marcuse, 1978, p. x). Similarly, Baudrillard's fails to define major terms, uses hyperbolic and declarative language, and ignores contradictory evidence (Poster, 1988, p. 7)

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