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Troubling Below: Rethinking Subcultural Theory

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ABSTRACT

The following thesis is an exploration of some of the limits of subcultural theory. Beginning with an overview of British subcultural theory, it uses two examples of contemporary musical practice to provide alternative readings of cultural activity in a global cultural economy. Examining music scenes in Montreal as well as New Zealand music fans in North America, the following is a consideration of the construction of cultural communities across the globe. It offers an analysis of the depth and scope of their interactions and how a range of cultural values and meanings are produced, distributed and consumed within those communities. Rather than seeing subcultures as geographically located in specific and discrete locales, I aim to illustrate how the various networks connecting them (whether they be affective alliances or computer-mediated communications) have in many ways realigned these communities along axes which differ from those proposed by earlier subcultural theories.

ABSTRAIT

Cette thèse propose l'exploration des limites des théories en circulation sur les subcultures. Suite à un aperçu des théories Britanniques des subcultures, deux examples de pratiques musicales courantes seront examinées afin de fournir des lectures alternatives de l'àctivité culturelle dans une économie culturelle globale. En examinant les milieux ("scenes") musicales à Montréal ainsi que les enthousiastes nord-américains de la musique contemporaine de la Nouvelle Zélande, je considérai la construction des communautés culturelles à travers le globe. J`offrirai une analyse de la profondeur et de l'ampleur de leurs interactions et du méchanisme par lequel une gamme de valeurs et de significations culturelles sont produites, distribuées, organisées et consommées à l'intérieur de ces communautés. Plutôt que voir les subcultures comme étant situées dans un local géographiquement spécifique et distinct, je cherche à illustrer comment les divers réseaux qui les relient (que ce soit par des alliances affectives ou des communications par ordinateur) ont, de plusieurs manières, réalignés ces communautés sur des axes qui diffèrent de ceux proposés par les théories subculturelles précédentes.

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INTRODUCTION

This is a song about something there
There is something about this song
We did the clubs what ass
I was hoping to have her in the sack
I was looking handsome
She was looking like an erotic vulture
I was all dressed up in black
She was all dressed up in black
Everything was fine down here
What you call it here
Call it what you will here
Way down down down in this subbacultcha
                    The Pixies - "Subbacultcha"

It was only after ten years of living and studying in (and listening to)

Montréal that I began to draw connections between subcultural theory and

popular music. While that might seem a rather facile, or even banal,

epiphany, it was while thinking through the nature of the sociomusical

experience in Montréal in greater detail that I realized that a large portion

of the literature devoted to analyses of subcultural practice was not

predisposed to adequately account for recent shifts in cultural production

and consumption. I had been thinking about this particularly in relation to

the status within Montréal of anglophone independent rock, a particular

genre of music which can generally be characterized by unpolished

production, with musicians often eschewing formal 24-track studio spaces

for 4- or 8-track recordings done informally in bedrooms or living rooms. It

is for the most part a white, middle-class cultural phenomenon in which a

do-it-yourself (DIY) ethos is the favoured mode of both production and

distribution (producers are encouraged to create their own labels and/or

release their own cassettes and 7-inch singles). 'Independent' defines the

music's relation to the major recording industry as well as an aesthetic which expresses itself in the form of a particular range of musical idioms.

As both a fan of independent rock and as an academic I became more aware of the limits the tools subcultural theory offers for current cultural analyses. Recently, studies of independent and alternative rock have tried to view rock formations through the prism of subcultural theory forwarded by Dick Hebdige (1979) and Stuart Hall, et al (1974) (see specifically Kruse, 1995 and Fonarow, 1995). There is something to this, for while not as spectacular as punks, Mods, Rastas or Rockers, indie rock's practitioners still occupy spaces on the mainstream's periphery, forming a shadow cultural economy. Many of the same issues of incorporation and co-optation which were central to the former groups' moral economies are also dominant concerns of the latter culture's participants. Deliberating on many of these shared concerns, practitioners of subculture theory have somewhat successfully described certain aspects of cultural activity occurring on the margins in both past and present cases. However, upon further examination, the shape and scope of independent rock indicated that much of that theory needed to be updated, recalibrated and generally reconsidered if it were to effectively take into account a broader number of factors informing current cultural practices.

In this sense, the following chapters are not geared towards dispensing entirely with subcultural theory (in its tenacious British cultural studies variant at least). They are centered more on pinpointing the lacunae that restrict the theory from properly describing cultural practice in a global cultural economy. By using the term cultural practice I am borrowing from Martin Allor (1997) and his suggestion that cultural practice and/or activity are more precise terms (rather than 'audience' or 'reception') describing "the discursive and praxical resources which are available to

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particular forms of cultural agency...and it is also to insist on the specificity of particular kinds of cultural activity, of their location in strips of space-time that place cultural agency in relation to pre-existing formations of practice, and, at times, in relation to the becoming of particular forms of community" (Allor, 47). In turn, these cultural practices, activities and various forms of agency will be considered in relation to processes of globalization, particularly their effects at a local level, focusing on the shifting coordinates of production, distribution and consumption that make up the indie rock formation.

The first chapter offers an overview of subcultural theory, beginning with the work done during the seventies at the University of Birmingham's Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies and ending with more recent accounts that reposition subcultural theory in a postmodern setting. However, in criticizing many of these theories the orientation is not towards an analysis of musical culture specifically, but the broader cultural practices determining, and determined by, individuals and groups interaction. This chapter offers alternative readings of sociocultural experience in the context of shifting spatial and social relations. To do this more effectively, it borrows from Pierre Bourdieu's notions of taste, habitus and field in accounting for a wider range of cultural production and consumption (1984, 1993). Bourdieu's work proposes a number of tools that more than adequately account for a number of cultural practices and social formations. His terms and theories are particularly useful for laying the groundwork for the following chapters as they have, more recently, been applied to the study of popular music (see Kruse, 1997; Thornton, 1996; Straw, 1991). The study of tastes and tastes communities will be complemented by Arjun Appadurai's (1996) work on contexts of

enactment and engagement which is used here to describe different kinds of connectivity and social interaction as they are played out globally.

Chapter Two deals with music and subcultures by examining an independent record label, Derivative Records, and its place in Montréal's musical scene. "Making Sense of Indie Rock in Montréal" extends many of the ideas about connections and community introduced in the first chapter, addressing a number of interactions and exchanges affected by the transregional scope of the scenes which make up indie rock. The networks supporting the affective alliances built across diverse geographical settings are of central concern, understood throughout as forms of connectivity and interactivity which are actualized at a real, concrete level as well as a symbolic and imaginative one. To describe these formal and informal channels, Ruth Finnegan's (1989) concept of 'pathways' is used throughout. For Finnegan the term pathways describes the real and symbolic channels that musicians and fans use in the construction and consumption of music in a localized setting. This concept can be extrapolated to connect musical routine with musical routes in order to trace the connections, manifested in a series of productive alliances, which link one musical scene to another. In this way Montréal musical culture and its relation to place is construed less as a bounded area for cultural activity, and will instead be understood as "articulated moments in networks of social relations and understandings" (Massey, 1993: 68). The means by which all of these networks are managed, organized and maintained will be described in relation to Montréal specifically but also to the indie rock scene generally.

The transregional scope of these networks of affinity will be explored in greater detail in the final chapter. "Siting the Sound: New Zealand Music Fans in North America" is an analysis of a particular group of fans and their tastes for a genre of music. The focus will be on the forms of

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connectivity which are determinants in the construction and maintenance of a scene, such as zines, periodicals, community radio and, more recently, computer-mediated communications. How a series of transnational connections are intertwined with the accumulation of knowledge and acquisition of goods and their arrangement into a particular constellation of meanings is also a main concern. To this end, the symbolic function of goods such as lathe-cut 7-inches and limited edition albums is related to the production of a system of values specific to indie rock. How that value is created, disseminated and maintained in globalized circuits of commodity production, transnational economies of desire and the social organization of a taste culture are the chapter's central organizing principles.

In order to make these analyses more relevant a number of theoretical approaches will be used. Anthropological, sociological and ethnographic accounts of cultural activity will provide guideposts for a mapping of musical culture and how its social aspects are realized in contemporary settings. In terms of a broader methodological framework, each chapter is shaped in many respects by the work of ethnomusicologist Mark Slobin (1993) and his use of Arjun Appadurai's notion of scapes. Scapes, as defined by Appadurai, are necessarily fluid, chaotic and irregular systems. More precisely,

> they are not objectively given relations that look the same from every angle of vision but, rather, that they are deeply perspectival constructs, inflected by the historical, linguistic, and political situatedness of different sorts of actors: nation-states, multinationals, diapsoric communities, as well as subnational groupings and movements, and even intimate face-to-face groups, such as villages, neighbourhoods, and families. Indeed, the individual actor is the last locus of this perspective set of landscapes, for these landscapes are eventually navigated by agents who both experience and constitute larger formations, in part from their own sense of what these landscapes offer
> (Appadurai: 33).

Slobin uses the term scapes to construct a model that explains the function of all these points in the process of cultural/musical production by framing them within a global cultural economy. Although Appadurai does not address music specifically, this model can be suitably applied to map out the 'possible' or 'imagined worlds' which are constituted by producers, products/texts and consumers/fans.

The notion of scapes better defines musical practice in a global cultural economy. The term scape can be subdivided into five different, yet interdependent, subspecies. The first scape is the ethnoscape which includes the "viewpoint of tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles", generally the movement of groups and individuals throughout the globe. It also includes the 'local' where the "'deterritorialization' of populations through economic, political, and cultural alienation means everyone has an active ethnoscape". The second is the technoscape which involves the uneven distribution and varied concentration and access to various technologies. The third scape is the mediascape which is composed of "image-centered, narrative based accounts of strips of reality" and the final scapes are ideoscapes which for the most part are gleaned from Enlightenment ideals and include images of "freedom, welfare, rights, sovereignty, representation and the master-term democracy" (14-15). The terms can be weighted differently as they can occur at the same time or at different speeds, operate in varying degrees inside and outside of local/global cultural formations and mean different things to different individuals, groups and nations. Employing the idea of scapes will lend this discussion a stronger texture and allow a deeper analysis of the production, distribution and consumption actualized through a wide range of cultural and social practices.

Appadurai's own work on the conjunctures and disjunctures of global flows through these scapes is one view that informs much of the following discussion, particularly making use of his comments on the phenomenological effects of globalization. Each chapter offers a direct, and sometimes indirect, return to discussions of the local and global and how they engage in dialogic and dialectic relationships which produce a range of effects, both negative and positive. Note however that no one chapter is intended to valorize or romanticize the local over the global. The local cannot be reduced to a site of authenticity and heterogeneity, and the global cannot be figured solely as abstract and homogenous. However, inasmuch as the local scene is necessarily about a certain type of continuity (experiential and phenomenological) and the global about a certain level of discontinuity (amorphous yet monolithic), the two terms will be taken as starting points for a discussion of how musical practice and its social aspects are, to borrow from Vincent Mosco, mutually constituted through a nexus of these forces (Mosco, 1997).

What I aim to demonstrate is that cultural activities and practices, subcultural or otherwise, require new or modified theoretical models in order to be analyzed effectively. I have taken two examples to illustrate that new forms of connectivity, communication and cultural production are part of broader social processes. These examinations deal in part with the tensions within musical culture between fixity (of scenes) and flow (of the networks which criss-cross scenes), continuity (traditions, myths) and discontinuity (economic), and how these various forces inform social and spatial relations. Positioned in the context of a discussion based on movement, mobility and mediation these tensions are taken to be instances of shifts in sociomusical experiences. As such, each case is a thumbnail sketch of a continually evolving phenomenon: the complex interdependency

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of music, technologies and social organization. Taken together, these chapters are meant as a contribution to an ongoing dialogue with other projects engaging with many of the same issues.

CHAPTER 1

TROUBLING BELOW:
RETHINKING SUBCULTURAL THEORY

> Subcultures represent noise (as opposed to sound): interference
> in the orderly sequence which leads from real events and
> phenomena to their representation in the media. We should
> therefore not underestimate the signifying power of the
> spectacular subculture not only as a metaphor for potential
> anarchy 'out there' but as an actual mechanism of semantic
> disorder: a kind of temporary blockage in the system of
> representation.
>
> (Hebdige, 1979: 90)

Subcultures as noise: a metaphor that possesses a deep, romantic and

poetic resonance for many scholars. The heroic rhetoric of resistance, the

valorization of the underdog and outsider, and the reemergence of a

potentially political working-class consciousness are all embedded in

discourses that have shaped the theorization of subcultures in the past

twenty years. The work of Dick Hebdige, Stuart Hall and others connected

with the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, University of

Birmingham, through which these conceits evolved, remain a backdrop for

many contemporary theories of subcultures. Studies such as Subcultures:

The Meaning of Style (1979) and Resistance Through Rituals (1975) drew

their theory from such diverse sources as Gramsci's theories of hegemony,

Levi-Strauss' notion of bricolage and homology, Eco's semiotics and Marx's

theories of class, ideology and commodity fetishism. The sartorial splendor

of Teds, Mods, Rockers and Punks became emblematic of a 'semiotic

guerrilla warfare' which took objects from the dominant culture and

transformed their everyday naturalized meaning into something

spectacular and alien. Style became a form of resistance.

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This discourse of style has outlasted many other aspects of their work, recuperated through recent attempts to situate subcultural practices within a postmodern milieu. In this context Baudrillard's implosion of meaning, the blurring of fantasy and reality through the aestheticization of everyday life and the supremacy of the image in an ocularcentric culture become tropes that consign subcultural practices to a narrow notion of spectacle. Social and cultural practices, condensed to mere processes of signification, are consequently viewed through theories inadequately predisposed to consider the complex intersection and layering of institutional, industrial, material, social, spatial and temporal dimensions and relations that facilitate and circumscribe a given social formation's operation.

The discussion which follows questions the efficacy of subcultural theory as it has been understood since the work of the CCCS rejuvenated an interest in the field. A reconsideration of the corpus will necessarily explore the gaps and limits which undermine the relevance and theoretical potency of the work of Hebdige and others. In order to illuminate the blind spots of subcultural theory, the spaces, and specifically the global contexts and local circumstances in which certain cultural practices unfold, a thicker description of the multiple forces and vectors which shape them is required. The (retreat to the) spectacularization of subcultures offers ineffective descriptive tools and often obscures the complexity of current cultural practices which constitute, and are constituted by, the aleatory effects of a globalized cultural economy.

The exploration of globalized cultural sensibilities and their coalescence into what will be denoted here as variegated and stratified taste cultures, requires a conceptual framework which is also amenable to describing reconfigurations of spatiality and their effect on social relations. I will take

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tastes here to be defined, after David Chaney (1997), as a "social vocabulary, a symbolic repertoire of membership and reference affiliations as a discourse that can be endlessly modified and renewed in the imagery and narratives of mass culture" (149). Tastes, alongside dispositions, preferences and affinities, all systems of classification and organization (Bourdieu, 1984), are terms used throughout to denote social activities and attitudes that influence as much as they are influenced by the spaces in which they reside. They suggest a rhetorical move away from rigidly vertical models which rely upon universals such as class and enable a nuanced examination of individual identity and group dynamics and how they are articulated (often unevenly) to large scale cultural arenas.

An emphasis on the specificities of local and regional cultures understood in a global setting, where spaces become sites fraught with competition, negotiation and accommodation occurring on multiple and intersecting planes, undermines any notion of a single determinant, often cast in essentialist terms (class, ethnicity, age, gender), which might exist as the overarching structuring principle of contemporary cultural practices, preferences and formations. The contexts which are most affected by globalization are the products of the circulation of ideas, texts, styles, and people (in the form of migrant labour, consumers, tourists, refugees) around the globe, a process which has been elided in subcultural theory. The institutional and infrastructural mechanisms which enable this mobility have produced networks, circuits and alliances, all modes of communicative and community action, which traverse the globe. An analysis of their role in the creation of geographically dispersed audiences will be a central component of the following chapter.

SUBCULTURAL THEORY: AN OVERVIEW

The subcultural theory espoused by John Clarke, Phil Cohen, Hebdige and Hall found its theoretical antecedents in a century of sociological work on deviancy and delinquency. A somewhat uneven trajectory can be traced from the work of Emile Durkheim to his influence on the Chicago School, a connection that shaped a tradition uniting urban studies and sociology, one with a profound and prolonged effect on the ensuing studies of marginal(ized) social groups. That history needs little documentation here as it has been thoroughly explicated in a number of texts devoted to a survey of the field (Sumner, 1995; also Taylor, Watson and Young, 1974; Brake, 1980). Briefly, the work of Hall, Clarke, Hebdige, Cohen et al, remains embedded in a tradition that includes functionalist anomie theory and the work of the Chicago School. Phil Cohen's work on neighbourhoods, for instance, shares much with Robert Park's social ecology and Clarke and Hall's introductory essay in <u>Resistance Through Rituals</u> echoes Robert Merton's anomie theory. The new theory shares an intellectual affinity with the works it was initially trying to dispense with. Working class adolescent males remain the central focus in both cases and delinquency still remains the collective solution to a structural problem. The new theories, however, offer a much more intricate analysis, as Stanley Cohen (1980) has suggested, with the addition of a structural analysis. Class, race and gender, understood historically, economically and politically are the 'problem' to which subcultures are the 'solution'.

Phil Cohen's project, "Subcultural Conflict and Working-Class Community" (1972), exemplifies the approach taken by many of the CCCS theorists, focusing as they do on post-World War II social transformations wrought by renewed industrialism, urbanization and the accelerated consuming habits of the young. Taking the working-class of East End London as his

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object of study, Cohen proposed that their position in newly urbanized spaces is one of exclusion. In these renovated spaces the working-class was subjected to middle-class ideology with its valorization of property and individual ownership, a stark contrast to the working-class ideal of communal ownership. The fractures that ran through the East End section under scrutiny were economic, ideological and political, all of which combined to a greater degree among the working class youth. The generational conflict that resulted gave rise to new subcultures that operated in opposition to the parent culture. Consequently, Cohen notes, "one effect of this was to weaken the links of historical and cultural continuity, mediated through the family" (Cohen in Gelder and Thornton, 1997: 94). Face-to-face contact with family members becomes abstracted to symbolic relations that are mediated through the activities of other members of a subculture. The subculture, a symbolic structure, then tries to 'magically' resolve the contradictions that exist (latent or manifest) in the parent culture. (The subculture, although a symbolic structure, depends upon territoriality to anchor individual members to a collective reality). The contradictions of the parent culture remain irresolvable because "it merely transcribes its terms at a micro social level and inscribes them in an imaginary set of relations" (96). This is not meant to suggest the futility of subcultural activity, however. Even as it expresses its autonomy from the parent culture, it simultaneously maintains parental identification, which often manifests itself through a ritualized defense against the transition into adulthood.

John Clarke, Stuart Hall et al (1975) also view youth subcultures through the prism of class and suggest they are doubly articulated to a parent culture, the working-class, and the dominant culture. Subcultures are defined here as "smaller, more localized and differentiated structures,

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within one or more of the larger cultural networks" (13). Working class cultures are the home of subcultures, while middle-class cultures create counter-cultures (see also Brake, 1980, 1984). Subcultures must be understood, foremost, in relation to the hegemonic forces of the dominant culture. Gramsci's notion of hegemony illuminates how a fraction of working-class culture, youth, comes to have its expressive elements curtailed and its lived reality circumscribed by the operation of hegemony. Society can never be one dimensional and as such the working class is never completely absorbed by the dominant class. The occupation of these lacunae is understood as 'winning space', a negotiated version of the dominant culture's values which the working-class has appropriated as an alternate moral system permitting legitimizing their own means of expression. This space was won by being made, a creative response to their alienation and disenfranchisement.

Subcultures must also be understood in relation to their own class, and in the case of working-class youth they are seen as a generational fraction of the parent working-class culture. The generational specificity that marks youth is seen through the prism of education, work and leisure. Youth experience class conflict differently than their parent culture due to the gaps between generations, a process which results in the creation of a generational consciousness.

The authors extend Cohen's work on symbolic structures, particularly modes such as dress, music, ritual and argot. The resulting discourses of style are an attempt to examine the relations struck between the subculture, the parent culture and mass culture. Through the semiotic reconfiguration of objects, specifically the commodities of the dominant class, the subculture invests them with particular meanings, further strengthening its inner relations through symbolic gestures. The unity of the

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modes binds the expressive elements of the subculture together which crystallizes into a set of cultural practices that develop their own history and structure.

Class, at least for Dick Hebdige in his study of British punks in Subculture: The Meaning of Style (1979), is only one dimension of subcultural formation. Hebdige's work occupies a central place in the subcultural oeuvre, offering a persuasive integration of modernist literature, semiotics, anthropology and structuralism in what has become a canonical study of the emergence of punk style. Hebdige's examination of punk music and culture historicizes its antecedents (reggae, the Teds, Mods, rockers) in a highly charged class-stratified milieu (where the even the working class is fraught with racially motivated anxiety and blame-casting). Hebdige offers an examination of the process of cross-pollination, hybridization, contamination and appropriation that occurred among subcultures in post-war Britain:

> (P)atterns of rejection and assimilation between host and immigrant communities can be mapped along spectacular lines laid down by white working-class youth culture. The succession of white subcultural forms can be read as a series of deep-structural adaptations which symbolically accommodate or expunge the black presence from the host community. It is on the plane of aesthetics: in dress, dance, music; in the whole rhetoric of style, that we find the dialogue between black and white most subtly and comprehensively recorded, albeit in code. By describing, interpreting and deciphering these forms, we can construct an oblique account of the exchanges which have taken place between these two communities. We can watch, played out on the loaded surfaces of British working-class youth cultures, a phantom history of race relations since the War (45).

Subcultural style, a deliberately arranged sartorial semiotic guerrilla warfare, is crucial to making the 'noise' essential to the success of a given subculture. Style for the dominant culture becomes both a

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celebration and subject of derision in the media; for subcultures it becomes a form of lived contestation and innovation. Hebdige recalls Stanley Cohen's 'folk devil' and 'moral panic' to suggest how the subordinate group is constituted in the social imaginary of the dominant group. The process of recuperation (of neutralizing the threat posed by 'folk devils') utilized by the dominant culture takes two forms: conversion of subcultural signs into commodities and the relabelling of deviant behaviour by various social agencies (police, judiciary) which takes the form of an ideology. The supposed Otherness of punks, for example, is continually redefined in the media, most often through the discourse of the family.

The subculture defines itself through a number of stylistic forms: intentional communication, bricolage, homology and signifying practice. Intentional communication is an ironic gesture, where visual ensembles are understood, at least by members of the subculture, as fabricated and function as forms of display. *Bricolage*, a term borrowed from Levi-Strauss to describe a science of the concrete (of the everyday, of the banal) is a tool employed to reconfigure the naturalized meaning of an object. Elevated through the rhetoric of style, the detourned objects take on another layer of cultural value, subject to the discourses and visual idioms specific to the subculture.

Hebdige also borrows from Levi-Strauss the notion of homology to explain the connection between seemingly disparate cultural practices. Homology is understood as the 'symbolic fit' between a subculture and the lifestyles and attitudes it acts out. There was an order to the chaos in punk subculture which cohered as a meaningful whole. There was an internal structure and an organic fit between various parts. The objects that circulate through that culture acquire a resonance that has deep affective value, suitably arrayed in the subcultural imaginary as a reflection

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and expression of explicit and implicit values. An extension of bricolage, homology is a term deployed to explain the consistency of a subculture and its attachment to various material practices (record buying, clothes wearing, scooter buying).

Bricolage and homology are both terms that describe a set of signifying practices. However, subcultures embody a number of contradictions which most semiotic theory is inadequately predisposed to accommodate. Hebdige stresses instead the polysemy of signifying practices, in which structure and system are discarded for the more febrile idea of subject position and the process of meaning making (which is ultimately bound up in the dominance of the signifier over the signified). He borrows from Julie Kristeva (1974) the notion of radical signifying practices: those which disturb rationality and order and semantic coherence. Punk for instance "cohered elliptically through a chain of conspicuous absences. It was characterized by its unlocatedness - its blankness" (120).

Members of a subculture are not always fully aware of the significance (in semiotic terms) of their own practices. The level of commitment to a subculture differs for many individuals. It can be escape or distraction but there must be a common language, or "it must say the right things in the right way at the right time" (122). Using Kristeva's 'poetic language' to describe a form of disturbed syntax, Hebdige proposes that punk expresses itself through semantic rupture. Punk's refashioning of language is utilized in contrast to other subcultures that might be seen as simply and 'magically' resolving the contradictions of living under the regimes of industrialized capitalism. From swastikas as accessory, to safety pins puncturing cheeks and to wearing bin liners as clothes, punks were construed as literally inscribing and embodying those contradictions.

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SUBCULTURAL THEORY RETHOUGHT

The work of the CCCS opened up a theoretical space which enabled a richer study of marginalized social formations and their cultural practices. Their examinations of the power differentials that structure contemporary culture created analytical tools which have become essential to any attempt accounting for the myriad responses of subordinate(d) groups to structures of domination. However, there remain a number of areas that are overtheorized, and others undertheorized, which question the continued relevance of their work. First, the discourse of style overemphasizes symbolic response to exclusion (Cohen's 'magical resolutions'), situating semiotic play with appropriated texts above that of the imaginative and concrete contexts in which cultural activity and practice is enacted. Also, the discourse of style adopted by a number of CCCS theorists remains fettered to its overly reductive optimism. Style is either a symbolic form of resistance or a 'magical solution' and therefore not a 'real' solution. The discourses attached to 'winning space' and the symbolic nature of that process in the CCCS's analyses are rhetorical ploys meant to explain away the opacity of subcultural activity itself. Style should be understood neither as a decoding tool that is solely oppositional, nor as something internal to the group itself. The convergence and mingling of mass culture and subculture through the *détournement* of appropriated objects is much more nuanced: it is trickle-up as much as trickle-down. The second criticism, and related to the first, is that the creation of a subcultural Other such as the media, the mainstream, or the popular, elides the role each plays in the subculture's own internal construction. Third, the emphasis on a linear model such as class, acting as the sole determinant in the origins of subcultural practices, marginalizes other factors such as age, gender and

ethnicity. Consideration of these factors as outside the purview of a model bound to a geographically specific idea of territory and 'winning space', neglect the complexities of identity formation and fail to assess the multiple determinations and motivations drawing individuals towards a certain range of subcultural practices.

The first criticism has been (somewhat awkwardly) rethought in the context of postmodernism; the latter criticisms have been highlighted by the effects engendered by a globalized cultural economy. This is due primarily to the shifting parameters circumscribing the spaces in which cultural practices are realized (the tension between local circumstances and global contexts, or more specifically, between the dispersed and geographically disconnected sites of production and consumption); secondly by the movement and mobility of ideas, objects, people and texts through that globalized cultural economy and its febrile apparatuses (including computer-mediated communication technologies), undermining the notion of a single trajectory or determination shaping individual identity and group affiliation.

The belief that subcultures are a common 'stylized' solution for disenfranchised youth remains vague on the connection between structure and the problem-solving option as well as undertheorizing notions such as choice and belonging. Gary Clarke asks: "How do we analytically leap from the desire for a solution to the adoption of a particular style?" (Clarke, 1997: 176). Group organization and individual desires are subtler and much more ineffable than Hebdige allows. Hebdige fails to describe where and when style is intentional and when it is unconscious, also ignoring the question of how, when, where and why individual identity begins and ends or when group affiliation starts. What are the endogenous and exogenous factors that shape a subculture?:

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> It is hard to say which is more sociologically incredible: a theory which postulates cultural dummies who give homologous meanings to all artefacts surrounding them or a theory which suggests that individual meanings do not matter at all.
>
> (Clarke: 158)

The response throughout Resistance Through Rituals and (less so in) Subculture: The Meaning of Style was to essentialize working-class youth cultures. As a consequence, both studies theorized 'the popular' (subculture's Other) as nothing more than ideological, with mainstream culture presented as producing banalized and passive individuals. Subcultural practices could then be construed as active, innately (and authentically) oppositional and resistant. This model of cultural activity often ascribes too much power to the audience, which as Lawrence Grossberg (1997) suggests, it does in two ways:

> (by)reducing the context which it claims is determinate to little more than a sociological position and a cultural identity. And in the name of political optimism, it too easily ignores the macropolitical success of hegemonic struggles in favour of abstract micropolitical struggles (226)

The authenticity of the subculture is valorized by theorists such as Hebdige and Hall, often at the expense of considerations of the paradigm shifts impinging on the contexts in which cultural practices, including style, are realized. The most notable shift is the changing shape of relations of production within capitalism, moving away from post-industrial modes to post-Fordist and finally to disorganized modes signaling a marked transformation of social relations (Lash and Urry, 1995; Amin, 1995). The vertical disintegration of transnational corporate bodies through outsourcing and flexible specialization resulting in highly reflexive productive capabilities contingent upon the mechanics of the contexts in which they operate, creating a scenario in which the articulation of individual to larger

reference groups existing in the global arena is a highly charged site of negotiation, compromise and opposition (see also Appadurai, 1996). However, much like the work of the CCCS, this model of vertical disintegration does not differentiate between different types of cultural industries and their logics of practice (Hesmondhalgh, 1995; Miege, 1987). All cultural industries are conflated into functional arms of the dominant hegemony, part of the apparatus of the controlling culture. The divergent interests, motives and organizational capacities of cultural industries such as radio, television and other media are neglected and remain a significant gloss in their research. By highlighting the 'spectacular' consumption of subcultures, Hebdige and Hall et al. overemphasize the significance of reception among subcultural formations, bracketing out larger, and multivalent institutional and industrial forces such as production which operate on a scale that often obscures their subtle yet unavoidable influence.

Recent attempts to reposition cultural studies alongside the vector of postmodernism offers little in the way of improvement. David Muggleton (1997) has extended those previous studies of subcultural practice, repositioning them in a postmodern milieu. Writing on the 'post-subculturalist' he places particular emphasis on style and the encroachment of the visual into the everyday. In the aestheticized setting of the quotidian there are no commodities left for subcultures to appropriate, just signs, the logical conclusion of a move away from use-value (authentic-modern) to exchange-value (manufactured-modern) and finally to the apotheosis of sign value (postmodern). Subcultural styles become simulacra, copies with no originals (196). Accordingly, there is no longer space for originality, as referents have been displaced or 'disappeared' and the 'real' reduced to the play of surfaces, an infinite series of signifiers signifying more signifiers.

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Creative practices such as fashion, art and music become depthless manifestations of postmodern pastiche, where any potentially radical politics (identity, resistance or otherwise) is eviscerated (see also Jameson, 1984). If there is no originality there is no authenticity:

> Post-subculturalists no longer have any sense of subcultural authenticity where inception is rooted in particular sociotemporal contexts and tied to underlying structural relations. Indeed post-subculturalists will experience all the signs of the subculture of their choosing time and time again. Choosing is the operative word here, for post-subculturalists revel in the availability of subcultural choice...This is something that all post-subculturalists are aware of, that there are no rules, that there is no authenticity, no reason for ideological commitment, merely a stylistic game to be played. (198)

Muggleton's account of current cultural practices focuses on rootlessness and play, where any hope for the ruptures which characterized the CCCS model of subcultural practice is seen as impossible. Cut adrift in a free-floating, inauthentic and valueless ether, post-subculturalists are interpreted as mindlessly genuflecting in awe at the postmodern, millennial sublime:

> The trappings of spectacular style are their right of admission to a costume party, a masquerade, a hedonistic escape into a Blitz Culture fantasy characterized by political indifference. (200)

This formulation of postmodernism, framed by a cultural pessimism suggesting quietism, apathy, moral relativism, and the ability to occupy a multiplicity of subjectivities obscures the effect that difference (structural and otherwise) and differential access to power have on producing meaningful contexts (and contexts of meaning) for cultural activity. In Muggleton's estimation, the gravitation of individuals and groups to sites of emotional investment, whether they be imaginary or real, is evacuated of all meaning.

As a corrective to this, Grossberg (1984,1994) has more convincingly characterized the postmodern as a disarticulation of affect and ideology, where maps of meaning and mattering maps become disengaged and reengaged in new places. By affect is meant a structured plane of effects (investment) which offers the possibility of agency (of acting willfully), a term describing "observable differences in how practices matter to, or are taken up by, different configurations of popular discourses and practices - different alliances (which are not simply audiences)" (228). And although affect waxes and wanes within everyday contexts, authenticity has not disappeared; it remains crucial to processes of differentiation, but has been modified in ironic fashion:

> Confronting the postmodern vector of everyday life produces an increasing tendency to stop in places (e.g. taking on particular cultural identities or taking up forms of agency), while self-consciously questioning, limiting or perhaps even challenging the investment in them: authentic inauthenticity (indifference) is a popular logic which refuses to distinguish between the authentic and inauthentic, between boredom and terror - and a set of practices which celebrates the affectivity of investment while refusing to discriminate between different forms and sites of investment - as the only viable response to contemporary conditions. (233)

Contrary to Muggleton's assertion, 'rules' still exist within the spaces of everyday life, albeit in very provisional and ad hoc forms. The unequal exercise of power (and its uneven distribution) in any given context negates claims postmodern theory makes about a cultural leveling where boundaries disappear. Boundaries are continually shifting and being redrawn, the contexts of cultural activity habitually reconstituted by the power relations and lines of continuity and logics (traditions, mythologies, and the circulation of commodities) which course through them.

Cultural production creates spaces which are dynamic sites of activity and the continual reassertion and maintenance of boundaries enacted through processes of differentiation and distinction made by groups and individuals needs stronger consideration. Grossberg (1984, 1997) and Sarah Thornton (1996) have each challenged the CCCS's assessment of cultural practices unfolding in discrete, self-contained spaces, the former by problematizing the notion of the mainstream (in relation to the postmodern) and the latter by inserting the media into the very origins of subcultures. For Grossberg the mainstream, or more correctly the popular, exists as a social pastiche where fragments from the margins are incorporated and fragments of itself are excorporated back into the margins: "a structured distribution of practices, codes and effects" (220). The intersection of margin and mainstream is a space where practices of social and cultural differentiation unfold and overlap in which the mainstream can no longer be seen as unified or monolithically Other.

The researchers at the CCCS construed the media as an *ipso facto* response to subcultures, allowing them to see more 'uncontaminated homologies'. They saw the media as instrumental to the success of the dominant hegemony, an integral part of the apparatus (the control culture) which constructed 'folk devils' (punks as Other) and 'moral panics' (see also Cohen, 1972). Subcultures were consequently theorized as "transparent niches in an opaque world as if subcultural life spoke an unmediated truth" (Thornton: 119). Thornton suggests, in contrast to the CCCS formulation of media as a subculture's demonized Other, that the media (television, radio, magazines, zines, pamphlets, virtual media such as the Internet) are integral to the formation of subcultures, playing a significant role in both their origin as well as prolonging their lifecycle.

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The media exist as systems of communication critical to the circulation of ideas, images, sounds and ideologies that bind culture(s) together. Thornton reminds us that some media legitimate while others popularize, some preserve the esoteric while others are seen to sell out: "As subjects of discussion and sources of information, media are deliberate and accidental determinants of cultural hierarchy" (Thornton: 164). The media function in that latter instance as a central network for the movement and distribution through cultural and social hierarchies of what Thornton, borrowing from Bourdieu (1984), has called 'subcultural capital'. Various types of capital (cultural, economic, social, symbolic) are acquired and distributed according to a logic specific to the field in which they reside. Economic capital is distributed through the field of economics, educational capital through an educational field. etc. Fields (of cultural production, of economics, of education) are hierarchies structuring the social spaces where struggles over capital and various resources are played out. The overarching field, of which these narrower fields are subsets, is the field of power (Bourdieu, 1993; Kruse, 1997). Cultural capital, a form of knowledge acquired through education and upbringing, is dispersed throughout the field of cultural production, where individuals and groups struggle to acquire and reinvest it to maintain social status.

Bourdieu's taxonomy of capital effectively describes the hierarchies of value and social status that underlie the (conscious and unconscious, subjective and objective) construction of individual preferences, tastes, and how they might then be articulated to, and by, social formations:

> Taste, the propensity and capacity to appropriate (materially or symbolically) a given class of classified, classifying objects or practices, is the generative formula of life-style, a unitary set of distinctive preferences which express the same expressive intention in the specific logic of each of the symbolic sub-spaces, furniture, clothing, language or body hexis. (Bourdieu, 1984:173)

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As Bourdieu states, the field of production, for example, could not exist if it were not for always already preexisting tastes. It offers a universe of cultural goods, a range of stylistic possibilities from which individuals select the system of stylistic features constituting a lifestyle (230). In contrast, by not considering the origins of style as a preference, predisposition or motivation, the CCCS never fully explained how style might become a 'uniform', a lifestyle replete with 'attitude'. For Bourdieu and Thornton cultural capital can be embodied/objectified (i.e.: style), the end result being the naturalization of preferences into what might be called second nature, the ability to make the 'right' choices, or what Bourdieu calls the habitus:

> Habitus is both the generative principle of objectively classifiable judgements and the system of classification of these practices. It is the relationship between the two capacities which define the habitus, the capacity to differentiate and appreciate these practices and products (taste), that the represented social world, i.e., the space of life-styles, is constituted. (170)

Subcultural capital denotes a form of 'being in the know', a type of knowledge not acquired through formal education and as such it remains classless: "Subcultural capital is the linchpin of an alternative hierarchy in which the axes of age, gender, sexuality and race are all employed in order to keep the determinations of class, income and occupation at bay" (Thornton:105). Subcultural capital, then, is a subspecies form of cultural capital dependent upon notions of 'hipness': embodied, cultivated and naturalized forms of knowledge which can disguise the origins of their own becoming. Performing according to a logic specific to its field, subcultural capital functions to (ironically) distance itself, at least in the imaginations of its participants, from mainstream culture.

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Bourdieu (1993) states that the field of production is composed of two differing fields: the field of restricted production and the field of large-scale production. The former is germane to this discussion as it describes the 'negative existence' of this field in relation to the latter. Externally, the sub-field of restricted production is opposed to the bourgeois or dominant economic order ('the mainstream'). Internally, the sub-field of restricted production is structured by the opposition between what Bourdieu calls the 'consecrated avant-garde' and the 'avant-garde': an opposition between those who have the power to consecrate and those who are trying to acquire that power (i.e. newcomers). The activity within the field of restricted cultural production is more characteristically defined as production for producers. In this context, where market forces are integral to the formation of the field, notions of autonomy become paramount. Authenticity, usually expressed in the vernacular as 'selling out', is a term which becomes part of those rhetorical strategies which are used frequently to define and justify who or what might be in or out in an economy of 'cool'.

Bourdieu's notion of fields as 'spaces of possibles' emphasizes the contested and conflicted activities of individuals vying for positions and resources in several fields and given sites. In these differing contexts, his notion of accruing and investing various types of capital (social, cultural, intellectual etc., but not discounting the economic) is a valuable way to describe systems of exchange and distribution that are not reducible to a simple economism. The field of cultural production exists as a field of 'possible forces' which organizes and is organized by the agents operating within it:

> (and is) defined in the relationship between the structure of
> average chances of access to different positions (measured by
> the difficulty of attaining them and, more precisely, by the

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relationship between the number of positions and the number of competitors) and the dispositions of each agent, the subjective basis of the perception and appreciation of the objective chances.

(64)

Dispositions and positions combine to form a sense of social direction which orient individuals in a given field. This 'direction' cannot be understood in its entirety as linear. The work of CCCS, which has characteristically correlated a vertical model of class rather mechanically to culture to explain the cultural forms they produce, fails to consider the effects of power differentials which function to quantitatively and qualitatively determine access to a given field (Middleton, 1990; Bourdieu, 1993: 65). Bourdieu's model of fields, taste and habitus replaces a rigidly vertical description of cultural practices by theoretically enumerating the activities occurring within and between fields that are interrelated in more complex, mobile, non-linear and multi-dimensional ways than previously theorized.

In order to maintain its multivalent potency and currency (or cultural worth) subcultural capital must flow through channels of communication, which themselves operate with, and are subject to, varying degrees of restriction (Thornton: 161). In globalized fields of cultural production and consumption these channels form part of a global infrastructure composed of networks of exclusion and inclusion. Within these channels state/institutional power is exerted (through cultural policy, protectionism, etc.) and individuals which have strategically reinvested their capital, subcultural or otherwise, consolidate positions of power. These agents, or agencies, act as gatekeepers, cultural custodians and intermediaries who can oversee, evaluate, sanction, or consecrate (Bourdieu, 1984), and thereby legitimize, certain cultural forms and practices. In this capacity,

they actualize discourses, such as those attached to notions of authenticity, constructing an (ideological) opposition between mainstream and margin which remains integral to the distinctions that differentiate individuals and their social groups from others (which can often be in the same field).

Grossberg employs Bourdieu's notion of sensibility to describe the intersection of these discursive practices and human actors. Sensibilities "empower cultural practices to work in certain ways, and they empower individuals to enact them in certain places. Sensibilities define the dialectical production of active audiences, everyday practices and productive contexts" (227). These productive contexts are interrelated to other contexts, not only by discursive practices:

> Contexts are produced in the complex imbrication of discursive and nondiscursive practices, and so the sense in which contexts imply other contexts, so that each context implies a global network of contexts.   (Appadurai, 1996: 187)

Grossberg overemphasizes the localized context, while Appadurai, more appropriately, links interrelated and interdependent contexts to global processes. Appadurai (1996) speaks of mobility and mediation of both objects and ideas as having profound effects on the shape of contexts of production and consumption. New modes of communication and new means for distributing information assist the circulation of the various forms of capital, while simultaneously reconfiguring the contexts in which cultural production and consumption take place. Forms of knowledge such as cultural capital can also be subject to global forces, distributed according to the organizing principles of a given spatial configuration (Thrift, 1985). Because the political, social, economic and cultural transformations occurring on a global scale are necessarily fluid, chaotic,

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arbitrary and uneven, resulting from the influence of mobile and mobilizing forces, they offer another contrary to the CCCS's paradigm where social movement is restricted to vertical ascent or descent. The movement and distribution of people, ideas, money and technologies through this global cultural economy takes hold in both the imaginations of individuals as well in concrete contexts. At the same time, the flow of commodities through these networks is subject, much like capital, to local restrictions which limit access. Access to commodities determines the form and range of experiences that are possible in a given space. It is important to note then that "spatial patterns cannot be said to interact, only the social objects present within one or more such spaces interact" (Urry: 65).

To avoid fetishizing the spatial, it remains critical to distinguish a given space from the flow of goods and objects through that space. The intial entropy and subsequent organization that characterizes the distribution of goods, services, ideas, capital and people is contingent upon the structure of the spaces through which they flow. The spaces where they come to rest and develop can be sites in which different and competing value systems (and systems of evaluation) engender conflict over access and distribution of these resources, a struggle structured by an already existing arrangement of indigenous social hierarchies. The intersection of social spaces and social relations shifts emphasis to the greater global contexts and the smaller local circumstances in which social and cultural activities unfold. Urry suggests that "there is no simple space, only different kinds of spaces, spatial relations or spatialisations", where space is not neutral (Urry:66). Urry recalls Lefebvre's theoretical structure for the analysis of the production of space which is composed of three elements: spatial practices, representations of space and spaces of representation (Urry: 25). Spatial practices include both individual daily routine as well as the

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concretization of zones and regions, through urban planning, etc. Phil
Cohen's work on East End London neighbourhoods touches on those
elements of spatial practice such as property and (economic) capital which
serve to demarcate difference in physical locales. Representations of
space include the forms of knowledge and practices which organize and
represent space in particular forms. Spaces of representation include the
imaginative construction of collectively experienced sites: "These include
symbolic differentiations and collective fantasies around space, the
resistances to the dominant practices and resulting forms of individual and
collective transgression" (Urry: 25). It is this third element which has the
most rhetorical force. As Appadurai (1996) has suggested with regard to
the processes of globalization, there has been a notable return to the
imagination persisting as a repository of nostalgia, engendering and
preserving collective experiences constituted through mythology, and
guaranteeing the promise of individual agency. The imagination "has
become an organized field of social practices, a form of work (in the sense
of both labour and culturally organized practice), and a form of
negotiation between sites of agency (individuals) and globally defined fields
of possibility" (Appadurai: 187).

As both Urry and Appadurai understand them, all three of Lefebvre's
spatial components highlight the multiple layers that compose social
spaces, themselves shaped by multiple vectors (economic, political), which
can be enacted and engaged on a micro-level of individual imaginings and
articulated to the macro-level of large scale global forces. Each vector
simultaneously extends and limits the horizon of the imagination, the flow of
ideas, capital and commodities. Even Cohen's neighbourhoods need
reconsideration in the context of global scale forces:

The capability of neighbourhoods to produce contexts (within which their very localizing activities acquire meaning and historical potential) and to produce local subjects is profoundly affected by the locality-producing capabilities of larger-scale formations (nation-states, kingdoms, missionary empires, and trading cartels) to determine the general shape of all the neighbourhoods within the reach of their powers. (187)

'The neighbourhood' remains a powerful metaphor for the organization and variety of lived spaces in contemporary cultures, illustrating connections between geographical area, physical structures and social organization. Neighbourhoods exist as productive contexts for subjectivities, where meaningful activity is initiated, enacted, performed and reproduced. This productive activity, however, often extends beyond the narrow confines of the neighbourhood and its kinship systems, making connections and finding affinities with neighbouring as well as distant contexts. A notion of neighbourhood which depends upon a territorial imaginary (such as Cohen's) needs to reconsider, for example, the emergence of virtual neighbourhoods, electronically produced and connected spaces. New media such as the Internet build unique social links, creating conduits for the transmission of ideas, money and information, which in many ways also transform the lived spaces of neighbourhoods in which the participants live.

The emergence of computer mediated communications (CMC) systems and their effect on the intersection of social and spatial relations as well as notions of community is worthy of some consideration here. Every new development in technology has promised new forms of community and connectivity, promising to form spaces which will allow the free flowering of proper democratic exchanges and pluralistic togetherness, recapturing some notion of gathering and interactivity which, for whatever reasons, have since been lost. Surrounded by the rhetoric of prophecy,

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"assumptions about technological change tell us what we believe the technology is supposed to do, which in turn reveals much about what we believe *we* are supposed to do" (Jones, 1995: 27).

The ascent of CMCs has also emphasized the distinctions drawn between what James Carey has called the view of communication either as 'transportation' or as 'ritual' (Carey, 1989). A view of communication as transportation tends to be dedicated to explaining the domination of time and space through the transmission of signals (in the form of information, for instance). This type of communication is tied to notions of control and power, a mastery of time and space through new, efficient and accelerated forms of dissemination. On a broader scale, it is still framed by discourses of frontierism, colonialism, mercantilism, expansionism and the desire for leaving behind older communities and creating new ones (Carey: 16).

The ritual view of communication, in contrast, is still very much an overlooked way of conceptualizing social interaction and movement. It is, as Carey states, "directed not toward the extension of messages in space but toward the maintenance of society in time; not the act of imparting information but the representation of shared beliefs" (Carey, 18). Carey and Steve Jones (1995), the latter employing these terms in discussing cyberspace and its relation to community, both advocate this view of communication. In its evocation of a prelapsarian cultural moment it retains a connection between community, commonness, and communion that positions it as the desirable and proper directive behind communicative action (Carey: 18). That desired action itself assumes a dramaturgical function as information becomes part of a socially sanctioned staging, the portrayal of "an arena of dramatic forces and action" allowing for sites of physical and imaginative enactments and performances (21). In its ritual mode communication becomes a powerful

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tool that organizes individual desires and dreams of belonging by representing a certain range of experiences, thereby offering the possibility for deep, affective investment among a community of like-minded others.

However much the pursuit of this ritualistic notion of communication may appear as ideal, it is a particularly problematic and highly contested one. While some of the issues surrounding CMCs and subcultural value will be taken up in more detail in chapter three, a caveat should be offered. As Jones suggests, most discussion surrounding the emergence of new communities founded through computer-mediated interactions fails to consider the "concomitant conceptualization of space and the social, the inquiry into connections between social relations, spatial practice, values, and beliefs" (Jones: 23). In this sense, and without a greater examination of issues surrounding access, motivations, and levels of participation, the recent analyses of virtuality and digitally connected individuals and groups share common absences and elisions with certain aspects of subcultural analyses.

Both old and new communications technologies, which can be understood as types of networks, aid the movement and dispersal of individuals by connecting and organizing them in various contexts as audiences, markets and publics. Given both the ritualistic and transportation view of communications and their effect on the relations between time and space, any attempt to supply a cartography of consumption requires a provisional model of taste cultures which cannot be understood as localized in any site-specific sense. Analyses of the flow of capital, information and people connected and mediated through communicative apparatuses that span the globe offer suggestive entry points into an account of the similarities that exist between dispersed consumers and their respective shared cultures. No longer hermetically sealed or self-

contained, the spaces of culture should, instead, be understood as organized through a series of interconnections. Doreen Massey (1998) has suggested that cultures (and she speaks here of youth cultures in particular) could be understood as a "particular articulation of contacts and influences drawn from a variety of places scattered, according to power relations, fashion and habit, across many different parts of the globe" (Massey in Skelton and Valentine eds.: 124). Social relations, in this capacity, are often constellations of temporary and *ad hoc* coherence embedded in a social space which is the product of relations and interconnections from the very local to the regional and transregional (ibid.: 125). The local structures (social and spatial) that determine the duration of these constellations as well those that inflect the reception and transmission of goods, images and people from distant contexts are interconnected through a series of networks. These networks function in the same capacity as networks of exclusion and inclusion, serving as channels for the transmission of people, ideas, objects and images that link one context and taste culture to another.

In their levels of sociality, participation and symbolic interaction these networks can be thought of in terms of ritual modes of communication, forging affective alliances or networks of empowerment (Grossberg, 1984), intercultural affinities (Slobin, 1993), pathways (Finnegan, 1989) or scapes (Appadurai, 1996). Print media, broadcast media and the Internet serve as mediated links between dispersed individuals and groups that are neither geographically specific nor dependent upon face-to-face contact, existing instead as 'imagined communities'. Benedict Anderson (1983) in his discussion of the rise of print capitalism and its relation to nation building suggests three ways in which a community is imagined. First, though many of the members will never meet face-to-face with others, "in the minds of

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each lives the image of their communion" (6). Second, this community is limited, because it has "finite, if elastic boundaries, beyond which lie other (communities)" (7). Finally, it is imagined because "regardless of the inequality...that may prevail in each, the (community) is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship"(ibid.). Mass-mediation (and Anderson is writing specifically about print capitalism), particularly electronic media and CMCs, enable these imagined communities to transcend some of the limits of local, regional or national space, activating what Appadurai (1996) has called a 'community of sentiment':

> (sentiment's) greatest force is in their ability to ignite intimacy into political state and turn locality into a staging ground for identity, have become spread over vast and irregular spaces as groups move yet stay linked to one another through sophisticated media capabilities. (41)

These mediations work most heavily on the level of the imagination in which local subjectivity exists as a "palimpsest of highly local and highly translocal considerations", where the imagination of individual agents is articulated to a larger social imaginary (198).

Whether it be in contexts, neighbourhoods or communities (concrete, imagined, or virtual), increasingly the quotidian rhythms of life are refracted through the localized effects of these translocal forces. On the level of the everyday, greater consideration must be given to how individuals operate within demarcated spaces situated in a global cultural economy. Grossberg's (1984, 1997) own work is useful for mapping out the lines that distribute, place and connect cultural practice. The everyday here is meant to convey a sense of a structured mobility, constructing a space that includes "specific forms and trajectories of movement (change) and stability (agency)" (1997: 229). Although the field and habitus (which share an affinity to 'structured mobility') are spaces shaped by these

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trajectories, recast in a global framework, Bourdieu's terms cannot remain uncontaminated by the changing shape of social spaces in this context. As Appadurai suggests, the habitus, no longer simply a realm of reproducible practices and dispositions, has instead become "more an arena for conscious choice, justification, and representation" (Appadurai: 44). As a schema for the appreciation and perception of cultural goods, the habitus must be broad enough to incorporate the larger scale social universe in which tastes and fields are subject and object of the glacial drift of global forces.

CONCLUSION

I have outlined here a number of limitations of subcultural theory, particularly those of the long-standing British variant. I have also offered a number of terms that fall outside of the rhetoric of rupture which otherwise highlight the tensions between the continuities and discontinuities, the formal and informal structures, that link spatialized cultural practices, production and consumption. I have also made reference to postmodern theories that focus solely on a flattened cultural terrain permeated by undifferentiated signs, without consideration of either material practices, or the concrete and imaginative organization of a given space. Both theoretical paradigms neglect the contextual variability which determines how, where and why social and spatial relations intersect in the places they do. No longer understood as being restricted to physically bounded sites, existing cultural and social formations exemplify the insinuation of cultural activity into global flows. The dispersal of consumer products, ideas and cultural idioms has to be framed in terms which can convey the local specificities of a given site as well as the globally-defined determinations which inflect their seemingly asymmetrical appropriation and incorporation. This framework

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would allow consideration of the vicissitudes of a global cultural economy and how they impinge on imaginative activity and material practice, and what shape they give to structures of feeling that adhere in physical and imagined locales. It must move away from rigid, vertical and static models, like those offered by the CCCS, and enable a model which considers the articulation of individual to proximal group, illustrate how that latter group is articulated to distant groups and finally how the social agglomerations of different shapes and sizes enter into dialogue with their disparate counterparts. In many ways it must move beyond a valorization of the local as site of authentic relations and heterogeneous cultural production and the demonization of the global as abstract homogenizing juggernaut. In accounting for the dispersed and diffuse nature of contexts of production and consumption, it would facilitate an examination of the distributive and connective functions of networks, alliances, circuits and conduits through which people, commodities, the myriad forms of capital, ideas and technology flow.

An examination of the mechanics of solidarity can highlight the diverse forces circumscribing each one of these links, illustrating how these processes of exclusion and inclusion function to arrange social and cultural practices in complex, interrelated, arbitrary and opaque configurations. Cultural practices, whether dominant or subordinate, rarely unfold in hermetically sealed or geographically discrete contexts. The parameters which define cultural practices, industries and institutions have been blurred, stretched, exploded, erased and redrawn through the complex and arbitrary effects wrought by the machinations of a globalized cultural apparatus. It is among the shifting origins and destinations of cultural production, distribution and consumption that an analytic model more flexible than that offered by subcultural theory must be found to describe

the elasticity and fluidity which confounds any notion of self-contained cultural practices. The following chapters propose to amend subcultural theory with a cartography of tastes and desires, providing instances of cultural practice which necessitate a remapped theory in order to, however provisionally, describe the various navigations through a terrain that is often simultaneously here, there, and everywhere.

CHAPTER 2

MAKING SENSE OF INDIE ROCK IN MONTRÉAL

It was suggested in the previous chapter that cultural production and consumption determine and are determined by the shape of the contexts in which they occur. This dialectical relationship creates spaces that are often fraught with visible and invisible tensions, irresolvable contradictions and competing discourses. Consequently (and somewhat ironically) the fragility and ephemerality of the cultural practices which unfold in these spaces produce temporary social clusters and aesthetic moments which converge to create constellations of great cultural intensity and occupy a privileged place in the social imaginary. The lingering effects of these moments can come to take on great significance in the local imagination, becoming a part of regional mythology informing present and future cultural practice. As such, they are highly-charged determinants in how 'the local' comes to be discursively constructed through a variety of media, individuals and institutions, informing the practice of mythopoesis which strengthens their cultural significance.

Alongside myth-making, as David Chaney (1997) suggests, there are a number of ways local culture can be produced, all of which depend on the degree of organization, direction of motivation to sustain local activities and arrangements of self-conscious positioning fostered in relation to the forms of national or global cultural industries (141). These aspects of the production of 'the local' are of central concern to the following discussion as it relates to Montréal music scenes, with an emphasis placed on the means and mediums through which musical scenes and cultural activities are constituted and maintained. 'Scene' here denotes an informal and temporary arrangement of industries, institutions, audiences and

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infrastructures that are elemental to how a scene is constructed over time and in a given space. Will Straw (1991) has defined a musical scene as a "cultural space in which a range of musical practices coexist, interacting with one another within a variety of processes of differentiation, and according to widely varying trajectories of change and cross-fertilization" (373). These cultural spaces, criss-crossed by a number of competing trajectories, should not confine the notion of scene and locality to geographically grounded sites. While scene and locality necessarily connote the site-specific, as physical locales in which particular cultural and material practices are lived and experienced, I also want to suggest that in some instances the symbolic spaces where musical culture is experienced most intensely are often imagined to be elsewhere. In this way the tension between a view of the local scene as fixed and immobile versus the flow and dynamism of the networks connecting them can be better explored.

While earlier models of subcultural theory have tended to frame subcultural practices using the image of the city as container, contemporary cultural practices and activities should be understood as more nuanced, geographically dispersed and less aligned with discrete territories (Ruddick, 1996; see also the previous chapter). The lines of flight that characterize independent rock formations, for instance, intersect in real and imagined spaces to inform cultural practices, often actualizing a directionality which is implied to be anywhere but 'here', shaping, in turn, the 'utopian' discourses of musical practice. As a consequence, an essential tension determining the scope and relative success of many scenes resides between the economic, political and social vectors impinging on local circumstance (the result often being a renewed sense of, and inward return to, regionalism and tradition) and those local restrictions which can only be ameliorated by extending market and imaginative horizons beyond the

narrowly site-specific (a movement outwards, finding and building alliances that transcend local 'parochial' restrictions). I have chosen these tensions to frame an analysis of the culture of Montréal anglophone independent rock, with an emphasis on the operations of the independent label Derivative Records. The label and the loose assembly of individuals who run it can be placed within an anglo-bohemian tradition in Montréal, where urban culture is realized in spaces negotiated through alliances forged between various musical and non-musical media and institutions (entertainment weeklies, zines, commercial, community and public radio, comics, open mike poetry workshops, etc.).

At the same time, the label should be seen as working through the weaknesses undermining any adherence to a notion of cohesive place-as-scene in which to produce music successfully in Montréal. While Derivative Records runs its operation in the cultural spaces created by the relative stability and durability of an urban bohemian tradition, a form of continuity, it is also organized through the ephemeral cultural moments produced within discontinuous, eroded social and cultural spaces in Montréal. These gaps and fissures are negotiated in a variety of ways to form ad hoc alliances and associations which eventually create and necessitate an opportunity for change and innovation. Given the uneven and contradictory effects of these tensions, the following discussion will begin to trouble the notion of rupture, spectacularization and the myths of opposition generated by the discourses circulating through indie rock culture, examining a number of the strategies generated by the intersection of social and spatial arrangements that affect musical and cultural production in Montréal.

Currently there is little and infrequent discussion of a Montréal independent scene in major or minor media (including radio and print)

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outside of the city. If we understand a scene, at one level, to be constructed, sustained, exported by institutions such as radio and print media, by extension then, there is no identifiable Montréal 'sound' in the same way one might think of a Manchester scene, or Dunedin sound (Redhead, 1998 ; Macleay, 1994). This absence is in contrast with the general cultural apparatuses framing indie rock, which we can understand as a matrix of sites, routines, networks, practices, events and participants. This complex of activities and agencies produces discursive frameworks which are notable for their emphasis on 'place-ness', as constructed through the rhetoric and discourses which combine to produce regional identities (Street: 255). Where bands come from and where they produce their music are distinguishing features of how they are represented by various media and fans. Indie bands and their music are imagined by fans and artists alike to be deeply connected with specific places, a sign of their unwavering allegiance to an ideology of small-scale production, a deep embeddedness in their region's underground world, and their role as bearers of its subterranean values.

In these marginal spaces and liminal zones fans, bands, labels and various media (radio, rock writers) construct, according to Street, a particular rhetoric through discourses of locality. These discourses revolve around a number of related notions of locality: as industrial base, social experience, aesthetic perspective, political experience, community and scene (256). While each of these discourses, with varying degrees of significance, are applicable to the Montréal indie scene, social experience, industrial base, community and scene are perhaps the most salient. It should be noted that a general discussion of francophone music industries and institutions, and their relation to anglophone musical cultures is beyond the scope of this chapter. The rise of Quebec's francophone independent labels has been

discussed in detail elsewhere, but its relevance here will used for context and reference points (for more see Grenier, 1993a, 1993b; for more on musical communities and scenes in francophone Quebec see Grenier and Morrison, 1995). Also for the sake of brevity the discourses that develop in relation to the local as political experience inform the discussion generally and will be understood through the broader context of socioeconomic and industrial forces which shape local cultural production.

Discourses surrounding Montréal micro-musical practices and the perennial problem of 'lack' that are so much a part of the rhetoric surrounding Montréal's indie scene are determined by a number of conflicting social, institutional and material practices that affect indigenous music scenes and their construction of localness. Each of these practices, as they are realized in the cultural space of Montréal, are in many ways suggestively re-placing the local. This re-placement, or what Anthony Giddens (1990) calls reembedding, suggests that current social and cultural practice can be located in "the complex relations between local involvements (circumstances of co-presence) and interaction across distance (the connections of presence and absence)" (64). Situating Derivative Records within Montréal's musical milieu and analyzing it in relation to the larger transregional scope of independent rock illustrates how the strategic realignment of the spatial and social relations framing cultural practices can temporarily suspend the restrictions of Montréal musical culture.

The anglophone sociomusical experience in Montréal, manifest in a series of cultural activities not the least of which is consumption, is a useful entry point into determining the contours of the scene, community and the notion of the local. Straw (1991) suggests that the character of musical audiences is "determined by the interlocking operation of the various

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institutions and sites within which musics are disseminated: the schoolyard, the urban dance club, the radio format", to which can be added the local spaces such as bars, used record stores, cafes and comic shops that function as local nodes in the social circuits of Montréal indie rock (384). These formal and informal, institutional and non-institutional meeting places are also central nodes in the informal networks and circuits that define an anglophone bohemian culture. Unlike scenes however, bohemian culture often takes the form of a stable artistic community, with a very specific relationship to its own heritage and traditions (Bourdieu, 1996). Within Quebecois, specifically francophone, musical cultures this sense of community has played an important role in building chansonnier traditions which have a localized sense of purpose and implied (and often politicized) direction (Grenier and Morrison, 1995). In anglophone independent musical culture this sense of community has not been as reliant upon local institutions, but rather has been reinforced through connections with either local artists such as the bohemians, or with distant yet aesthetically aligned music scenes.

A bohemian community, depending as it does upon a disenchanted and dissenting middle-class huddling in informal sites of communal gathering (i.e. a cafe), creates a shadow cultural economy through the establishment and cultivation of an underground ideology and aesthetic. "Fragile urban habitats of busy streets" says Russell Jacoby, "cheap eateries, reasonable rents, and decent environs foster bohemias" (Jacoby, 1987: 28). Montréal as a port city, for many decades the gateway into Canada and North America, has historically embraced the transient, the mobile, the ephemeral, the marginal in its cultural and social makeup (see Prévost, 1993;

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Weintraub, 1994).[1] With its notoriously cheap rents, the open-minded Euro-civility (or what novelist/essayist Morley Callaghan has called its "urban cynicism"), the combination of anglophone, francophone and allophone cultures mingling in a highly charged political atmosphere (framed mainly by sovereignty and language debates), all occurring among a vast number of informal meeting places, Montréal provides an ideal setting for a bohemian world to emerge.

Montréal musical culture has depended on this bohemian sensibility to foster localized experiences, a process in which indigenous idiosyncrasies become embedded in narratives of place-as-history and create the kinds of myths around which communities coalesce. In its current state, Montréal offers a diverse number of creative spaces which take shape through the art galleries and derelict lofts serving as *ad hoc* and temporary live venues and rehearsal spaces, through the active comics culture and spoken word gatherings which overlap with independent music culture, and through the output of those individuals who play integral roles in radio, and write/edit for alternative entertainment weeklies such as *The Mirror*, *The Hour* and *Vice Magazine*. As part of an artistic lineage which includes salons in nineteenth century Paris and the happenings in 1960's New York (see Bourdieu, 1992; Gruen, 1966, respectively), Montréal musical life is solidly entrenched in a durable bohemian tradition and is experienced in the spaces that have historically been sites for cultural practice and activities.

These bohemian spaces, however, are no longer grounded in geographically specific locales. The contours of the urban landscape have

[1] In 1996 Montréal had the highest rate of unemployment of 23 North American cities at 11.9% (Bureau of Labour Statistics, Statistics Canada, 1997). Ironically, among North American cities, according to a Price-Waterhouse survey on high-tech employment, Montréal had the highest percentage of high-tech workers per capita. See, "High-tech boom reveals Montréal's tale of 2 economies" *Toronto Star*, October 20, 1997: A1. See also, "Montréal Holds First Place for Poverty" *The Calgary Herald*, June 26, 1996, p.A9.; "Montréal's Economy Stagnating in Poverty, Study Says: The

changed through the increased mobilization, mobility and mediation of ideas, finance, ethnicities and technologies (Appadurai, 1996). The complex conjunctures and disjunctures of these 'scapes' (ibid.: 33) and the texts, commodities and people moving within them have produced a number of effects (material, ideological, spatial, temporal) that are distributed unevenly through global and local contexts. Amidst the ebb and flow of goods, ideologies and people, urbanites can often feel they share nothing in common with their next-door neighbour, yet might find a lasting relationship and deep affiliation with others thousands of kilometres away. Telecommunications media and other electronic media have intensified and extended these 'imagined communities' previously produced through print media (Anderson, 1990).

The result of these shifts as wrought on the geographically disparate spaces of bohemia are no different. Bohemian cultures are the product of a (disenchanted) middle-class sensibility and the dislocation of bohemian culture is a result of the members of a cosmopolitan and highly mobile middle-class traveling between urban centres in search of locales which will provide authentic experiences (see Graña and Graña eds., 1990). Bohemia, as Stephen Duncombe (1997) suggests, has been profoundly reconfigured through an extremely mobile culture, creating a bohemian diaspora:

> If the characteristic of place no longer holds, the other characteristics - those of bohemia ideas, practice and creativity - live on through non spatial networks. Webs of communication can offer the community, the support and the feeling of connection that are so important for dissent and creativity. (55)

For the culture of indie rock a central medium in which these dispersed spaces are imaginatively connected to allow uncorrupted, authentic

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communication between (musical) subcultures, according to Duncombe, is through the photocopied and stapled pages of the fanzine. Fan sentiment and participation in a scene are mediated by these micro-media, ephemeral texts composed of "non-commercial, nonprofessional, small-circulation magazines which their creators produce, publish, and distribute by themselves" (Duncombe: 6; see also Thornton, 1996).

Zines dedicated to music are a central medium for shaping how fans, musicians and record labels are represented to one another, both within a local scene as well as to distant musical subcultures. Leslie Gay, Jr. (1995) says of zine culture and its relation to indie rock culture:

> The personal contact zines seem to create between their writers and readers challenges conventional notions that equate locality or community with geography. Individuals pursuing their passions by publishing and reading zines have created geographically sprawling communities of people networked together by common interest. (126)

Zines are useful means of communication "free(ing) individuals from face-to-face interaction" (Duncombe: 38). As such they are an integral part of the network mediating, mobilizing and disseminating ideas, ideologies, aesthetics, criticisms and praise for various musics and scenes, while simultaneously troubling the notion of a regionally specific sense of place.

The anglophone indie rock audiences that exist in Montréal are bound together partially and tenuously by a sporadic indigenous zine culture. Local zines are generally divided between those that concern themselves with transnational, mainly North American scenes (such as the bilingual *Amazine*), and those which are locally focused (the predominantly anglophone semi-annual *Fish Piss*, which is devoted to remembering and reconstructing a regional scene, drawing connections from a vibrant Montréal music culture in the late seventies and early eighties to its current

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lamentable state). The latter half of *Fish Piss #2* , for instance, is dedicated to a history of Montréal zines published during the late seventies and early eighties. It also includes an interview with Paul Gott of punk band The Ripcordz and co-publisher of early Montréal music guide *RearGarde*. Throughout the interview he foregrounds discourses of locality, scene and community, the authenticities of which are best realized in micro-mediated space of zines (in opposition to larger magazines such as *The Mirror* or Montréal community radio stations such as CKUT 90.3 FM):

> You've got to give (the bands) coverage. I don't know any bands that say "Yeah, we wouldn't be where we are today without the *Mirror*, or without CKUT." There hasn't been the support for local bands...Local magazines and tabloids are supposed to be that bridge, between fanzines and mainstream media, but in Montréal, you get better coverage of the local scene through the mainstream media, you get more coverage out of CHOM, Musique Plus and the *Gazette* than you would out of the Mirror and CKUT. Why even bother talking to them? (*Fish Piss*, #2, 37)

Gott points to the failure of more upscale, professional magazines to foster interest in local music scenes by suggesting that even large scale commercial media more effectively cater to the local scene. Zines and community radio are rhetorically positioned by Gott as deeply invested in the 'local' and are important loci of resistance to American and international cultural 'imperialism'. For Gott, media that neglect the creation of a discursive space for local musical culture are failing to create allegiances to regionalism and have therefore failed to build a sense of imagined community. In contrast, the culture of zines and community radio, if properly representing local musical experience, is considered an authentic antidote to the glossy cosmopolitan surface scope of the ad-saturated *Mirror* or *Hour*. The local here is positioned as an authentic site in which music can be made unaffected by the machinery of the global

cultural economy and as such is privileged as an unmediated expression and articulation of regional desires and musical aspirations.

As a medium creating spaces where imagined communities can represent and reflect upon themselves, zines share many of the same ideological and imaginative functions as community or college radio. Both radio and zines exemplify the ritual mode of communication as Carey (1992) defines it, where notions such as 'sharing', 'participation' and 'fellowship' are the rhetorical binding agents (18). Radio, as Jody Berland (1993) states, "has unique capacities to map our symbolic and social environment" (116). Community radio is a site where musicians, activists, programmers, poets, and cultural critics can interact, network and actively reinforce a bohemian sensibility. It is here that the local is more coherently realized (literally circumscribed by broadcast radius), and where regional scenes are mediated through an institutional site dedicated to promoting difference and alternatives to mainstream and dominant culture. However, community radio is also a site of contrasting and contested discourses of locality and community-building in which issues of gender, ethnicity, politics, sexuality are often at odds. While one collectivity sees community radio effectively articulating their cultural and political aspirations, another views it as ignoring or slighting theirs. The effectiveness of community radio in developing and supporting a culture of anglophone independent rock, reinforcing the discourses of regionalism and localism as Gott suggests, remains a disputed view in Montréal's musical imaginary. As a consequence, any coherent shape (discursive or otherwise) given to the local indie scene must rely for its realization on other symbolic and material practices.

The discourses conceived around zine culture and community radio indicate that the production of locality depends on the circuits that link

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audiences, industries, musicians and infrastructures together through imaginative and concrete practices and channels. Broadly speaking, the production, distribution, and consumption of music can be situated in a system of pathways, to borrow Ruth Finnegan's term (Finnegan, 1989: 297-326). Pathways can be both real and/or symbolic: the former are the streets, subways, routes to and from venues, studios and meeting places; the latter include the manner in which certain individuals become musicians (career trajectories), or the role the broadcast, recorded and print media play in disseminating musical knowledges. Pathways, generally, are the social, geographical, historical, cultural, ideological means and methods deployed to negotiate a position or privileged vantage point in which to be heard from within (and from without) a particular musical culture, existing as communicative channels that link routes to routines. Pathways provide opportunities for a number of physical and imaginative encounters which reinforce one another and ultimately guarantee the survival of a musical culture across the various yet disparate institutional sites through which it is produced. They are as, Chaney suggests, a series of connections, a multiplicity of affiliations and alliances which constitute local frameworks (Chaney: 141).

The movement through real pathways in Montréal is frustrated at various points by, for instance, the dominance of pay-to-play venues, narrowing the availability of live spaces through which music can be heard.[2] In response, numerous pathways have been replotted through the available loft spaces for rehearsing and the small galleries and clubs that put on live shows. This has meant an overwhelming dependence on local audiences (the phenomenological experience of the local as being-with-others in moments of co-presence), the result being little success promised outside

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[2] See Mark Lepage "Do rock bands pay to play?" Montréal Gazette, June 10, 1995, D1-3.

of Montréal. The anomie generated by aspirations limited by lack of industrial and institutional means of achieving them has become an entrenched part of music-making in Montréal, producing a rhetoric of heroic anti-heroism. In both the past and present, the response among musicians has been to visualize other musical horizons, imagining cosmopolitan cities whose real and symbolic pathways and aural sensibilities might be more receptive (i.e.: Toronto, or the US).

These imaginative gestures outwards, projections of desire and longing beyond the local, reaffirm that the mobility through real pathways must be reinforced by the successful negotiation of symbolic pathways. In these imagined spaces a musical culture member's affective relationship to other members in other scenes is made manifest, an empathy symbolically articulated to a broader imagined community with a shared history that is crucial to a scene's self-definition and maintenance. It is in these outward trajectories that narratives of becoming and belonging mingle to heighten the tension between the potentialities imagined to reside in both local and non-local histories. Mark Fenster (1995) has said of the relation of the local to the construction of musical history that "the historical encrustation of musical practice - the marks of the past in official, social and personal memory, as well as the recordings: and spaces of the past - condition that which is possible for...local musicians and listeners"(86). A local canon of punk, of which independent rock is an aesthetic heir, remains partial in Montréal. Only during the mid-to-late eighties did anthologies of regional music make their appearance, mainly in the form of retrospectives (*Primitive Air Raid* from 1984 being the most well-known). In these instances, musical tradition is built by retrospectively grafting a mythology onto what scant recordings exist, re-energizing their significance retroactively.

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A consideration of the importance of recorded histories follows from McCracken (1988) who suggests that the importance of cultural commodities such as the 7-inch single, cassette and LP are their function as forms of "ballast", anchors or weights which slow the infinite flow of goods through a culture:

> As an instrument of continuity, goods serve two capacities. One of these is the 'ballast' that they create when they serve as a concrete public record of the existing categories and principles that make up culture. The other way is in which goods create an 'object-code' that absorbs change and helps to configure it according to the existing terms sanctioned by a culture. (131)

Both the public record and object-code aspects of musical-commodity culture in Montréal are unevenly represented. Books dedicated to documenting punk discographies such as Smash the State (1993) list only two singles coming from Montréal between 1979-1982, significant years of musical output for other Canadian cities. As a result, Montréal musical histories dating from the emergence of punk/new wave have remained overwhelmingly oral in nature, with few common reference points and little possibility for a stable musical canon to develop[3]

Within these fragmented histories, cultural goods lose their capacity to perform what McCracken has called their secondary function as instruments of change. He suggests that in more amenable contexts they otherwise function as an opportunity "to fashion a new cultural concept through the selective use, novel combination, and premeditated innovation

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[3]In the summer of 1996 I was asked by a filmmaker to gather whatever records I could from the Montréal punk scene circa 1978-1982. I only found one recording and that was the American Devices who had only recorded material in 1986, originally written in the late Seventies. For the most part I had to rely on oral histories given by record shop owners and radio employees. Rumours of a cassette underground proved groundless. There is no doubt that for a brief moment there was a vitality to the burgeoning punk scene, but as to its recorded history it does not exist. Chris Yurkiw, a music writer from Montréal weekly The Mirror, confirmed this with a transcription of his interviews with figures from Montréal's punk era: "An Oral History of Punk" [ted@babylon.Montréal.qc.ca] personal email to author, October 11, 1996.

of existing cultural meanings" (135). From this, goods such as recordings provide a "creative medium in which invention can take place"(ibid.). The absence of recorded histories undermines attempts within Montréal to define either a centralizing mythos or institute a narrative of development that enhances the musical culture concretely and symbolically. This makes it unlike many other urban centres where the centrality of documented output from a singular cultural moment significantly informs and strengthens present and future pathways mapped across a scene. In New York, for instance, its No Wave records and ROIR cassettes established and extended a well known avant-garde trajectory, lending that scene a mythological aura. In Toronto post-punk/new wave recordings and ur-texts such as *The Last Pogo* had a lasting effect on the bohemian culture of Queen Street, in which it became impossible to imagine one without the other. In places like these, the intertwining aesthetic and historical pathways materialized through recordings create an aura of purposefulness and direction where bands and individuals can imagine their role and contribution to a continuing musical tradition.

The successful selection, organization and display of the object-codes within institutions such as radio provide central sites around which a community of listeners can be temporarily organized. The musical aspects of bohemian culture on Toronto's Queen Street in the late seventies and early eighties saw its presence in the urban imaginary reinforced by airings on commercial radio through the then ascendant alternative rock station CFNY (102.1 FM)[4]. Alongside the thinness of recorded histories, a regionally based "modern rock" radio station in Montréal, which it lacks, has often been singled out as another element that could otherwise

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[4] This according to former announcer at CFNY, Lee Carter (Personal interview with author, June 18, 1995).

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strengthen an audience base for Montréal band product. While a new modern rock station broadcasting since August 1996 from Burlington, Vermont (WTBZ "The Buzz") plays a higher percentage of Canadian music than other American stations, they are not held to content quotas and do this not out of a sense of altruism but through a recognition of Montréal as their nearest and biggest urban market.[5] These sorts of institutional and industrial alliances and their role in the creation and articulation of the narratives, texts and histories appropriate to myth-building are either absent or partial in Montréal, compromising how territoriality of place can be effectively inscribed and lived.

The confusing and conflicting concatenation of audiences, musicians, institutions negatively affects Montréal's underlying industrial infrastructure. While Montréal has become a centre for the successful production of francophone musics, a process supported by francophone independent labels and their alliances with other cultural industries such as television, video and stage production (a process of consolidation often perpetrated at the expense of other regions of Quebec), it remains a fragile site for independent anglophone musical production and consumption (Grenier, 1993). While the industry has created an ample number of studio spaces in which to record and rehearse, the actual number of anglophone musicians taking advantage of them has diminished. A highly transient anglophone audience, composed mainly of university students studying at one of Montréal's two English-speaking universities, can hardly be counted on for continued support (either as cultural producers or consumers) once their degree is completed. According to Statistics Canada, university graduates are among the most mobile Canadians. Between 1991-1996 Quebec had

[5] See "Brash New Waves: Upstart American radio station WBTZ aims to shake up Montréal" *Montréal Gazette*, September 28, 1996, p. E1; see also, "Here comes the Buzz: One-Woman U.S. Station beams alterna-rock our way" *Montréal Gazette*, August 15, 1996, p.C4.

the highest proportion of out-migrants aged 25 and over with a university degree (33%) and anglophones counted for 50% of these graduates (1996 Census: Education, Mobility and Migration, StatsCan, 1997). The high turnover of anglophones has frustrated the growth of local anglophone independent record industries, while simultaneously ensuring the instability and turbulence of the city's musical scenes.

The role that local industry plays in producing, supporting and distributing music is another component central to the notion of locality as produced through various discourses. It usefully highlights the function of 'mom and pop' specialty record shops that are the lifeblood of indie rock and emphasize the effects of their limited presence in Montréal. Record shops provide sites for musical activity and exchange, where musicians, connoisseurs, radio and club DJs and fans often congregate and share stories or information informally over record racks (see also Finnegan: 274). They are critical junctures along the pathways in which individuals involved in all aspects of musical activity can confirm their place amidst a community of like-minded others. They also provide entry points for the circulation of non-local musics into a local cultural economy and for the indie rock specialist looking for more obscure musics a shop's connections to transnational distributors allows optimal access. Record shops remain an integral part of any scene and form a part of both its affective economy and its infrastructure.

In Montréal, shops catering to an indie rock market have in the past been heavily dependent on medium-sized distributors (one-stops) such as Cargo Canada which supply a number of these shops with imports and domestic releases. However, Cargo Canada's role as distributor had been compromised by its increasing inability to adequately serve those shops as it restructured, downsized and continually hinted at leaving Montréal to find

more receptive markets. When Cargo Canada declared bankruptcy in December, 1997, it left a number of bands enmeshed in legal hassles in their quest for vinyl 7-inches, LPs and CDs which had been abandoned at pressing plants. The effect of their closing on independent music production cannot be understated: Cargo Canada was a significant supplier of advance capital for independent labels in Montréal, allowing a number of them to pursue and direct their resources towards a variety of projects simultaneously. When Cargo Canada collapsed, the capital disappeared, as did any affiliated label's ability to concentrate on a number of future musical projects.

The small market demands and unstable demographics of Montréal's anglophone community ensure that the weaknesses of the city's musical culture centre around distribution, availability and access to music. The manner in which music is produced, distributed and consumed along Montréal's fractured pathways creates a dilemma for the consumer of indie rock: Where can someone go to hear and buy new music? One answer has been found through the resurgence of mail order labels (both in zines and on-line) that serve as distributors and intermediaries for a number of smaller labels. The other response has been to combine this role as distributor with that of a label which can also develop its own band roster. Indie rock thrives on small scale production such as home-taping and the relatively cheap manufacture of 7-inch singles and full-length compact discs. As such, a central way to make sense of music-making in a city like Montréal is to establish a label and run distribution out of a place in which economic, cultural and social disadvantages can be effectively (and with little sense of irony) rerouted into opportunities.

DERIVATIVE RECORDS

Montréal appeals to me because it's isolated already, so I like 'lower-expectation complex' (*sic*), so it's kind of like Canada reduced even more. So if you can hang on to an aesthetic sensibility against the odds it makes you even stronger. That's a really backwards and noble way to think about it, but it appeals to me on a really 'primal' level".

(Derivative Records owner Patti Schmidt, personal interview with author 16/5/98)

Holly Kruse (1995) says indie rock labels "struggle to both ground themselves in their localities and liberate themselves from local identities; they seek to target select audiences yet reach as many potential customers as possible" (193). Often the establishment of a scene and its attendant sense of 'locality' depends on two elements as Street (borrowing from Cohen, 1991) contends: place-as-infrastructure and place-as-identity (257). As was illustrated above, the successful combination of these elements in producing a scene in Montréal has been ineffectual at a number of levels. There have been bold and inventive attempts to renegotiate a sense of place in Montréal, moving deftly across the sparse terrain marked by the fragmented local audiences and the weak industrial and institutional infrastructure, mapping that sense of identity externally by suggesting that that 'place', as the relative success of Derivative Records denotes, is increasingly not only here, but there and everywhere.

Derivative was originally established as a cassette/7-inch-only label in Montréal during 1992 by Patti Schmidt and Kevin Komoda. When distribution increased to include more markets in the US and Europe they brought in Geneviève Heistek and Pat Hamou and expanded their format options by including CDs. Derivative and its brand of lo-fi indie rock (generally rough-hewn 4 or 8-track home recordings) emerged out of a typical indie rock sensibility: boredom, bedrooms, vanity and an inchoate sense of urgency that something must be done to offer a healthy

corrective to what was at the time an anemic local scene. Derivative's operation offers a response to local needs and international trends and is also a reminder that "local identities are constructed out of resources (both material and symbolic) which may well not be at all local in their origin" (Street: 257). Along with the individual label personnel, which also includes their band P5K (formerly Pest 5000), the label occupies an ambiguous space in Montréal's musical community allowing the label owners to negotiate a place both as local anti-heroes (as band and label runners) and operators of a respected and relatively successful label with transregional scope. This apparent paradoxical position is managed by Derivative and P5K through a variety of strategies, all of which are determined by their positions in the circuits, networks, and the historical and imaginative pathways that link the indie rock community here in Montréal to a number of geographically dispersed but affectively-aligned communities.

Derivative has tried to offer a novel solution to the problem of lack in Montréal. The obstacle for Derivative has been how to make sense of the complex constitution of localness through an operation that carries little in the way of Canadian artists and whose preferred audience is increasingly focused beyond the narrow market parameters of Montréal. The label's greatest sales are outside of the city and increasingly outside of Canada, firmly entrenching Derivative's reputation among North American and European indie rock fans while effectively avoiding the appearance of being too provincial. They have also formed distribution deals with labels in the US and the UK including Harriet and Surefire Records(Boston), Dark Beloved Cloud (New York), Darla (San Francisco), Ché Records (UK), Green UFO (Spain). While a number of labels in Montréal have tried to build a musical scene around a bounded sense of regionalism (such as Gott's EnGarde),

Derivative's ensemble have each brought to the label a personal and professional history that has elevated the label above the parochial restrictions of Montréal musical culture.

The solution Derivative has formed out of Montréal musical culture is illustrated by the label owners' personal and musical histories and reputations inside and outside the city. The status of the personnel of both Derivative and P5K in Montréal's bohemian community, their importance as cultural producers, as well as the diverse cultural/industrial positions its various members occupy along the real and symbolic pathways of local music scenes allow multiple forms of access to new music and the forging of new conduits through which to hear and disseminate it. Komoda, Heistek and Schmidt all work or have worked at CBC-Radio in production capacities, with Schmidt being on-air host since 1991 for Brave New Waves, a nationally broadcast late-night radio show dedicated to show casing independent and avant-garde rock. (Heistek and Schmidt began their radio careers as volunteers at what was then McGill University's radio station CKUT). Heistek plays with a variety of other Montréal and Toronto bands, such as Sackville, The Sadies and Pest 5000, concomitant with her ongoing research position at Brave New Waves. Komoda has a long history with Montréal music, beginning with eighties synthpopsters Rational Youth. Having left Derivative, he worked for Cargo Canada which allowed him to briefly run his own in-house label Janken Pon. He still remains an integral member of P5K. Pat Hamou has been a freelance graphic artist who does not only band posters but advertising and promotion for other cultural events within Montréal. Each of their respective roles has been a necessary component of Derivative's ascent and continued success, located as they are in sociocultural, institutional and distribution networks which form the material and symbolic infrastructure of independent rock.

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Their role as 'nodes' in these networks, and their accrual of cultural and symbolic capital amidst a field of cultural production and consumption in which the label-as-hobby (seemingly) displaces any overt dependence on the economic field, will be the focus of the latter portion of this chapter. .

The most salient and significant positions occupied by members of the Derivative ensemble are Heistek and Schmidt's involvement with Brave New Waves. The program's bearing on Derivative's success depends on a symbiotic relationship struck between the formal requirements of institutional support and the informal qualities of an independent ethos. Local popular radio and its representation of Montréal's independent music culture, as noted above, has been sparse. While in the early eighties local AM radio stations (CFMB) and community/college radio (CRSG) provided airtime for local acts, more recently local radio's commitment to a selection of musical communities has been the subject of much debate (see Gott in *Fish Piss* #2,). An alternate avenue for indie rock fans seeking to hear new music has, since 1984, come from the nationally broadcast CBC-FM (Radio 2) show Brave New Waves. Broadcast after midnight Monday through Friday on CBC-FM from Montréal, Brave New Waves is a showcase for new independent and avant-garde music, profiling bands and providing interviews with musicians (and occasionally film-makers, zine writers and comic artists). It has been the only long-running show on CBC-FM with a target demographic aged 18-35, appearing somewhat anomalous within a radio schedule offering programming which is predominantly high-brow and classical/jazz based, interspersed with news and current affairs.

As a nightly institution catering to indie rock listeners, Brave New Waves has created an aural space in which a stylistic community of like-minded music fans can be constituted. Jody Berland (1993) says of the mediated construction of a community that

> if radio exists only to make others present, an invisible machine for making the world visible to itself...the community which speaks and is spoken through that medium is also constituted by it, and is formed by its structures, selections and strategies. It is for this reason that radio comprises an ideal instrument for collective self-construction (107).

As a taste-maker for a nation of indie rock fans, Brave New Waves, a nationally broadcast radio show, functions to create a sense of community while also highlighting the tensions faced by the programmers at Brave New Waves. Brave New Waves' role as cultural custodian should be seen in the context of a network like the CBC which "'builds its programs in its own image of the public interest' persuading itself 'that apathy shown towards its offerings is due to listeners' bad taste rather than its own poor judgment'" (Hodgetts, cited in Raboy, 1990: 10). Set within a broadcasting institution which views itself as a vehicle for the promotion of good taste, Brave New Waves provides an aural space allowing the programmers a position from which to select, organize and legitimize their musical choices through access to new demo cassettes, singles and albums. The prominence of this location, from which subcultural prestige is then bestowed on select records and bands, provides a forum for the successful display of symbolic capital manifested in the choice and arrangement of music on Brave New Waves. This process of consecration is dependent upon the cultural capital, as cultural knowledge or competency, each programmer, researcher and producer brings to the show. It is, as Bourdieu (1990) states, evidence of the "power granted to those who have obtained sufficient recognition to be in a position to impose recognition" (138).

The ambiguous position of Brave New Waves at the CBC is made manifest in its function within the culture of indie rock and how the latter

attends to discourses of the local. As Berland suggests (after Harold Innis, 1950) popular radio can be seen as a space-binding communications medium, allowing "more rapid dissemination of information across space, but erod(ing) local memory and the self-determination of peripheral groups" (Berland: 111). While the program itself cannot be seen as popular radio, the personnel at Brave New Waves still must negotiate between these and other conflicting agendas (of national and local, centre and periphery) whose tense relations also complicate the establishment of an indie rock community as autonomous cultural sphere. Brave New Waves remains situated within the programming mandates of a national network that is a hybrid of commercial and public-service-monopoly systems (Raboy, 1996: 104-105). As a mixed private-public communications medium, the CBC has historically placed an emphasis on an agenda tied to promoting national culture (a sense of broadcasting dedicated to a 'national purpose'), in which the notions of 'the public' and 'nationhood' have been conflated (Raboy, 1990: 7). The programmers at Brave New Waves sidestep a number of these contradictions and conflicts by effectively reconfiguring the local, notions of community, and shared aural histories manifested in discourses and rhetoric surrounding scenes, personal interviews and band profiles, providing a public service by reaching listeners outside cosmopolitan centres where access to community radio is limited.

Located at key points in institutional and industrial settings, Schmidt's role as host of Brave New Waves, Heistek's role as researcher and Komoda's previous position in a medium scale record distribution company like Cargo Canada have been central components of Derivative's success. Their multi-faceted positions as cultural intermediaries provide pivotal means through which Derivative reproduces transregional and transnational

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indie rock material practices and musical attitudes. According to Keith Negus (borrowing from Bourdieu) cultural intermediaries do not act as gatekeepers so much as mediators "who blur a number of formal distinctions associated with working life" (Negus, 1997: 63). The lack of distance between their realms of work and leisure doubly consecrates the ensemble's status as cultural intermediaries, whereby both spheres of activity benefit while appearing to remain mutually exclusive. (It should be noted that Schmidt neither mentions nor plays material from Derivative or P5K on Brave New Waves). In this way the label's members work across a number of different sites of musical production and distribution. Their dependence on the social dimensions of musical culture maintains and legitimizes acceptable attitudes and practices taken towards music, actively elaborating and extending what Appadurai has elsewhere called the 'ideoscape'(1996). This ideological channel aids the horizontal flow of particular narratives which then circulate through convenient and accommodating locations, with their success contingent upon social/cultural conditions as much as economic/institutional ones. The constellation of values produced through these narrative structures frame acceptable indie rock musical idioms, alongside the ubiquitous discourses of authenticity and ably assist the construction of an anti-hegemonic hegemony. Forming a layered circuit of meaning and affect, the ideoscape determines how local, regional, transregional and global processes enter into dialectical and dialogic relationships.

The ideology of indie rock is built through geographically dispersed sites of production and their links with non-local distribution labels. The one-off and temporary licensing arrangements struck with many bands for the release of a single encourages fans and musicians alike to view indie rock as a small scale operation, fostering discourses of a proto- or pre-

capitalist nostalgic return to artisanal manufacture and craft. The result is the deployment of discourses of artistic autonomy and non-alienated creativity, where relationships between artists and audience are perceived as more connected, communal and egalitarian ('anyone can do this') than the relations of production and consumption of the mainstream transnational recording industry. This flattened, non-hierarchical, horizontal model and the webs of interdependence sustained through the networks it hinges upon enable the type of reflexivity and specialization specific to indie rock culture, aiding and abetting the 'imagined community' through which it continually constructs, understands and reproduces itself.

The 'free' movement, or flow, of bands, recordings and ideas through a variety of channels, the creation of intense affective alliances (Grossberg's networks of empowerment - see Chapter One), is central to the operational logic shaping the musical subfield of indie rock. A small-scale cultural economy such as indie rock defines itself against the larger field of cultural production ('the mainstream'). The creation of an autonomous sphere of cultural activity depends on presenting the movement and distribution of resources as no longer contingent upon economic factors, hence the stress on forms of prestige and knowledge (symbolic and cultural capital respectively) as determining positions in the field (often appearing 'indier-than-thou'). The lines that demarcate indie rock's generic boundaries (who's in, who's out) are constrained by the disavowal of any visible or explicit connection to a field of production in which the economic is the dominant system of exchange. However, the economic can never be held entirely at bay. As a shadow cultural economy which is often the site of major labeling poaching ('selling out'), the economic demands of the large-scale recording industry are always a backdrop against which the

discourses of authenticity permeating indie rock vernacular are placed in high relief.

Negatively positioned in relation to the major music industry, the culture of indie rock and its pathways are just as likely to be affected (however unevenly) by those changes in modes of cultural production, distribution and consumption which affect the larger globalized cultural economy. Within global economies and transnational media conglomerates which have been subject to accelerating corporate vertical disintegration and reintegration with increasing horizontalization through flexible specialization and reflexive production, Lash and Urry (1994) suggest that networks, a somewhat more mechanical variation of Finnegan's pathways, provide the best model to understand the machinations of post-organized capitalism[6]. Conceiving of them as webs or bridges these networks are made up of a few basic elements such as "links which connect points in a network...The entities that move along these links are called traffic...the points connected by links in a network are called 'simplices' and they can be individuals, they can be organizations, they can be terminals, transmitters or receivers."(24). Globalized networks, they suggest, cultivate a cosmopolitan sensibility, "a chance hermeneutically to extend reflexive critique beyond the 'neo-tribes', a chance for translation between communities"(143). Amid the flux and movement that define cosmopolitan living and the rapid production and consumption of cultural products,

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[6] This is highly contested intellectual terrain, particularly as it relates to the music industry. David Hesmondhalgh (1995) offers an analysis of the debates surrounding flexible specialization and its effects on the culture industries, specifically the music industry. By critiquing various examinations of the Hollywood model of flexible specialization he suggests that a broader consideration not only of modes of production, but also of promotion and finance would actually tend to stress the reintegration of global media conglomerates. The stress in the context of this paper is on the smaller scale operations such as independent rock formations, which are not separate from this debate, as Hesmondhalgh notes. What Derivative offers by way of example, however, is a model of reflexivity and flexibility that is missing in his discussion. See Hesmondhalgh, David. "Is This What You Call Change? Flexibility, Post-Fordism and the Music Industries" in Popular Music: Style and Identity, Straw, Johnson, Sullivan and Friedlander eds., Montréal: CRCCII, 1995. pp.141-148.

Derivative and other distribution labels act as traffic managers, discriminating cultural interpreters sifting through a glut of commodities produced in globally dispersed places vying for attention among a geographically diffuse audience. The Derivative ensemble with their cultural capital and occupation of privileged vantage points set within a number of networks can consolidate and cultivate a roster of favourite bands through which a signature 'sound' or sensibility can be loosely and rhetorically constructed.

Derivative has adopted an integrated approach to production and distribution that has become increasingly typical of a new breed of indie rock labels. Its success is underlined by the multi-layered investment and embodiment of cultural capital in the form of keen aesthetic sensibility and the cultivation of aural acumen ('taste' and 'style') and established market access, each actualized through the lived experience of local musical history as well as through national and transregional networks. Derivative operates on a multitude of planes and pathways that depend not only on ideas of the local, but work to elaborate what Mark Slobin (1992) has called an 'interculture'. A spatialized cross-cutting system of geographically dispersed alliances and taste affinities, the interculture is maintained through established networks for the proper distribution of selected range of musical objects. According to Slobin, within the interculture the exchange of musics often occurs in a counter-cultural manner where "no profit motive or hegemony move is apparent on the surface, and the creation of an affinity group seems the immediate goal" (49).

Within the term interculture resides two differing yet complementary subspecies of subcultural alliances that are also specific to independent rock formations: diasporic intercultures and affinity intercultures. The

former refers to the links that subcultures establish over national boundaries, the latter a way of linking geographically dispersed yet like-minded subcultures through a series of networks (of which the bohemia diaspora is a fraction). Both categories complicate the relation of the local to what have otherwise been narrowly circumscribed regional or urban boundaries (45). The musical choices that Derivative makes are ultimately bound up with aspects of an affinity interculture, a selection process determined by and further determining their deep imbrication in institutional, industrial and sociocultural contexts of production and distribution. The success of Derivative depends on the cultural capital (as manifest in status and reputation) that the label owners transfer and re-invest in strategic locales and relationships, the networks established through everyday work and musical life, the aesthetic and ideological affiliations, and the face-to-face connections made with other bands through touring and licensing singles.

In those moments when the label owners transform themselves into the musical act P5K and become part of the global sonic traffic, they play a dual role in how Derivative operates. First, the band promotes new product through live shows (they bring a number of the label's singles with them), reaffirming through instances of physical co-presence the relations that link the culture together. Second, they also search out and establish new markets by moving through another locality's pathways. Moving across and through previously distant scenes and markets forges a reflexive connection to the label's fans and the organization of its catalogue. This symbiotic relationship has a practical component having to do with the local restrictions placed on diminished market size. To survive, Derivative has had to extend their reach outside of Montréal, even Canada, and P5K are the ideal vehicle. Links are continually reestablished by touring

and playing shows with bands throughout North America, where previous distal relations are substantiated through face-to-face encounters and contact are reaffirmed. This is part of the process of reembedding the local, where, according to Giddens (1990), "faceless commitments are sustained or transformed by facework"(88). Reembedding "connects confidence in abstract systems to their reflexively mobile nature, as well as providing encounters and rituals which sustain collegial trustworthiness" (87). As the band PSK, label concerns run in informal tandem with the band as it inserts itself into the pathways that crisscross the interculture. Being intimately bound up with the productive (material and aesthetic) operations of the indie community-at-large and its various scenes, strengthening the distributive components of the interculture, and by literally grounding an abstract ideology of an affectively-linked community through face-to-face contact, Derivative can foster a more reflexive and flexible strategy for consolidating the label's musical output. This very often produces the rhetoric of egalitarianism and voluntarism which courses through indie rock, an idiom which is a mark of its distinction denoting its difference from the mainstream music industry. The replacement of economic necessity with new paradigms of scarcity and resource distribution as seen through the prism of culture is, in the words of Bourdieu, a process specific to a field of restricted cultural production which distances itself from the demands of the larger field of production (the mainstream) and imagines itself as a separate market:

> The more a field is capable of functioning as field of competition for cultural legitimacy, the more individual production must be oriented towards the search for culturally pertinent features endowed with the value in the field's own economy. This confers properly cultural value on the producers by endowing them with marks of distinction (a specialty, a manner, a style) recognized as

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such within the historically available cultural taxonomies
(Bourdieu, 1993: 117)

In the context of a musical field such as indie rock which imagines itself as non-competitive, producing goods for a public of equals, where cultural capital is privileged over economic capital and serves as the overarching system of exchange and value, Derivative and other distribution labels are ideal examples of a form of subcultural traffic management. The transfiguration of their role as cultural intermediaries in institutional and industrial settings onto the plane of cultural production (producers producing for other producers) is deftly managed through the effective display and use of cultural capital. Fans/consumers come to rely on expert systems to make sense of the rapid movement of commodities through the sonic landscape. Indie labels, as they extend their reach beyond regions and national boundaries and as they become increasingly global, resituate the portability of the local alongside Giddens' disembedding mechanisms. If modernity is characterized by the institutionalization of doubt, as he suggests, then Derivative and its organizational role in the construction of transregional taste cultures creates a context for consumption in which the variability, high turnover and diachronic flow of indie rock through intertwined networks can be slowed or momentarily halted, allowing a synchronic fixing and vertical development. As a consequence, trust in the label arises, an embedded (and in Bourdieu's sense, embodied) sense of consumer loyalty and expectation. This is an affirmation of taste as expressed through an allegiance formed across this bounded and binding universe of sonically different products which takes the form of branding, alleviating consumer anxiety through the selective arrangement of the musical commodities according to an internalized aesthetic and aural logics. (The elements of risk which haunt the consumer are also mitigated

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by those instances in which the band P5K affirm their place in the fan's world by performing in a live setting). The sensibilities and organizational capacities of the Derivative ensemble offer fans a well constructed and taste-tested promise by both creating and recreating a range of expectations, heightening the label's status within the field. Their ability to react to, create, recreate and reflect changing fan demands and scene configurations with a great deal of rapidity, flexibility and reflexivity is effectively realized through Derivative's team of 'taste experts'.

As an indie label's place in the field begins to stabilize and it becomes embedded in more established networks, an implied sense of professionalism becomes more pronounced through the proper monitoring of sales, keeping tabs on bands and adhering to a schedule of release dates. The anxiety about appearing to 'get bigger' and its effect on their pivotal positions in indie rock's networks is confirmed by Schmidt:

> Once it becomes a career for you, say like SubPop, and you like it and you want to hang onto it you start to make all these little compromises. You say to yourself: 'I really like this, I want this to be my job, so I'll sign on with major labels or major distribution companies and maybe I'll put out a Cheap Trick record, I'll just slip one in....' (personal interview 16/05/98)

Derivative is not immune to this evolution, as levels of professionalism have begun to affect the way it organizes itself. In their capacity as entrepreneurial capitalists, the ensemble's haphazard and relaxed approach to the label has been opposed to the greater romanticized project of loving music, creating, as Schmidt has said, a friction between either "making it or making music" (personal interview, 16/11/96). The gestures towards professionalism it has adopted - making sure accounts balance, overheads are met, singles break even (a rarity), bands are on time - are contrary to the egalitarian DIY we're-all-in-this-together ethos

that is the driving impetus of indie rock. The label ensemble has tried to run Derivative more efficiently, solidifying their economic imperatives (breaking even) which means less leeway for bands and less risk-taking allowed. The artistic compromises implied in this shift, of getting bigger, are elided by striking a pose of disinterestedness, in what Bourdieu has called a 'disavowal' of the economic. The combined sensibilities of Derivative's personnel, their disavowal of the constraints of economic capital and the savvy investment of cultural capital as realized through their placement in key institutional and industrial settings allowing it to remain 'just a hobby', strengthen ties with other like-minded individuals and labels within in the field, deepening their place in those webs of interdependence and belonging. Heistek has said: "We're committed to making these (label and band) activities work while having jobs we enjoy".[7] The end result is a privileged accessibility to a market denied to other labels which cannot or have not acquired the cultural capital required to invest for continued long-term success. With the much more acceptable accrual of cultural capital, wisely dispersed through various networks, Derivative can by virtue of a privileged vantage point still maintain an appearance of openness and receptivity to new sounds and allow possible new licensing arrangements to be struck while also avoiding any charges of compromise.

Labels which are strategically located along the networks of production, distribution and consumption marshal together discriminating fans by forming and catering to specific niches. The ongoing stratification and hierarchization of indie labels struggling for a limited number of positions in the musical field allows more labels to take on a distributive function as scale of production is enlarged, thereby necessitating their movement up

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[7] "Pest is Best Without Pipe Dream", *Toronto Sun*, October 10, 1996, p.65.

another tier to act as intermediary discriminatory nodes in the network. Much like those labels distributing indie rock which move towards galvanizing and extending the networks and maintaining strategies for survival by relying on transregional and transnational markets, Derivative also confounds the sense of the local in its more grounded sense. Their version of 'localness' is at once concerned with taking advantage of the real pathways that Montréal provides (such as the lower cost of rent/living, and studio/recording space), but also with maintaining the symbolic pathways founded through markets, scenes and like-minded ideologies outside of Montréal. While not explicitly addressing these aspects of the label's origin and orientation, Schmidt suggests that their reasons for not trying to build a regional scene "may be just because we're just anti-idealistic" (personal interview, 16/05/98). Rather than appearing troubled with the greater ontological, organizational or institutional questions of what makes a local, geographically bounded scene work and given the historical thinness of an indie rock scene in Montréal, Derivative's practical outward looking strategy thrives on a locally-generated and deftly managed response to the aleatory effects of a global cultural economy.

The intricate position Derivative occupies in the local/global system of networks complicates its relation to three criteria that Lash and Urry (1994) use to define the success of the 'local' and its relation to sense of place. The first is that of interpretation, utilizing Giddens' conception of 'expert systems'. Derivative's personnel and their role as cultural intermediaries (specialists) exemplify how "local production complexes can provide the context in which discourses and accounts develop by which these apparently distant systems can be made sense of and interpreted" (284; see also Negus, 1997: 62). The second criterion depends upon the context for social interaction, the ability to gather and disseminate

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information, make contacts and contracts. The infrastructure within Montréal, as noted above, is rather fragile and confounded by a myriad of economic, linguistic and social factors. In order to respond to these problems effectively, Derivative has had to rely on connections and (licensing) agreements fostered through networks whose trajectories are directed and even formed outside of the city (the CBC - a national network - and Cargo Canada - a transnational network - are also pivotal sites of contact).

The final criterion for continued local success is the ability to enable product and process innovation to take place in relatively decentralized systems. A complement to this is the ability of entrepreneurs to take advantage of local amenities and the "critical mass of knowledgeable people which enable gaps in the market to be identified" (284). Derivative built their musical roster through connections with labels and musical cultures outside Montréal, Canada and in some cases North America. While hardly as calculated as Lash and Urry suggest, through their combined cultural capital and social histories the members of Derivative have managed to consolidate a firm base of operation here in Montréal, but with minds on markets outside of the city.

CONCLUSION

> If we transplanted the label with exactly the same contacts and with the networks we know to Winnipeg, I think we would die. You're just geographically far away and psychically too. So this is the perfect isolation - we're still so close to New York and Boston. We get bands coming up here because Derivative's here and we get a nice little exchange of musics just out of the network.
> (Patti Schmidt, personal interview, 16/5/98)

The specificity and singularity of Derivative's function as shaped by the sociomusical experience in Montréal is as firmly determined by the opportunities afforded by local circumstance as it is by the ensemble's position in a broader transregional musical field. It is the balanced management of their place in local artistic traditions, institutional, national/transnational contexts, and their negotiation of the eroded indigenous spaces in which music is imagined and practiced that makes Derivative's contributions to the sociomusical experience of Montréal culture significantly different than options offered by previous labels. The Derivative ensemble achieve this due to the cultural competencies which are learned, legitimized, confirmed and shrewdly disavowed across a number of sociohistorical, industrial, institutional, regional and transregional contexts. The privileged position of the label in the fickle world of indie rock is the result of the agile movement across diffuse cultural spaces. It is a process of negotiation set within fragmented cultural terrain, dependent for its success on the proper acquisition, maintenance and display of specialized knowledges associated with symbolic and cultural capital. These knowledges are embodied and experienced through the symbolic and material practices produced in the specific spaces afforded by Montréal's sociocultural idiosyncrasies. Given all of this, it is hardly disingenuous to suggest that it would be impossible, as Schmidt herself implies, to imagine Derivative existing anywhere else.

CHAPTER 4

SITING THE SOUND:
NEW ZEALAND MUSIC FANS IN NORTH AMERICA

As the practices of Montréal's Derivative Records illustrate, the connection between local musical production and the distant musical communities that consume it has been a relationship highlighted by a central tension framing the sociomusical experience. The local is taken to be a site in which a range of cultural activities are realized, fixed and developed. They are junctures along a global circuit composed of intertwining networks through which flow goods, ideas, technologies and people. The sociomusical experience, or more precisely, the manner in which musicians, labels and fans interact, is in many ways determined by these two contrasting yet parallel processes of fixity and flow. As a more recent example such as Derivative Records' role in cultural production and distribution inside and outside of Montréal illustrates, musical scenes and communities develop and define themselves along the axes connecting geographically dispersed regions.

In many cases these social groupings coalesce globally, mediated and bound together through new and established communications media such as records, zines, community radio and, more recently, the Internet. The combination of these technologies and media has created, as Appadurai (1996) suggests, "an interactive system in a sense that is strikingly new" (27). However, in discussions about the supposed democratizing and community-building potential of these new media we are left to consider how progressive and innovative these new communications technologies truly are. Other than accelerated distribution of information (and in some cases knowledge) and recalibrated rituals of simultaneity offered by

electronic and digital media, it needs to be asked if there is anything novel in these new forms of interconnectedness. For instance, in terms of building networks of affinity, what sort of advantages are instituted by these new technologies which differ from the rituals of belonging built through the apparatuses of print capitalism?

It is possible, and in some cases essential, to answer these sorts of questions by framing the discussion of these new forms of connectivity, belonging and desiring around notions of residual and long-standing colonialist quests for the new and exotic. The rhetoric of frontierism, commercialism and expansionism surrounding these new communications media certainly situates them firmly in colonial traditions of exploitation (Carey, 1989; Gunkel and Gunkel, 1997). James Carey (1989; 1995) reminds us that as conduits for transmission of ideas they share much in common with other communication technologies designed for transport, including steam and air travel, print and broadcast media - communicative networks that have been deeply embedded in nation and empire building. Expanding on the connection between these movements and mediations, Appadurai (1996) suggestively explores the history and very real effect of these networks and their connection with capitalist commodity production when he considers the mobility of people in the form of slaves and migrant workers. While each group emerged during historically specific moments, they are a part of a larger continuum framing the creation and exploitation of globally dispersed labour pools. In each instance, the negative effect is the uprooting and displacement of individuals and communities due to shifts in the demands of global capitalism, the result of the re-organization of older markets and the creation of new markets. A possible positive effect can be found when these processes of disembedding and re-embedding create what might be called hybridized, indigenized, creolized sociocultural

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formations, in which diasporic communities can begin global dialogues and exchanges not only with homelands but other displaced peoples (Notably music, in the latter instance, has historically been the artistic form most accommodating to these new cultural hybrids - see Gilroy, 1993; Slobin, 1993).

Coincident with the demands for new labour needed for expanding industries, the demand for foreign luxury goods, often seen among the priviledged classes as the fruits reaped by empire building, is also part of a larger history founded on exploration and exploitation. These were (and in some senses still are) desires and demands steeped in xenophobia, racism, ethnocentrism, exoticism and fetishism, often masked under the guise of more respectable pursuits such as philanthropy, preservation and anthropology. Since the sixteenth century the growth and success of museums and archives in colonizing countries has been realized through the gathering, accumulation, organization and classification of these fetishes, tokens, totems and symbols in appropriate fashion. The articulation of private desires to public acts of belonging through museum displays (often constructed through the rhetorical appeals to 'national heritage') has been well documented, particularly the 'rituals of citizenship' which are constructed within the walls of national archives. (Duncan, 1991; Whitelaw, 1997).

These same processes of acquisition and accumulation worked their way down to a micro-level and manifest themselves in the cultures which emerged around the collection of exotic tokens, relics and curiosities. As studies done on Captain Cook's antipodal voyages to Freud's array of Greek and Egyptian antiquities illustrate the lanes of traffic constructed for the transportation and collection of these luxury goods have criss-crossed the globe for centuries (see Elsner and Cardinal, eds.,1994). These

channels reached their greatest density and achieved semi-permanence during the eighteenth and nineteenth century. As Eurocolonial empires settled in and began exchanging technological advances and consolidating capital in urban centres, the monopolization of market dominance and the successful expansion of industrialization became increasingly dependent on the speed and efficiency of new communications technologies (Appadurai: 28). These processes demanded the establishment of trade routes which could connect geographically dispersed cultures and economies, which in turn could transport raw materials and labour, completing a commodity circuit in which each place was both origin and destination, imagined always the origin of resources (including labour) and as a potential market. The end result was the creation of webs of interdependence which signaled the beginnings of global capitalism (and evidence also that globalization is by no means a new phenomenon).

Today, the spatially disconnected audiences made available for cultural commodities still remain significant points on the map of a global cultural economy. Earlier modes of communication which emphasized transport have been augmented by new types of electronic and digital media creating forms of 'neighbourliness'. In the latter instance, computer-mediated communications facilitating new forms of sociality emphasize the ritual mode of communication and suggestively point towards new definitions of community, civil re-organization and personal intimacy (Carey, 1989; Appadurai: 29). Along with earlier developments in communication technologies (in the form of air and rail travel, the telephone, photography, and mass media such as newspapers, cinema and radio), emergent electronic and digital technologies have given rise to mailing lists, email, chat rooms, web pages and recent innovations in interactive on-line services which in turn have created new modes of production, innovative forms of

distribution and increased the number of potential sites and means of consumption.

Without retreating to either the negative rhetoric of technological determinism or utopian discourses of techno-liberation it is worth considering the ways in which this brave new world remains haunted by the spectre of colonialism. Recently, it has been suggested that the definition of cyberspace as a 'new world' shares more than just a name with the European appellation for the Americas as the 'New World':

> Under this sign ('the new world'), cyberspace has already been surveyed, partitioned, and allocated for contemporary treasure hunters and marketing executives. And all this is recoded and justified through the promise of sociocultural emancipation, which turns out to be nothing more than a luxury belonging to the majority. In this way, the 'new world' of cyberspace offers nothing new but is already appropriated into a rather specific lineage and history. Five hundred years after Columbus, the process of discovery begins anew but discovers little, if anything, new. (Gunkel and Gunkel, 1997: 132)

The vestiges of colonialism remain an integral part of the material and ideological infrastructure informing current cultural practices and circumscribe the how, where and why of their realization in certain locales. These traces form a palimpsest against which any cultural analysis attempting to sketch a cartography of globalized consumer sensibilities and commodity flow should be effectively drawn.

Although an in depth analysis is beyond the bounds of this project, a number of these concerns are in part the organizing principles of the following chapter. The focus will be on the production, distribution and consumption of a particular category of music, New Zealand independent rock, which is produced in New Zealand yet assumes a heightened value in the record collections of individuals living in Europe and, disproportionately, North America. By New Zealand independent rock I am referring to a

category of music which includes rough-hewn jangle pop (exemplified by bands such as the Chills and the Bats), homemade tape-loop experiments (Chris Knox/Tall Dwarfs), as well as the avant-garde noisescapes produced by a small collection of artists (the Dead C, Peter Jefferies, Michael Morley). They are all associated, for the most part, with Dunedin, a sparsely populated, small university town located on New Zealand's South Island.

What drew me to this study initially was trying to understand why record shops as far away from one another as Shinjuku, Japan, Boston, Massachusetts, Soho, London and Toronto, Canada often have a section reserved for New Zealand independent rock. Rarely are independent musics from other nations as highly categorized, organized and set apart from the genre as a whole. As a fan of the music myself, it became apparent that the ease with which I could access the music (through mail order, in shops, advertised through fanzines, played on community radio) was a strong indicator of an infrastructure, however informal it might be, that supported a community of fans with a predilection for a very specific category of independent rock. And while for someone who had traveled extensively through New Zealand the memories of place evoked through the music might be one obvious reason he or she might collect it, it had become clear that the sort of longing created among fans who had never been there was of a different order.

I have chosen to pose the question "Why New Zealand music?" (first to myself and later fans and label owners) as a rhetorical ploy to frame a discussion that examines the relatively successful production, distribution and consumption of nationally-aligned musical texts in globally dispersed markets. Borrowing from recent work done in the field of museum studies, anthropology and sociology, the broader emphasis is on the material and imaginative practices surrounding collecting. However, in order to avoid

limiting the study to an ethnography of consumption this chapter will provide an outline describing the functional and symbolic values accruing to all facets of musical practice from point of origin to point of destination, charting the multiple determinants which affect the possible trajectories musical texts and ideas may follow. Thus, notions of exoticism, fetishism, the process of 'Othering', the accumulation of specialized knowledges and the desire for novelty will be examined in relation to the discourses produced and reproduced amidst the circulation of texts, people, ideas, technologies and ideologies. In this way, it will provide a larger consideration of the networks of exclusion and inclusion that necessarily inform and mediate the value, prestige and marks of distinction that are integral to the processes of differentiation which elevate New Zealand independent rock, relative to other independent musics, in the imaginations of fans.

The affinities realized through the mediated interactions of geographically dispersed individuals exchanging and discussing New Zealand independent rock have created what Appadurai has elsewhere called global communities of sentiment (Appadurai, 1996; see also Chapter 1). The community gathered around New Zealand independent rock has depended, in the past, on older forms of communication such as zines and specialized periodicals. More recently, the creation of the NZ-Pop List on the Internet has provided new means of discussion through computer-mediated communication (see also Mitchell, 1997). The mobilization and galvanization of tastes for the esoteric aspects of New Zealand independent rock have accelerated the global exchange of related musical texts and increased the circulation of the specialized knowledges and means required to properly acquire and consume it.

More generally, the process through which the global reputations of specific New Zealand musics have been built is supported by the relationships that New Zealand labels (specifically Flying Nun and Xpressway) have fostered with North American independent labels such as Roof Bolt, Communion, Homestead, Siltbreeze, Ajax, Dark Beloved Cloud, and Mammoth. The following discussion will focus mainly upon two New Zealand labels, Flying Nun and Xpressway/IMD, and how the distribution and licensing arrangements that they have with their American counterparts affect the creation and reception of the music. Each New Zealand label has established a particular reputation as the purveyor of a specific 'sound', one which is deeply embedded in distinctive aesthetic and material practices as well as the resulting products.

The sustained status and reputation of these labels in North America depend on a well maintained institutional and industrial distribution system. The cultivation and maintenance of the taste culture/niche market and the accompanying connoisseurist practices attached to New Zealand music consumption depend upon an infrastructure built through specialty record shops, print media such as magazines and fanzines, and broadcast media such as community/college radio. Some of the more established music magazines (*Rolling Stone, Spin, Alternative Press*) pay little attention to what is happening Down Under while many other periodical magazines, operating at a more esoteric level, such as *Magnet, Puncture* and *Popwatch*, link together a number of dispersed national audiences in a network composed of globalized independent music cultures. In the pages of the latter magazines this global scene often appears evenly divided between New Zealand/Australian and American indie music, supporting and reinforcing the infrastructure that supports the mobility and circulation that the smaller labels distributing New Zealand music require. It was as a

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result of my emerging fandom and 'discovery' of the proper means by which to access the scene organized around 'kiwimusic' that it became apparent indie music from New Zealand enjoys a heightened currency among North American independent rock fans.

The sheer proliferation and sprawl of indie labels and bands in North America allows the New Zealand scene to (seemingly) embody a more negotiable and manageable sense of musical history and style. It is this imagined coherence that organizes and facilitates a specific form of fandom and social interaction in North America. And although for some fans who have never been to New Zealand the connection between the physical place of New Zealand and the residue of place is imagined to reside 'in the music', there are 'grounded' others for whom the question still remains: "Why New Zealand music?". It is important to note here, and hardly insignificant, that in 1992 Flying Nun witnessed a 300% sales growth (Shuker in Hayward, 1994:16). This profitable success, derived mainly from overseas markets, rests upon a variety of intertwining factors: individual taste formations incorporating a type of globalized/globalizing pop sensibility; musical exhaustion as it relates to the variability of indie music scenes in North America; the formation of new musical histories and trajectories and their dependence on the 'logics' of indie scenes; and the construction of antipodality/Otherness by fans (on a micro-level), states and their cultural industries and institutions (on a macro-level) and the bands themselves (as intermediaries between the two). Each of these issues will be taken up in terms of New Zealand music production, distribution and consumption and their mutual interdependence, as well as providing an analysis of construction of value systems specific to this cultural formation.

PRODUCTION

The production of music within New Zealand is deeply embedded in the internal ideological and industrial mechanisms that foster a distinct relation to domestic differences and similarities. Domestic cultural industries and institutions also organize how these differences are articulated to the larger global sonic arena and various scapes into which the music flows and circulates. The core/periphery music model that frames the operation of internal and external markets and cultural production generally has strongly defined musical culture in New Zealand (Shuker, 1995). The real and imagined effects of marginality that permeate New Zealand musical culture are integral to the logic and development of New Zealand music and operate on a specific level, as Colin Macleay's (1992) cultural geography of Dunedin has more than adequately illustrated. Through the discursive construction of a specific history and mythos which defines the place of Dunedin within New Zealand music culture, the bands, fans and label owners tried to differentiate themselves from the cosmopolitan context of the Auckland scene. As Macleay notes, the latter city's musical culture is seen by Dunedin musicians as inspired by more international-flavoured sounds, an irony highlighted by Flying Nun's move to Auckland to accommodate an increase in foreign demand.

Dunedin, through its geographical 'isolation', fostered a small community of musicians and fans that appeared to do what they wanted, irrespective of the demands of record label executives or nations overseas, constructing attitudes and practices that spawned what is popularly known as the 'Dunedin Sound' (Mitchell, 1994; Macleay, 1992). The city is celebrated as a space in which hybrid cultures created a mix of experimental DIY low-tech home-tapers and Britpop-inspired New Musical Express readers. Weaned on the sporadic sonic packages that the various

-scapes afforded, they used the space to generate a scene "not based on musical or lyrical attitudes, but on a cultural identity created by internal and external imaginations of place" (Macleay: 44).

Displaying many of the marks of an 'import culture', Dunedin's scene embodies the effects of various scapes on the formation of the 'Dunedin sound'. The technoscape and the lag in time that the distance necessarily creates due to the unequal distribution of and access to various recording technologies, for example, feeds a local ideoscape of anti-technology founded on the disavowal of technology whereby a celebration of primitivism and purism become central to the discursive construction of a local idea of "community". Shayne Carter of the Straightjacket Fits suggests as much when he says:

> The bottom line is that in our band we are four white boys who grew up in a town where there's no technology available. We had no money, so we've never been able to buy samplers or things like that. So we've basically been stuck with acoustic guitars in our bedrooms. You can't pretend to be what you aren't. I think what we're doing is relevant to what we are and where we come from.
> (Carter as cited in Hayward, 1994: 41)

Carter positions himself in relation to a variety of scapes: the ethnoscape of whiteness (although he himself is of Maori extraction), referring tangentially to a (predominantly white) musical tradition that has disavowed samplers, which are often affiliated with 'dance' music (hence the disdain for Auckland music); a technoscape that excludes New Zealand generally, but Dunedin specifically, where Auckland is seen as the more cosmopolitan city. Auckland provides greater access to studio spaces and other recording technologies, thereby creating more opportunities to be seduced into being "less authentic", to "pretend to be what you aren't". In contrast, musical life in Dunedin fosters an ideoscape of imagined isolation,

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where locality is "defined in part through shared experiences of individuals encouraged by common interests and constructions of class, generation, ethnicity, and gender clustered in particular configurations" (Gay: 123). The appeal to localism and (imagined) community as it relates to the (geographic) isolation of New Zealand from the larger machinations of the global pop industry is often invoked as a marker of purism. Colin Macleay notes in his discussion of the construction of the 'Dunedin Sound' that there is "the general perception equat(ing) Flying Nun with music that is unaffected by fashion and trends" (Macleay: 42). Carter's matter-of-fact description of music making in New Zealand is central to an internal ideoscape based on the production of sounds and attitudes, where distance and access (geographical and technological) are cited as crucial determinants in musical development. Isolation is naturalized (as "this was the way it was") in a logic of sound where attachment to geography necessarily feeds into exportable notions of romanticized antipodality. This is not an uncomplicated position as Macleay notes when he cites a journalist who dismantles the mythologies attached to isolation:

> People from Dunedin are always saying that they have more
> artistic freedom and are not under the same international
> pressure as people from Auckland. But we all watch the same
> television shows. There is not one moment of electronic media
> experience that is not broadcast nationally. (42)

The elaboration of an internal ideoscape of isolation, independence and/or difference through distance is partially undermined by the mediascape that shrinks the country to an immediate whole and elides difference, or at least troubles how disconnected these different scenes are. Macleay suggests that "a sense of music locality depends on both the immediate material circumstances (audiences, venues, etc.) and on 'reference' groups, identities and fantasies that are mediated globally" (Macleay: 46). Far from being

disparate and disconnected sites of musical production, both Auckland and Dunedin and the imagined significance of each place is deeply embedded in a dense configuration of various national and international media.

These notions of localness and of imaginations of place are transmitted and received throughout the globe, assisted by the nimble apparatuses of the mediascape and the technoscape. They play a central role in how the idea of something as abstract as 'the nation' is then constructed both internally and externally, forming an imagined community:

> The apparatuses of discourse, technologies and institutions (print capitalism, education, mass media and so forth)...produce what is generally recognised as 'the national culture'...the nation is an effect of these cultural technologies, not their origin. A nation does not express itself through its culture: it is cultural apparatuses that produce 'the nation'. What is produced is not an identity or a single consciousness....but (hierarchically organised) values, dispositions and differences. This cultural and social heterogeneity is given a certain fixity by the articulating principle of 'the nation'. The 'national' defines the culture's unity by differentiating if from other cultures, by marking its boundaries; a fictional unity of course because the 'us' on the inside is itself always differentiated.
> (Donald cited in Morley and Robbins, 1995:45)

As Donald suggests, what the media enable is an exportable illusion of a united and uncomplicated national front, with the result that the stratified mass of cultural artifacts and their producers are softened and flattened as they become subsumed under the rubric of a 'national culture'.

A more effective way of describing how the various scapes 'produce' culture can be found in Slobin's term 'supercultures'. He suggests that the superculture is composed of three elements: an industry, "including its alliances with techno-media- and finanscapes, consummated through the ceremony of advertising, justifying the ways of the superculture to man, woman and child."; "the state and its institutionalized rules and venues";

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and the "less flagrant but more insidious strands of hegemony (that) define the everyday, and circumscribe the expressive" where the superculture "provides a set of standardized styles, repertoires and performance practices anyone can recognize"(15-18). The first two elements allow a specific cultural formation and series of practices to be contained, organized and managed for export, facilitating the portability of an internal ideoscape the traces of which are then transformed into an ethnoscape (its 'New Zealandness') on the receiving end. The last element will be discussed in further detail within the context of North American reception and fandom and its relation to notions of exoticism and fetishism as reflected in the record collection. Its relevance here is precisely this notion of 'internal superculture', a supercultural hegemony operating within certain subcultures that dictate style and practice allowing global affinities to be drawn from dispersed musical scenes, an elaboration of the "diasporic interculture which emerges from the linkages that subcultures set up across national boundaries" (44).

DISTRIBUTION

> The movement, the flows of capital, money, commodities, labour,
> information and images across time and space are only
> comprehensible if 'networks' are taken into account because it is
> through networks that these subjects and objects are able to
> gain mobility. Whatever form of institutional governance is
> dominant, whether markets, hierarchies, the state or corporatism,
> the subjects and objects which are governed must be mobile
> through networks.   (Lash and Urry: 24)

Much like the demands shaping music making in Montréal, the actual manufacture of music in New Zealand is determined, on a purely practical level, by the small domestic market which compels its cultural producers to export their products. The production of 'successful' music or film in New

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Zealand (in which 'successful' has become interchangeable with 'exportable') often requires the intervention/assistance of the superculture which in many cases takes the form of state subsidized funding. The superculture employs various internal mediums to maintain its privileged position, foster exportable products and provide conduits which will allow mobility, creating layers of "definition and control which (are) exquisitely articulated with the mainstream system of management, both state and industrial" (Slobin: 37).

New Zealand's well documented radio content and local music quota debates and discussions are central as well to the idea of the superculture, advocating the formation of protectionist policies as an antidote to the cultural imperialism of Anglo-American culture (Pickering and Shuker, 1994). Consequently, individuals and bands in New Zealand are often marketed as "major international acts, devoid of national identity" their origins or any specifically indigenous references erased (Hayward: 50). But the success of New Zealand independent music is organized precisely around its "New Zealandness", the marginal status being seen as a virtue that perfectly crystallizes certain aesthetic and subcultural currencies. This occurs on a reduced scale in which the portability of the 'local' is exploited because "record labels and radio programmers know that the independents are often mediators of the emotional and cultural baggage of indigenous popular music" (50).

Developments over the last few years at Flying Nun suggest that perhaps even its relation to concepts of 'place' and the 'local' are shifting, coming as a result of increased global networking. Flying Nun lacked the resources to get more of its product heard overseas and signed a distribution deal with WEA in 1989. This lasted a short while until Flying Nun was picked up by Mushroom Records in Australia, using Festival Records as

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a distributor. Coincident with this was Flying Nun founder Roger Sheperd's move to head up Flying Nun Europe, basing himself in England and expanding the Flying Nun roster to include, for the first time, distribution deals with non-New Zealand bands including Ween (US), Stereolab (UK), Cul de Sac (US) and Labradford (US). Briefly, between October 1996 and October 1997, Flying Nun opened a North American wing run by a former Mammoth employee. It was housed in a building run by Merge label head and avowed kiwi-rock lover Mac Macaughan of lo-fi indie rockers Superchunk. (It closed when the owner moved to New York to pursue other interests).

Flying Nun is often cited as a model of ideal practice for indie record labels, seen as successfully operating as a medium-sized label remaining true to indie ideals, uncompromising and always cutting edge, perfectly replicating the logics of indie rock and its attendant scenes. However, as Bourdieu (1993) states, the project of maintaining marginal/subcultural status in the field of cultural production becomes more difficult as an organization "gets older" and must adjust itself to the expansionist imperatives of a global market economy:

> Ageing is almost inevitably accompanied by an 'economic' transformation of the relation to the 'economy', i.e. a moderating of the denial of the 'economy' which is in dialectical relation with the scale of business and the size of the firm. The only defence against 'growing old' is a refusal to 'get fat' through profits and for profit, a refusal to enter the dialectic of profit which, by increasing the size of the firm and consequently the overheads, imposes a pursuit of profit through larger markets, leading to the devaluation entailed in a 'mass appeal'. (104)

Bourdieu's idea of "growing older", which includes the notion of 'benign' expansion and growth, certainly ironizes Flying Nun's tenth anniversary compilation *Getting Older 1981-1991*, released at a time when the label

was trying to extend its services through license and distribution deals within larger organizations such as Mushroom Records in Australia.

Licensing arrangements with companies throughout the globe are always framed as a 'necessary evil'. However, the virtues attached to music produced in a small country whose resources are limited by scale of operation combined with its position tucked away in the corner of the globe ameliorates any anxiety over getting 'too big for its britches'. Bourdieu (1993) has noted as much:

> the opposition between the 'commercial' and the 'non-commercial' is the generative principle of most of the judgments which...establish the frontier between what is and what is not art...it is always an opposition between small-scale and large-scale ('commercial') production. (82)

This is a strategy deployed to distinguish large transnational corporations such as Sony, MCA etc. from smaller labels which, as was illustrated in the previous chapter, also have markets that are transnational. The overtures towards a disavowal of dependence on the economic field underlie the discourses framing cultural production in indie rock. This includes the overdetermined negative rhetoric of 'selling out' which is used as a measure of authentic cultural value, and a way in which the apparent contradictions engendered by their place in the shadow of a global cultural economy can be elided.

The small scale operation of Flying Nun within New Zealand is perfectly replicated in North America by the diffuse nature of licensing agreements. There is no single distributor for either Flying Nun or Xpressway in North America as there is in Australia (under Mushroom Records/Festival Records), France or the UK (Flying Nun Europe). Instead the records are carried by a variety of small/medium labels spread throughout North America: Communion (San Francisco), Mammoth and Merge (North

Carolina), Dark Beloved Cloud (New York), Roof Bolt (Oak Park, Illinois), Ajax (Chicago), Siltbreeze (Philadelphia), Homestead (New York), Summershine (an Australian label distributed by Sub Pop) and Caroline (New York). When asked about having no centralized distributor in North America Paul McKessar at Flying Nun replied:

> When we are trying to license an album in America, we don't export it. Some copies will turn up, usually from UK-based one-stops, but we are not actively exporting these records to US distributors. It makes it easier to get an album out domestically if there aren't hundreds of expensive imports around. Licensing a record takes time and effort but the rewards are clear...Most of our bands want to get to America and we need someone to be putting the records out there usually with the potential to provide some financial support for tours....We'd love things to happen faster, but we - and many of the people we're dealing with - lack the resources to make that so.
> (Paul McKessar, NZPOP-L discussion)

While the temporary appearance of a satellite office of Flying Nun in North America complicated its place in the dispersed label model, Xpressway, the 'other' New Zealand label (now defunct) adds another level of resonance to the problems of distribution. Xpressway emerged out of the gap left open by Flying Nun's move to Auckland in 1988. Generally seen as an alternative to Flying Nun's jangle pop, offering instead a more experimental, artier and avant-garde roster, Xpressway found a tiny yet devoted audience of overseas listeners who coveted each limited edition release which then took on the status of collectors' items. The actual dissolution of Xpressway in 1992, coming as a result of the dispersed nature of licensing agreements the label had made throughout the globe, suggested that it had "no actual existence as a label in its own right" (Mitchell, 1994: 47). These elaborate networks and channels of distribution are part of a global infrastructure in which even a minor/specialist label

such as Xpressway ('run by artists for artists') finds itself operating, where the "local and the global intersect in different ways in different places, and there is great spatial variability in the robustness of the local conditions which permit growth. In other words, global processes can in a sense be pinned down in certain localities and hence can become the basis for self-sustaining growth in those places." (Lash and Urry: 284).

The positive and economically successful reception of New Zealand music in North America is due in part to the manner in which the 'diasporic interculture' of independent rock is connected through these networks, emerging "from the linkages that subcultures set up across national boundaries" (Slobin: 44). The New Zealand indie rock network includes a number of label owners ('simplices') who are also record reviewers, or 'traffic' managers, occupying a number of positions across the field of cultural production. For example: Bill Meyer who runs Roof Bolt is also a writer for *Magnet* and Pop *Watch*; Douglas Wolk who is managing editor of *CMJ* runs Dark Beloved Cloud; Tim Adams who runs Ajax (no longer a label proper, but still popular and well-respected distributor which carries the records put out by Dark Beloved Cloud and Roof Bolt, as well as those New Zealand records put out by European labels such as Germany's Raffmond) writes for *Pop Watch* and other zines. The ability to work across the field, occupying strategic positions embedded in the mediascape, technoscape and ideoscape create what Straw (1991) describes as "the terrain of alternative rock" in which resides

> a distinctive density of historical time within the performance
> styles of alternative groups: most noticeably, an inflection of
> older, residual styles with a contemporary irony which itself
> evokes a bohemian heritage in which that combination has its
> antecedents. Similarly, as moves within alternative rock produce
> more and more detailed syntheses of style and form, they fill in
> the range of options between canonical styles, the latter serving

as....markers of privileged antecedents from which eclectic stylistic exercises develop outwards. This process as a whole might be described as one in which temporal movement is transformed into cartographic density. (380-381)

Through broadcast media such as community/college radio and small (inter- and intra-) nationally distributed magazines such as *Popwatch*, *Magnet* and *Puncture*, the privileged place of New Zealand music abroad is linked to the set of shared and communal 'stylistic exercises' within independent rock. In these distant places a common and global musical heritage (itself facilitated by the mediascape-technoscape) is forged and a shared ideoscape elaborated (i.e.: the marginal relation to the dominant ideology and/or superculture). Consequently, the ethnoscape and the notion of localism/imagined community embedded in ideas of New Zealand rock can be readily established. Straw has stated that:

> The aesthetic values which dominate local alternative terrains are for the most part those of a musical cosmopolitanism wherein the points of musical reference are likely to remain stable from one community to another. The development of an alternative-rock culture may be said to follow a logic in which a particular pluralism of musical languages repeats itself from one community to another. Each local space has evolved, to a varying degrees, the range of musical vernaculars emergent within other, and the global culture of alternative rock music is one in which localism has been reproduced, in relatively uniform ways, on a continental and international level. (378)

Straw is not suggesting a uniformity of style, sound or practice, but proposing that within each regional subculture there is a relation to historical and musical movements that exemplifies a type of supercultural practice contained within the subculture. At the same time he is attempting to account for the apparent replication of musical idioms across the globe. The tensions between similarity and difference, continuity

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and change, are manifest in the hegemonic practices that circumscribe or containing the possible range and trajectories that a scene may follow. These types of practices are central the creation of an ideoscape that is global, at least in terms of common vernaculars and range of practices deemed acceptable.

CONSUMPTION

In considering the reception of New Zealand music in North America I began an email dialogue with a friend whose commitment to NZ music has a longer and deeper history than my own. His buying habits are as much about archiving/cataloguing New Zealand music as they are about simply collecting for the pleasure gained by the music. I have included his response to my question "Why New Zealand music?" in full, because it points to some ideas of collecting that fit neatly into the ideas of scapes that I have applied throughout this discussion:

> I think that the appeal of NZ music, or at least some movements within the NZ scene is the sense that I get when listening to much of the Flying Nun/Xpressway releases and that ilk, that this is music for the sake of the music and not generally for the sake of money, fame, critical acclaim, etc. Much like R&B in the late 60's and early 70's, or pretty much the whole principle of folk music, there seems to be a contentedness in creating uncompromising music whether it be snappy pop, tragic pop noise, "free noise" or that sort of mess the Axemen spit out...and not an interest in being recognized in the street. The sense I get is that through the developmental years of this scene that not many cared if they sold more than a few records(Michael Morley, who recently made that folk music analogy, told me that until a few months ago he kept issuing these edition of 50 or 80 Gate records because he didn't think more than 50-80 people would be interested in what he was doing). I've found a remarkable amount of this music to have great integrity, the originality of New Zealand's isolation and a consistency of quality not seen by me in my many years following music(perhaps the punk explosion (not nearly as reliable)or the New Jersey/North Carolina scene in the

early-mid 80's (dB's, Individuals, Sneakers, Bongos, etc) might compare. (email to author, 2/11/96)

While not trying to implicate all fans in what Vallor says, or reduce one fan's experience of music to how all fans consume it, there is embedded within Vallor's comment a variety of impulses that fuel the privileged position New Zealand music occupies in North America. With appeals to ideas of 'folk' culture and the 'uncompromising' practice of music making as well as lamenting the state of indie rock in North America, Dan's comment provides a framework in which to better examine New Zealand music and its relation to the independent/alternative rock scene in North America. His note about limited run 7-inch and album production provides an entry point for a broader discussion of collecting generally and its relationship to independent rock specifically. The acquisition, organization, classification processes surrounding collecting should be seen as a backdrop against which the success of New Zealand music is set. The focus on collecting, where small production runs of lathe-cut 7-inches and limited edition albums have achieved prestigious value in the imaginations and collections of New Zealand music fans, is suggestive of the intersection of material and symbolic practices, the production and maintenance of hierarchies of value (which are constituted by processes of evaluation and valuing) and how each effects the shape of independent rock culture.

The social and symbolic functions of the 7-inch and the limited edition album are an indication of how goods circulate within the rarefied atmosphere of a specialized cultural economy. There are a number of interconnected points that I want to stress throughout this discussion, each germane to the logic of independent rock generally and New Zealand independent rock specifically. The first point centres on the nature of goods and commodities and, more specifically, their position in hierarchies

of value. When is a good a commodity and can a commodity ever escape being 'damned' to the cycle of commodity circulation? The second point is that the fan's acquisition of the 7-inch and the album should be understood as being only partially about collecting. What is the connection between the consumption of a particular musical text, which at one level can be construed as a fetish object or at another the aestheticization of use-value, and the nature of musical production generally? In the cycle of commodity production does a lathe-cut 7-inch or a limited edition album have a functional value which complements or even supersedes its symbolic value? How, and by who, is that value determined? Each of these points are indices of the tensions that underlie the discursive construction of value within indie rock and can be usefully deployed to examine the processes informing the production, distribution and consumption of New Zealand independent rock amongst a community of like-minded fans.

The shifting status of artifacts such as the 7-inch and the limited edition album as consumable goods situated within a musical field highlights their movement between the realms of objecthood and commodification. In order to maintain this dual status, their placement in a hierarchy of value depends on evaluative criteria specific to the field of its production and consumption. By hierarchy of value I mean, for example, the uneven arrangement of use-value in relation to exchange-value and vice-versa. In a monetary field exchange-value in the form of profit is privileged over use-value. In contrast, the field of cultural production, according to Bourdieu, can be divided into large-scale production and restricted production (for more detail see Chapter One). Large-scale production is loosely defined as the mainstream in which success is measured in terms of profit and return. In the field of restricted production use-value, or even aesthetic value, are placed above exchange-value and autonomy and authenticity become

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markers of legitimate and elevated notions of success. A restricted field of cultural production, which Bourdieu classes as producers producing for other producers, more than adequately describes independent rock and the blurred distinctions between the musician and fan in which consumers are often producers and vice versa.

In a musical field like that of independent rock objects such as the 7-inch and limited run album are often discursively positioned outside a system of exchange value, a reminder that value itself is a result of shifting and layered meanings. Value often accrues to a good as its trajectory through a culture reflects and is refracted through social, technological, and market shifts. As Barbara Herrnstein-Smith (1988) suggests:

> All value is radically contingent, being neither a fixed attribute, an inherent quality, or an objective property of things but, rather, an effect of multiple, continuously changing, and continuously interacting variables or, to put this another way, the product of dynamics of a system, specifically an economic system. (30)

I will take economy in this context to mean something other than its strict market definition. Instead it will refer to what Raymond Williams (1977), in his study of the etymology of the word, reminds us was its use in describing "the management of a household and then the management of a community before it became the description of a perceived system of production, distribution, and exchange" (11). 'Economy', in its rhetorical slipperiness, can then refer also to personal affective economies and the larger group's moral economy. Each of these economies impinge on one another by framing a number of interactive relationships and forms of interdependence, which endeavour to halt the contingency of value. In indie rock this is most often achieved through the deployment of discursive and organizational strategies that attempt to organize the high variability and slow the accelerated turnover of music. Objects such as singles and

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albums are arranged according to an always already existing constellation of values, framed in terms specific to a moral economy that echoes preindustrial practices "in which the circulation of objects, the making of memories and reputations, and the pursuit of social distinction through strategies of partnership all come together" (Appadurai, 1992: 18). This has manifest itself in a moral economy which stresses community and reinforces a series of affective alliances both inside and outside the local arena of consumption, constituting and constitutive of what Smith calls a 'dynamic of endurance'.

As is the case in Montréal musical culture, these notions of endurance and contingency are a reminder that goods serve as both instruments of continuity and as instruments of change in modern culture (McCracken, 1988). As instruments of continuity, the conservative nature of objects is stressed. The sounds permanently etched into the grooves of a vinyl single or album are a literal record of a musical moment produced in a specific time and place. Existing as concrete realizations of individual or group ideals they are part of a visible (or more appropriately aural) culture which establishes a public and private record. The symbolic nature of goods is evident in the way consumer objects allows us to glimpse the basis of their signification. They display principles according to which they were constituted. They come appended with a record of the cultural coordinates according to which they and the concepts they signify were formed.

The nature of endurance, durability and continuity and their relation to evaluative processes can be partially understood through the theoretical discourses that surround notions of the collection and collecting. As James Clifford (1994) reminds us collections represent "some sort of gathering around the self and the group - the assemblage of a material 'world', the

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marking-off of a subjective domain that is not 'other'. All such collections embody hierarchies of value, exclusions, rule-governed territories of the self." (259). Organized according to selective hierarchies of value, collections often represent the replacement of monetary value with aesthetic value, a shift achieved through a parallel economic system which has its own patterns of meaning and principles of exchange. As Susan Stewart (1996) suggests: "Whereas the larger economy has replaced use value through the translation of labor into exchange value, the economy of the collection translates the monetary system into the system of objects. Indeed, that system of objects is often designed to serve as a stay against the frailties of the very monetary system from which it has sprung" (159). The collection is imbued with an aura of transcendence and autonomy which seemingly operates outside the monetarized system of exchange and valuation. The 7-inch and vinyl album consequently have auratic qualities attached to them as the elaboration of specialized knowledge and anecdotal minutiae add to the rarefied language spoken by fans, further separating them from the mundane plainness of everyday objects.

In a symbolic retreat to a mode of pre-capitalist production, the auratic and transcendent values of the 7-inch and the vinyl album are resacralized for indie rock consumers through an appeal to indie rock's small-scale production. Within the ersatz folk-culture of independent rock the notion of craft and artisansal manufacture are stressed above mass production. Stewart repositions the notion of craft so that it becomes integral to the type of value given the collection and the objects contained therein:

> Crafts are contiguous to preindustrial modes of production, and thus use value lies at the core of their aesthetic forms; analogously, the production of amusement mimes the seriality and abstraction of postindustrial modes of production. Within

contemporary consumer society, the collection takes the place of crafts as the prevailing form of domestic pastime. Ironically, such collecting combines a preindustrial aesthetic of the handmade and singular object with a postindustrial mode of acquisition/ production: the ready-made. (Stewart: 165)

Goods, particularly in their capacity as crafts, can act as a type of ballast that works against cultural drift, where exchange value is suppressed and use/utilitarian and social value is heightened. Embedded in the 7-inch and the vinyl album is a symbolic world in which the DIY ethos and the small scale production echoes an uncorrupted artisanal past, born of a disdain for flashy production values and the corporate muscle of transnational record companies.

In the private domestic space of the adoring fan's bedroom, the album collection has a specialized and personalized value, but its meaning extends beyond those four walls to return again to questions generated by its social value. It is evidence of a tension, as Straw (1997) suggests, between seeing the collection simultaneously as private haven and cultural monument. In this, and many other respects, theories about collecting are inadequate to describe the multiple functions of the 7-inch and vinyl album in spaces and places beyond those of individualized private havens. The gathering and classifying typical of the collector depends, at least in most accounts of collecting, on an aesthetic disposition. Bourdieu has described the aesthetic disposition as a "generalized capacity to neutralize ordinary urgencies and to bracket off practical ends, a durable inclination and aptitude for practice without practical function, can only be constituted within an experience of the world freed from urgency and through the practice of activities which are an end in themselves" (Bourdieu cited in Danet and Katriel, 1994: 226). As Danet and Katriel suggest (1994) there are three criteria that might be considered elemental to an aesthetic

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attitude. Firstly, it is non-practical. That is, the object is perceived for its own sake and not in order to pursue some goal by means of it. Secondly it is non-cognitive, where cognitive knowledge about the object is analytically distinct from immediate sensory experience of it. Finally it is non-personal, that is, the experience is disinterested (where formal characteristics are privileged above those of content) (Danet and Katriel: 225). All three criteria are inadequate in accounting for the function of musical formats such as the 7-inch or album, even as it escapes being reduced to a purely aesthetic object or pursuit. Firstly, they perform a practical and social function, as a mode of communication and as a text, which in their lo-fi aesthetic continually refers to the context of its production (a bedroom or home studio in New Zealand for instance). Secondly, the lathe cut 7-inch and album do exist on a cognitive level, inasmuch as they come encoded with ideologies and material properties that are not erased but celebrated through the discourses that motivate the language and practices of indie rock. Finally, the limited run 7-inch and the small pressings of vinyl albums offer the most personalized expression available to the indie rock consumer. The former's size and the latter's small-scale production are often construed discursively as individualized addresses to the fan/consumer which reflect and affirm the home-spun values central to subcultural notions of community.

The interrelated and intimate connections between production, distribution and consumption in indie rock are crucial to the creation of a seemingly autonomous cultural economy. To suggest that the acquisition of 7-inches or limited run albums within indie rock is solely about collecting neglects the links between these moments in their life cycles. Stewart claims that "the collection is a form of art as play, a form involving the reframing of objects within a world of attention and manipulation of

context. Like other forms of art, its function is not the restoration of context of origin, but rather the creation of a new context, a context standing in a metaphorical, rather than a contiguous, relation to the world of everyday life" (152). While indie rock might be construed as an autonomous cultural sphere separate from the alienating machinery of the major music industry, the context of origin remains wedded to the mode of production and is in this sense crucial to how 7-inches and vinyl albums are understood (symbolic value) and used (functional value). As objects expressing historical, ideological and aesthetic continuity they retain a metonymical, rather than metaphorical, relation with the cultural context from which they came. Contrary to Clifford's assertion that "the time and order of the collection erase the concrete social labour of its making" the value of the labour that went into the manufacture of the music is often central to the discursive formations shaping independent rock. Most fans consider their cultural production less alienated and elevate it above the corrupt, distant and abstracted labour of major label production. The link between cultural producer and consumer is presumed to be 'closer' in indie rock, in which a labour of love is often indistinguishable from the love of a very specialized labour. Eric Weisbard has summed this up neatly:

> (Indie rock created) a form of rock that could thrive on
> voluntarism, subsistence, and obscurity, where the distance
> between fanship and participation was no distance at all, so one
> could be a consumer without the traditional associations of gross
> commodification, audience passivity, and massness.
> (Weisbard: 15)

The elaboration of this sort of moral economy depends on the ability of the 7-inch and vinyl albums to perform active functions outside of the collection and relates to the second function of goods which is their capacity to act as instruments of change. The process of change unfolds

on two levels. The first offers an opportunity to fashion a new cultural concept through the selective use, novel combination, and premeditated innovation of existing cultural meanings, stressing the flexibility of any object as a creative medium. The second level allows an internal and external dialogue to take place between members of a subculture (offering a means of reflecting accepted group values) and between a dominant group and subordinate group. The resulting formation is what Appadurai calls a 'commodity ecumene', a "network of relationships linking producers, distributors, and consumers of a particular commodity or set of commodities" (Appadurai, 1986: 27). Through these affinities indie rock musicians and fans form a cultural economy which comes appended with a moral economy, reinforced by the symbolic and discursive power produced through a mythology of opposition.

Serving as instruments of continuity and change, there are two trajectories objects such as the 7-inch or vinyl album might follow: the first comes after a period of time during which technological advantages privilege one format over another, whereby its original functions disappear. Hence it will fall into disrepair, be disregarded, interest will wane whereby it might retain some layer of value as a 'relic' of 'historical' interest (its pastness). Among certain indie fans the privileging of vinyl over compact disc is the most well-known example, although it costs more to produce a 7-inch single than a full-length compact disc[8]. The other trajectory

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[8] Skippy at March Records (New York) suggested that the average price to manufacture 1,000 7-inch singles is about $1,000. By contrast, he suggests, "the average price to manufacture 1,000 CD's is about $600-700. That doesn't include packaging on either end. Besides that, we figure that with all costs in it costs $1.50 per single and we sell it for $2.00 (wholesale). A CD you can make for $1.25 all in and sell for $6.50-7.00 each. Much better for projects that may only sell 300 copies. If you do a single, you MUST sell all the copies or lose money." [SkippyUSA@aol.com]. "A history of the 7 inch" Email to author, April 2, 1997. Another label owner based in California offered a much more accurate breakdown in a post to the IndiePop Mailing List.
ACME Record Pressing Costs (in American dollars):
7": 100-299   51 cents each; 300-499   47 cents each; 500-749   44 cents each; 750-999   41 cents each; 1000&up   38 cents each. This does not include the cost of mastering ($60.00), plating

suggests that in this same context of competition it retains some functions (which may not be those which gave it its initial value) and it can continue to be culturally reproduced (its presentness). It is in this context that a certain residual value might be retained, insuring its very survival and endurance. Herrnstein Smith states that these traces are part of:

> witness to lost innocence, former glory, and/or apparently persistent communal interests and values and thus a banner of communal identity....as a stylistic and generic exemplar that will energize the production of subsequent works and texts (upon which the latter will be modeled) not merely to *survive within* but to *shape and create* the culture in which its value is produced and transmitted...to perpetuate the conditions of its own flourishing. Nothing endures like endurance. (50)

The culture of independent rock is framed by discursive and rhetorical strategies aimed at differentiating itself from the calculated wantonness of the major music industry. Independent rock fans, label owners, music makers, college/community radio stations and fanzine writers continue the subcultural reproduction of a commodity ecumene which stresses that consumer goods have a significance going beyond their utilitarian character and commercial value in as much as they communicate definitive cultural meaning. The 7-inch and vinyl album are subsequently imbued with performative functions and encoded with symbolic values which give them a cultural meaning and concreteness for the individual and group that they would not otherwise have.

Broadly speaking, making sense of indie rock often depends on the activity of collecting as a synchronic fixing of one style or genre, a process

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(between $37.00-$82.00), or test pressings ($30..00). Label printing costs are not included either. Pressing on coloured vinyl pushes the cost of each 7-inch up to 15 cents more
Compact Disc
1000 bulk discs with two-color printing on disc and postage included: $700
("Making Vinyl" from Cory, Richard [o_o_o@hotmail.com] email to [indiepop-list@eskimo.com], June 12, 1998.)

realized in contrast to the diachronic flow that typically overwhelms the indie rock listener. The contingency of value of which Herrnstein writes is momentarily suspended through the selection and organization of various musical texts. A response to the high turnover and variability of independent rock, the result is a manageable historicizing that comes with the 'discovery' of another country's music which becomes embedded in the cataloguing/serializing fetishes and habits of the connoisseur/obscurist. Collecting sets in motion both an illusory teleology and defers gratification, feeding the creation and maintenance of a bottomless pit of undiscovered music. This narrow mode of consumption is not at odds with the structures of capital accumulation; instead it often goes towards maintaining habituated buying practices and singular modes of consumption. Collecting, and the attendant process of canonization, may actually facilitate the corporate machinations of niche marketing through the elaboration of a parallel or "shadow culture" which runs alongside but not necessarily in opposition to the dominant musical culture (Fiske, 1992).

What this suggests is that these aesthetic-cultural practices embody two impulses: First, "we have witnessed the further encroachment of capital into the cultural sphere exemplified by the manner in which the future can be harnessed by shortening the time-scale of consumption and accelerating the cycles of need and desire in fashion". The second impulse appears on the surface to be an opposite, as the art-market (as an example) is a "guarantee of long-term security amidst the general flux of an inflationary era, a way to 'store value under conditions where the usual money forms were deficient'" (David Harvey, cited by Connor, 1995: 232). The collector/connoisseur becomes deeply enmeshed in the continued elaboration of the minutest esoterica of New Zealand music. Through a process of valuation, literally 'fixating', the collector imbues his or her

objects (in relation to other objects and realized through socially sanctioned scales of value) with meaning and degrees of affect that work on a different time-scale than that of the global cultural economy. There is the "sustaining of the present into the future, of decelerating time", a strategy that simultaneously buys (literally) into systems of consumption which challenges the rapid changeover and cycles that characterizes the larger imperatives of capitalism (Connor, 1992: 232).

The successful enactment of these micro-practices by New Zealand music fans in North America illustrates the contradictory, competing and complementary aspects of a globalized/transnationalized soundscape that record buying and fandom embody. For instance, aided by the selective imperatives of the mediascape which allow only certain sonic histories to be narrativized while others are marginalized, the limited run pressings that Michael Morley or Bruce Russell at Corpus Hermeticum were making for a tiny New Zealand market have become treasured objects abroad. The inadequacies and inequities generated through the technoscape also determine the speed at which these artifacts are disseminated and transported, while the superculture's sanctioning of a narrow type of exportable product maintains the Anglo-American hegemony within the music industry. The intersection and layering of these scapes maintains and valorizes independent rock's ideoscape, instituting principles of containment and traffic flow management which affect the value accruing to all aspects of music production.

The relative success of New Zealand music in North America, which depends on the proper flow afforded by these various scapes, requires a return to what constitutes New Zealand music exactly and opens the discussion up to include notions of canonicity, cultural authority and cultural capital. During 1995, debates on the NZ-POP discussion group took place

around the editing of a new book, Kiwi Rock: A Reference Book (1996).

Listing the so-called 'important' New Zealand bands generated a number of

positive and negative posts as to what precisely makes up the canon, what

is included and excluded (Maori and Polynesian bands are for the most part

excluded, as is dance music. For more on this see Mitchell, 1997). New

Zealand music journalist Mark Cubey said of the book:

> Yes, yes, I realize that it's a 'rock' book, and that much of the
> music produced over the last couple of decades fits that
> whitemaleguitar (sic) niche; my problem is that this sort of music
> does not represent...where NZ is heading now, and books like this
> just cement a particular NZ music image, particularly in the minds
> of our under informed overseas bros and sisses.
>   (Email to NZ-Pop List, 9/12/95)

Much like record collecting, the book only records certain histories, the

editors adopting a form of what Stewart calls self-enclosure by privileging

classification and taxonomy over broader cultural or historical contexts

(151). More to Cubey's larger point, the selective canonization of select

groups and individuals (The Chills, The Clean, The Bats, Dead C, Peter

Jefferies, Alastair Galbraith, and the recent rediscovery/recuperation of

forgotten local legends Roy Montgomery and Bill Direen) is motivated by an

atavistic reminiscence of some prelapsarian moment when the proliferation

of sounds and scenes in North America proceeded at pace deemed more

manageable.

Herrnstein Smith reminds us that the sorts of evaluative processes at

work here are defining elements of community. They affect the type and

level of participation, as well as arranging tastes and preferences through

the balanced display and concealment of various types of knowledge,

strategies of maintenance and continuity:

> The prevailing structure of tastes and preferences within some
> community (and consequent illusions of a consensus based on
> objective value) will always be implicitly threatened or directly

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challenged by the divergent tastes and preferences of some subjects within the community (for example, those not yet adequately acculturated, such as the young, and others with "uncultivated tastes", such as provincials and social upstarts)...Consequently, institutions of evaluative authority will be called upon repeatedly to devise arguments and procedures that validate the community's established tastes and preferences, thereby warding off barbarism and the constant apparition of an imminent collapse of standards and also justifying the exercise of their normative activity.   (Herrnstein Smith: 40).

The success of the numerous organizational strategies and attempts at canonizing selected artists and groups depends on the ability to properly define and cater to specific taste cultures. To do this effectively, that is, to nominate certain texts and artists as eligible or legitimate, there must be the proper accumulation and display of specific types of authorized knowledge. Bourdieu's use of 'symbolic capital' describes this as a form of practice that differentiates those that 'know', from those that 'don't know', determining who can then speak as an authority. As with any fan-driven culture, the issues of authority and cultural competence are integral to mapping out the boundaries of the field.

Where in the one case status systems are protected and reproduced by restricting equivalences and exchange in *stable* universe of commodities, in a (system of cultural production) what is restricted and controlled is *taste* in an *ever-changing* universe of commodities, with the illusion of complete interchangeability and unrestricted access (Appadurai, 1986: 25).

The ability to display symbolic or cultural capital in the form of taste is a proper prerequisite to enter the subcultural arena in which, according to Appadurai, tournaments of value can be played out. In these status games, a well catalogued and indexed collection is one guarantee of heightened prestige as sustained through the appropriate display of symbolic capital.

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A second range of positions founded on prestige (which also function as positions in which prestige can be bestowed) is facilitated by the role of a cultural intermediary who offers other means by which tastes can be aligned. Occupying positions in many of the same networks shared by Derivative Records, North American label owners, such as Bill Meyer (Roof Bolt) and Douglas Wolk (Dark Beloved Cloud), have adopted a firm commitment to distributing New Zealand indie rock. They orient themselves in the musical field by maintaining positions dense with subcultural authority, writing in respected magazines (*Pop Watch, Magnet* and *CMJ*) with broad subcultural appeal and wide circulation. Meyer suggested that his introduction to New Zealand independent rock was due to his position as a rock journalist.

> My interest in the music as a fan and music journalist led to the development of personal connections. These personal connections meant that I could put out really good stuff to start, where a lot of labels start out releasing their friends mediocre punk records because that's all that is available. New Zealand isn't the only place to have good music, but it had an unusually high concentration of it in the 80s, and when I started writing about it no one else seemed to be doing so.
> (e-mail to author, 7/10/95)

The subcultural capital they acquire through the magazines, aiding the ability to foster musical and antipodal connections, is re-invested in the creation of small-scale labels, confirming their function as significant nodes in the networks through which New Zealand music is channeled. The position of taste custodian and cultural intermediary occupied by these label owners allows them to act as managers in the flow of musical traffic, providing filters which sift out the various musics, add layers of value to chosen texts and thereby informally consolidate an audience for New Zealand music.

How the flow of goods is determined and directed by these intermediaries depends on a number of other mediating factors, not the least of which is the digital domain of cyberspace. The organization of a global audience around New Zealand independent rock has been significantly affected by the emergence of computer mediated communication systems. The resulting shift in means and modes of production, distribution and consumption has also meant a significant change in the shape of audiences for New Zealand music. The transnationalization of production, distribution/marketing and consumption Morley and Robbins (1995) describe as the "process in which the 'vertical' organisation of people within national communities (is) being supplanted by their organisation into 'horizontal' communities - people are connected electronically rather than by geographical proximity" (Morley and Robbins: 61). The NZ-Pop discussion group on the Internet typifies the consolidation of a global fan base for New Zealand music, guaranteeing and maintaining a culture which is composed of fans, academics, DIY 'zine writers, small label owners, and musicians (which includes musicians that are part of the very scene being discussed). Notably, more than half of the approximately 300 people who subscribe to the NZ-Pop list (managed by an American fan living in Boston) are North American.

The list itself provides a number of options and levels of participation, including the discussion of artists, gossip, musical tablature, radio playlists and on a more mercantile level, the buying and selling of hard to find or out of print records. As debates about the Kiwi Rock book illustrate, it is also a space where various hierarchies of value are instituted, contested and affirmed. Tony Mitchell (1997) has examined in detail, alongside an assessment of many overseas fans' introduction to New Zealand indie rock, the construction of a New Zealand music canon as mediated through the

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list. He states that the range of knowledges produced through the discussion of New Zealand indie rock is necessarily detached from, or mistakenly misrepresents, local experience:

> While misreadings of the music of distant places are a common feature of our appreciation of World music and the music of other cultures, they do not enable us to comment with authority on those musics. Similarly, the shared appreciation of music which Internet discussion groups afford throughout an international network of aficionados is not necessarily conducive to an understanding of the social and cultural origins and determining factors of that music, or even of its range and diversity
> (Mitchell: 89)

It is this misrepresentation that remains the most significant aspect of the fan-based culture connected through the computer-mediated environment of the list. The activity on the list illustrates that a range of values are displaced in which the terms valorized (heterogeneity, difference, ethnicity) are replaced by others (homogeneity, generic similarities, whiteness). A number of diverse musical histories are conflated, erased and subsumed under a unifying and one-dimensional, hence manageable, narrative. However, the assumptions made by many non-New Zealand subscribers do not remain incontestable, as Mitchell suggests:

> Kiwi subscribers may dispute US subscribers' right to interpret and collect New Zealand music, but the fact remains that New Zealand music relies on the US market for dissemination and survival, and US support for the music has helped considerably local attempts to describe, define, debate and dispute the existence of a 'New Zealand sound' as well as to consider the importance of Maori and Pacific Islanders music in this sound
> (Mitchell: 91-92)

Mitchell is careful not to view the NZ-Pop List as an idealized public sphere. He notes, borrowing from Goodwin (1993), that there are hierarchies and schema in place that distinguish between those that know from those that don't, between experts and neophytes. Paul McKessar of

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Flying Nun confirms this by suggesting the list and the dissemination of these sorts of knowledges have improved the reputation and sales of the label:

> I think it has. The opportunity for people to discuss music is great in places like NZPop. It is good for neophytes to ask questions about what's out there and for know-it-alls to pontificate. I like that. I hope the web is an important part of the future of keeping interest in our catalogue - it is not easy to keep pressing CDs when demand is limited; I hope that the web is one of our ways around this in the future. (Email to author, 16/6/98)

The list has had a direct impact on Flying Nun's sales to overseas fans, as McKessar (sarcastically) admits:

> A lot of our established international mail order customers have switched over to email ordering. We have seduced over a thousand people into leaving their address after visiting our website and they now 'enjoy' our irregular email newsletters. It has been a great thing for us in the small-time way that it informs our established fanbase and spreads the word out slowly. It is not the most dynamic or high-speed way of promoting records, but word gets around in a very tasty way. I think it is well-suited to cult record labels like Flying Nun; more so than tiny new indies or large established major labels. (ibid.)

Building on a reputation that emerged out of a decade's worth of globally dispersed zine/periodical reviews and broadcasts on distant community/college radio, Flying Nun has begun to rethink techniques for 'surviving' in a musical field cluttered by an undifferentiated mass of goods. Both of McKessar's statements about the Internet's effect on Flying Nun sales are a celebration of commercialism and community simultaneously, two seemingly antithetical forces rhetorically realigned as mutually interdependent in order to properly ensure Flying Nun's survival as a 'cult' label in the eyes of audience member, consumer, fan and/or community participant.

This intersection of markets, audiences and publics in the mediated spaces provided by cyberspace points to a number of contradictions which are central determinants in the type of community that may unfold. In a cultural community which is made up of a series of globalized exchanges and transactions (information, knowledge and goods) the commingling of various discourses of togetherness, cooperation and sharing (crucial to the continued success of any imagined community) are often at cross-purposes with the mercantile demands of the labels, buyers, and sellers that also inhabit these spaces. The result is a series of competing value/evaluative systems that have become an integral part of how that cultural community defines and sustains itself. The demand among fans of New Zealand music in North America for the sort of goods that have a specialized cultural appeal beyond simple additions to a collection can at one level be construed as a celebration of a narrow fragment of a national culture. At a more cynical level, it could be construed as another not-so-veiled form of ethnocentric appropriation of exotic goods which can be displayed in various settings to gain prestige and maintain a certain status amongst peers. Appadurai (1986) probes these tensions by linking them with a series of processes of acquisition and what he calls 'commoditization by diversion':

> These are examples of what we might call commoditization by diversion, where value, in art or fashion markets, is accelerated or enhanced by placing object and things in unlikely contexts. It is the aesthetics of decontextualization (itself driven by the quest for novelty) that is at the heart of display, in highbrow Western homes, of the tools of the "other": the Turkmen saddlebag, Masai spear, Dinka basket. In these objects, we see not only the equation of the authentic with the exotic everyday object, but also the aesthetics of diversion. Such diversion is not only an instrument of decommoditization of the object, but also of the (potential) intensification of commoditization by the enhancement of value attendant upon its diversion. This enhancement of value

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through the diversion of commodities from their customary circuits underlies the plunder of enemy valuables in warfare, the purchase and display of "primitive" utilitarian objects, the framing of found objects, the making of collections of any sort. (28)

Appadurai's comments about commodities, collections and cultures are a useful way in which to bring this discussion towards a conclusion. The process of diversion has, as Appadurai notes, a long and infamous history marked by appropriation, exploitation and exoticism. Consequently, the tasteful display of diverted and domesticated objects is, literally and figuratively, quite revealing. The recontextualization of objects, whether they be religious icons, medieval relics or 7-inch singles, has always been determined according to the hierarchies of value indigenous to their new contexts, their new 'homes'. However, in each instance the residue of their point of origin remains a reference point which cannot be erased. In the case of New Zealand music fans in North America, the traces their treasured objects bear of their contexts of origin are a central determination of value, as played out in the various arenas provided for these tournaments of value.

I take the term diversion to also be a rhetorical way of bringing together the notions of routes and routines which, as was stressed in the previous chapter, alluded to the connection between the culture of the everyday and transregional/global activity. In the context of a commodity ecumene, the type of social interaction organized around the production, distribution and consumption of a particular type of object (or musical genre as is the case here), the nature of value and how that value is produced and maintained (as mediated through zines, periodicals, radio and the Internet) have become key indicators of the organizing principles through which the New Zealand musical community has imagined itself.

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The exploration of a networked scene formed through like-minded sentiment, the conservative habits that record collecting supports and an examination of the manner in which New Zealand music is simultaneously domesticated and re-exoticized are all attempts to provide a richer understanding of the complexity of tastes and habits of New Zealand music fans in North America. The concatenation of various scapes and collusion of competing (and often complementary) value systems forms a complex global relationship in the form of a cultural community, the framework of which is structured by layered and diverse sets of practices. The New Zealand music scene, as constituted globally through the interplay of labels, the fans, radio, magazines and computer-mediated communications operates in a field of production and consumption fraught with paradoxes. The active maintenance of New Zealand musical culture through the social interactions taking place both domestically and abroad remains a process dense with conflict and compromise. The various systems of exchange enumerated here have illustrated a number of ways in which culture, community and commodities are mutually constituted through a competing range of hierarchies. The end result is a rich and complex series of determinations which interact and intersect to produce a very specific social formation, the contours of which have been outlined above.

CONCLUSION

(The construction of community) assumes that authentic rock
depends on its ability to articulate private but common desires,
feelings and experiences into a shared public language. The
consumption of rock constructs or expresses a 'community'. This
romantic ideology displaces sexuality and makes desire matter by
fantasizing a community predicated on images of urban mobility,
delinquency, bohemianism and artistry.

(Grossberg, 1992: 62)

Communication is nothing if not a collective activity; indeed, it is
the process by which the real is created, maintained, celebrated
and transformed, and repaired. The product of that activity-
meaning - establishes a common and shared world.

(Carey in Munson and Warren, 1997: 68)

The preceding chapters, at one level or another, have alluded to

Grossberg's notion of community as he defines it here, particularly with his

emphasis on mobility and bohemianism. They are also equally informed by

Carey's description of communication and the interactions that lead to the

creation of community. In offering alternative readings of cultural practice

occurring on what can only be loosely defined as 'the margins', each

chapter has taken up the various discourses and rhetorics framing the

language of independent rock in order to illustrate how those various

idioms might be articulated to broader cultural processes and practices.

The networks, alliances, and circuits used for the distribution of goods and

the dissemination of ideas are central to how communities and scenes

construct themselves across geographically dispersed regions. At various

points the terms pathways, intercultural affinities and affective alliances

have been used to describe types of connectivity and interaction facilitated

by new and old communications technologies, extending from the

encounters occurring between the pages of photocopied zines to the more

recent interfacing with the pixellated screens of digital listserves. The

projection of their individual and collective desires, the collective imagination of a community as it both reflects upon and is a reflection of these and others forms of mediation, have each informed a number of ideas which underlie this discussion. The resulting forms of sociality and webs of interdependence determining the shape and scope of independent rock have necessitated new or modified models which require that subculture theory be properly rethought.

Inasmuch subculture theory can be seen as a subspecies of cultural studies, it too is subject to many of the blindspots and biases that affect the latter. Martin Allor (1997) has said of the theoretical currents running through cultural studies that a fundamental tension can be found between "the politics of place within global capitalism and...questions concerning the relative agency of cultural consumers" (42). He offers a much more nuanced alternative:

> Rather than fetishizing either the domination of global circuits of capital or the resistant moment of local consumption, the problematic of space and place interrogates both the certainties of abstract social relations...and the ways in which we theorise and analyse the context(s) of mediation of social life. This is more, therefore, than just a question of the specification of "context"; these lines of inquiry demand that we link the relations of text and audience to the relations of context and conjuncture which specify the field of mediations possible in any domain of cultural activity. (ibid.)

With these sorts of conjunctures, contexts and mediations in mind, I have correlated social relations to spatial relations through profiles of cultural activities as localized as music making in Montréal and as globalized as the international audience for New Zealand music. In each case, the intersection of forces of globalization and localization has produced an interconnected series of sites of social interaction and cultural practice which cannot be reduced to either a generalized or polarized model based on negative

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versus positive effects. On the one hand, as the sociomusical experience in Montréal illustrates, otherwise debilitating tensions can lead to creative negotiation of an uneven cultural terrain. Taking advantage of what Montréal does and does not offer a record label, Derivative can situate their cultural practice in a milieu which has proven highly productive. Their successful negotiation is subsequently articulated to transregional networks and distant reference groups, an affirmation and consolidation of communities of sentiment. On the other hand, the success of New Zealand music in North America exemplifies the deep imbrication of a certain musical fetishism in globalized circuits of desire and accumulation that have never properly shed their indebtedness to the twin prongs of capitalism and colonialism. In both cases, the interaction of different types of economies, be they the affective economies of everyday life, the various economies emerging through the exchange of goods and ideas or even a global cultural economy, has shaped the emergence of specific forms of cultural practice and community.

The shape that these cultural communities take has depended on the commingling of phenomenological and imaginative encounters with like-minded others through a wide selection of communication media. A larger emphasis has been placed on how their cultural activities are then broadened to reinforce a spectrum of sociocultural interactions which unfold on a number of complementary and contradictory levels. They have become a complex of cultural practices which, in its very organization, points toward many of the issues surrounding the overlap of routes and routines. They are forms of expression bound to the exchanges occurring between an individual's everyday affective economy and the moral economies of larger reference groups. The facilitation of rituals of belonging by various communications technologies and the multiple forms of

connectivity and interactivity which they offer are as much a necessary product of local circumstance as they are a globalized cultural economy. The symbolic and material effects of these exchanges, entrenched as they are in industrial, institutional and ideological structures have allowed a multifaceted response among the producers and consumers of something as specialized as independent rock.

As situations of co-presence occur only intermittently within these musical cultures, the relationships forged between members of either New Zealand music fandom or Montréal music culture, have become predominantly mediated ones. The media here are then instances of what Craig Calhoun (1992) calls 'infrastructural technologies', providing a means through which the quality of social relationships and organization has been redistributed through new and old spaces, whereby both concrete relationships and virtual ones are irrevocably altered (cited in Hannerz: 95).

Whether it be through the rituals of simultaneity afforded by the computer mediated communiqués of mailing lists connecting individuals from far-flung locales, or the feelings of co-presence experienced at a local level in rehearsal spaces, live clubs and record stores, the means and methods by which cultural communities and scenes are constituted need a more nuanced theoretical model. Subculture theory, as it has been inherited from the CCCS, can only partially address these interactions. Moving away from analyses of style and semiotic play, there must be a stronger account of the interactions and exchanges between the members of not-so-spectacular cultures. Punks, Mods and Rockers are in many respects singular and highly visible illustrations of the appropriation of a dominant culture's detritus, effectively staged as a dramatic display of dissent and disavowal and understood as encounters essential to the differentiation of themselves from the dominant 'other'. In this capacity they are taken to

be ideal-typical cases of subcultural practice, in which the refusal of the dominant culture's ideology can easily be correlated to the stylized *détournment* of refuse in a series of homologies. These sorts of micro-economies of style, which are a crucial component of subculture analyses, have to be opened up so as to include their relationship with a global cultural economy. Enumerating economies of style are, even today, useful ways to account for the power of symbolic and material displays of difference. But, as the emphasis on global economies and transnational connections throughout these chapters indicates, there also has to be a thorough examination of the internationalization of style and sounds, a larger assessment of forms of connectivity and community, and how shifts in sites of production and consumption affect the shape, scope and types of social interaction these processes engender.

With two more recent considerations of the intersection of spatial and social relations in mind, I have positioned Montréal music-making and New Zealand fans in North America as instances of cultural practice exemplifying how contemporary cultural communities are constructed and maintained. Thus, both Grossberg's notion of community and Carey's notion of communication can be augmented by Appadurai's insistence that consumption is innately social as they are all reminders that the production, distribution and consumption of goods is essential to the construction and alignment of informal and formal hierarchies of value within cultural communities. It is, as Appadurai notes, the creation of what might otherwise be called commodity ecumenes, complete with rarefied language, specialized circuits of distribution, their members' predisposition towards certain cultural artifacts, and their participatory spirit of communion and commonness, which need greater analysis. Addressing these points, Ulf Hannerz (1996) has posited that perhaps this notion of ecumene be

globalized. That is, we should think of transnational connections as unfolding within a *global* ecumene, as it more effectively alludes to "the interconnectedness of the world, by way of interactions, exchanges and related developments, affecting not least the organization of culture" (7). The complex interplay of technologies, media, social formations and symbolic systems and the way in which they organize and are organized by cultural production means something else in a global cultural economy.

The studies of Montréal music making and New Zealand music fans in North America are minor instances of the larger shifts in the myriad forms of sociality cutting across contemporary cultures. They are rough delineations of the dialogues and exchanges geographically dispersed peoples are continually engaged in, imaginatively and materially making sense of various urban and cultural spaces, giving meaning to cultural expression and reflecting on the nature of connection and community. In an expanding scholarly subfield which has once again turned its focus towards a number of these issues, it is in this documentary capacity that these can be useful additions to larger debates, complements to both existing theoretical heritages and emergent areas of study.

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