

The Frankfurt School: Its History, Theories, and Political Significance

Rolf Wiggershaus

**Translated by Michael Robertson
MIT**

Review by David Weininger
Featured in BBR March 1995

For all of us who enter the intellectual arena aiming to analyze "the social world"- whether we do so under the auspices of literature, sociology, philosophy, economics or psychology-one question possesses us, and it concerns the relation between theory and practice. What meaning does such "engaged" intellectual work have? Are thought and action autonomous, and have they ever been? Quite simply, what, if any, practical significance does theory have?

In the early part of this century, a loose aggregation of intellectuals known as the "Frankfurt School" produced a body of work which was haunted by exactly such issues. Most of its names have by now become familiar to the academic community: Theodor W. Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Herbert Marcuse, Walter Benjamin, Erich Fromm. While they engaged a dazzlingly diverse group of intellectual disciplines and theoretical approaches, the guiding thread of all of their analyses was the diagnosis of the ruined, pathological world of the early 20th century. Under the triumphant twin shadows of full-blown industrial capitalism and National Socialism, the Frankfurt School asked two familiar questions: How did we get here? and Where does salvation lie? What was so tremendously original about their collective responses was that the answers lay not in political activism or in a revolutionary labor movement, but in such abstruse phenomena as avant-garde art, psychoanalysis, dialectical philosophy, and a messianic religious faith. Their studies-which go under the general name of "Critical Theory"-were among the first which can be properly labeled interdisciplinary, encompassing insights from so many different areas. By the time of their mature works-most notably Horkheimer and Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment*-the members of the Frankfurt School no longer referred to their work as philosophy, sociology, aesthetics or psychology; it was, simply, "Theory."

Rolf Wiggershaus has carefully and thoroughly documented the School's history, from its inception right up to its legacy in scholars who are still active, most notably Jurgen Habermas. *The Frankfurt School: Its History, Theories, and Political Significance* far surpasses Martin Jay's *The Dialectical Imagination*-the only other history of the School to this point-in historical detail and willingness to critically engage the texts at issue.

The Institute for Social Research was founded in Frankfurt in 1924 as a school dedicated to the scientific study of Marxism. Its benefactor was Felix Weil, a wealthy part-time scholar who saw the establishment of the Institute as a compromise between his class position and his leftist sympathies. The Institute-loosely associated with the University of Frankfurt at its inception-became a sort of mecca for German leftists, for whom the study

of Marxist political economy and the history of the labor movement could be undertaken at the university level for the first time. Yet it did not begin to assume its mature approach until the appointment, in 1930, of Max Horkheimer as director. Horkheimer, a philosopher by training, was thoroughly steeped in the German tradition through Hegel, and had embraced Marxism only reluctantly. Yet, in his inaugural lecture as director of the Institute, he pointed to the working class as the starting point of all serious social inquiry. He went on to define the task of the Institute in a vague but quite original way:

[T]o set up, along with my associates..., a regime of planned work on the juxtaposition of philosophical construct and empiricism in social theory....[To] organize inquiries, on the basis of current philosophical questions, in which philosophers, sociologists, economists, historians and psychologists can unite in lasting co-operation.

To just such an end, he gathered around him a diverse group of scholars to formulate this interdisciplinary approach: Fromm, a Freudian analyst with strong leftist leanings; Friedrich Pollock, a rather orthodox Marxist economist; Adorno, whose doctorate was in philosophy but who at the time was employed as a music critic; Marcuse, a philosopher and former student of Martin Heidegger. Benjamin, who was never a permanent member of the Institute, was perhaps the hardest to classify, for his work encompassed nearly all the humanistic disciplines and many of the social sciences. True to Horkheimer's aim, the first studies under the Institute's name-on the influence of authority on the German working class-were evenly balanced between theoretical speculation and empirical support. Before the Institute could really develop their approach, however, they were forced into exile by the ascendancy of the Nazi Party to power in 1933. The Frankfurt School was doubly damned, being not only "left-wing radicals" but Jewish to boot. Initially scattered throughout Europe in exile, their next permanent base would be Columbia University in New York, with which they formed an association which would last from July 1934 until early 1943. Their financial needs were still met by Weil's endowment, so they were able to remain relatively independent and free to carry out their own work.

The School's exile would be a relatively unimportant matter if it did not seem to have a direct bearing on the group's work. While their first studies did indeed aim at a union of empirical and theoretical work, by the late '30s their work was undergoing two profound shifts. At one level, the theoretical was clearly overshadowing the empirical. No longer were questionnaires distributed for gathering data, and no statistics were consulted-the School was drifting heavily towards the philosophical. Either as a cause or as a consequence of this move, Horkheimer, Adorno and Marcuse were becoming the central proponents of the institute's work.

Conversely, their theoretical perspective had darkened considerably. The Marxist orientation gave way and expanded to include such figures as Nietzsche and Freud. The move toward these thinkers expressed a suspicion that beneath the individual's interests lay dangerously hidden forces which were the most important motivating factors in their action. The Critical Theorists extended this thesis, arguing that even the movements in which humanity tried to liberate itself were rotten to the core, and contained the seeds of

their own undoing.

This viewpoint was given its most forceful explication in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, whose introduction is a micro-model of the tone and style of the group's bitter, resigned thought:

In the most general sense of progressive thought, the Enlightenment has always aimed at liberating men from fear and establishing their sovereignty. Yet the fully enlightened earth radiates disaster triumphant.... What men want to learn from nature is how to use it in order wholly to dominate it and other men.... Ruthlessly, in despite of itself, the Enlightenment has extinguished any trace of its own self-consciousness.

The book goes on to show the Enlightenment's self-ruination in the *Odyssey*, Sade's *Juliette*, the culture industry, and most poignantly, modern anti-Semitism. It is a strange, difficult and unique book that combines a number of diverse approaches. One is tempted to call it the first volume in what we now call Cultural Studies.

Wiggershaus gives an excellent, thorough guide to this challenging text, and in that respect alone this book fills a large gap in the secondary literature. Additionally, he demonstrates how the book's themes grew out of the group's earlier works and concerns. For example, on the relation between anti-Semitism and capitalism, Wiggershaus points to an early essay by Horkheimer on "The Jews and Europe," whose opening sentences rival those of *Dialectic of Enlightenment* in sheer drama and conviction:

No one can ask the émigrés to hold a mirror up to the world that has produced fascism in the very place in which they are being offered asylum. But those who do not wish to speak of capitalism should be silent about fascism.

But Critical Theory was now a long way away from the "union of the theoretical and the empirical sciences" Horkheimer had once advocated. And as for any hope of qualitative change, one would believe that the authors held out for none.

After the war, only Horkheimer and Adorno returned to Frankfurt, the others preferring to remain in America. (Walter Benjamin, sadly, never escaped Europe during the war and committed suicide in Spain in 1940.) The tone of their works became, if anything, more melancholy and distressed as they realized that the the culture of German-Jewish intellectuals from which they had emerged was now hopelessly lost. Nevertheless, they both assumed academic posts at Frankfurt and carried on their theoretical work, which- especially for Adorno- was far more oriented towards memory and meditation on the past than toward a diagnosis of the present. This is evidenced in the subtitle of one of Adorno's last books: *Minima Moralia: Reflections From a Damaged Life*. In it, he lamented the culture destroyed by fascism while attempting to exorcise his guilt at having survived the war. All this he managed to sum up beautifully in one sentence: "To write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric."

One might just as well cast a skeptical eye toward the Frankfurt School and contend that

"To write theory during Auschwitz is absurd." A few months before his death, Adorno was lecturing at the University of Frankfurt when three members of a radical separatist student group rushed the podium, bared their breasts, and "attacked" him with erotic caresses. As he left the stage, angered and humiliated, the women declared that "as an institution, Adorno is dead." This story throws into stark relief the theory/practice distinction which must be invoked in any discussion of the Frankfurt School. The German student movements of the 1960s came to reject Critical Theory precisely because of its sheer unworkability. What value does a critical theory of society have if it contains no implications for immediate revolutionary change?

Critical Theory would tell us that thought itself is far more important than what it takes to be token action. Wiggershaus points out that Habermas and younger Critical Theorists, far more oriented toward social action than the members of the Frankfurt School, say much about Horkheimer and Adorno's "political significance" by remaining almost silent about it. It underscores once more what they did: Theory.

Source: <http://www.bookwire.com/bbr/politics/frankfurt-school.html>

The Frankfurt School

The "Frankfurt School" refers to a group of German-American theorists who developed powerful analyses of the changes in Western capitalist societies that occurred since the classical theory of Marx. Working at the Institut für Sozialforschung in Frankfurt, Germany in the late 1920s and early 1930s, theorists such as Max Horkheimer, T.W. Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, Leo Lowenthal, and Erich Fromm produced some of the first accounts within critical social theory of the importance of mass culture and communication in social reproduction and domination. The Frankfurt School also generated one of the first models of a critical cultural studies that analyzes the processes of cultural production and political economy, the politics of cultural texts, and audience reception and use of cultural artifacts (Kellner 1989 and 1995).

Moving from Nazi Germany to the United States, the Frankfurt School experienced at first hand the rise of a media culture involving film, popular music, radio, television, and other forms of mass culture (Wiggershaus 1994). In the United States, where they found themselves in exile, media production was by and large a form of commercial entertainment controlled by big corporations. Two of its key theorists Max Horkheimer and T.W. Adorno developed an account of the "culture industry" to call attention to the industrialization and commercialization of culture under capitalist relations of production (1972). This situation was most marked in the United States that had little state support of film or television industries, and where a highly commercial mass culture emerged that came to be a distinctive feature of capitalist societies and a focus of critical cultural studies.

During the 1930s, the Frankfurt school developed a critical and transdisciplinary approach to cultural and communications studies, combining political economy, textual analysis, and analysis of social and ideological effects of. They coined the term "culture industry" to signify the process of the industrialization of mass-produced culture and the commercial imperatives that drove the system. The critical theorists analyzed all mass-mediated cultural artifacts within the context of industrial production, in which the commodities of the culture industries exhibited the same features as other products of mass production: commodification, standardization, and massification. The culture industries had the specific function, however, of providing ideological legitimation of the existing capitalist societies and of integrating individuals into its way of life.

Adorno's analyses of popular music, television, and other phenomena ranging from astrology columns to fascist speeches (1991, 1994), Lowenthal's studies of popular literature and magazines (1961), Herzog's studies of radio soap operas (1941), and the perspectives and critiques of mass culture developed in Horkheimer and Adorno's famous study of the culture industries (1972 and Adorno 1991) provide many examples of the Frankfurt school approach. Moreover, in their theories of the culture industries and critiques of mass culture, they were among the first social theorists its importance in the reproduction of contemporary societies. In their view, mass culture and communications

stand in the center of leisure activity, are important agents of socialization, mediators of political reality, and should thus be seen as major institutions of contemporary societies with a variety of economic, political, cultural and social effects.

Furthermore, the critical theorists investigated the cultural industries in a political context as a form of the integration of the working class into capitalist societies. The Frankfurt school theorists were among the first neo-Marxian groups to examine the effects of mass culture and the rise of the consumer society on the working classes which were to be the instrument of revolution in the classical Marxian scenario. They also analyzed the ways that the culture industries and consumer society were stabilizing contemporary capitalism and accordingly sought new strategies for political change, agencies of political transformation, and models for political emancipation that could serve as norms of social critique and goals for political struggle. This project required rethinking Marxian theory and produced many important contributions -- as well as some problematical positions.

The Frankfurt school focused intently on technology and culture, indicating how technology was becoming both a major force of production and formative mode of social organization and control. In a 1941 article, "Some Social Implications of Modern Technology," Herbert Marcuse argued that technology in the contemporary era constitutes an entire "mode of organizing and perpetuating (or changing) social relationships, a manifestation of prevalent thought and behavior patterns, an instrument for control and domination" (414). In the realm of culture, technology produced mass culture that habituated individuals to conform to the dominant patterns of thought and behavior, and thus provided powerful instruments of social control and domination.

Victims of European fascism, the Frankfurt school experienced first hand the ways that the Nazis used the instruments of mass culture to produce submission to fascist culture and society. While in exile in the United States, the members of the Frankfurt school came to believe that American "popular culture" was also highly ideological and worked to promote the interests of American capitalism. Controlled by giant corporations, the culture industries were organized according to the strictures of mass production, churning out mass-produced products that generated a highly commercial system of culture which in turn sold the values, life-styles, and institutions of "the American way of life."

The work of the Frankfurt School provided what Paul Lazarsfeld (1942), one of the originators of modern communications studies, called a critical approach, which he distinguished from the "administrative research." The positions of Adorno, Lowenthal, and other members of the inner circle of the Institute for Social Research were contested by Walter Benjamin, an idiosyncratic theorist loosely affiliated with the Institute. Benjamin, writing in Paris during the 1930s, discerned progressive aspects in new technologies of cultural production such as photography, film, and radio. In "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" (1969), Benjamin noted how new mass media were supplanting older forms of culture whereby the mass reproduction of photography, film, recordings, and publications replaced the emphasis on the originality and "aura" of the work of art in an earlier era. Freed from the mystification of high culture, Benjamin believed that media culture could cultivate more critical individuals

able to judge and analyze their culture, just as sports fans could dissect and evaluate athletic activities. In addition, processing the rush of images of cinema created, Benjamin believed, subjectivities better able to parry and comprehend the flux and turbulence of experience in industrialized, urbanized societies.

Himself a collaborator of the prolific German artist Bertolt Brecht, Benjamin worked with Brecht on films, created radio plays, and attempted to utilize the media as organs of social progress. In the essay "The Artist as Producer" (1999 [1934]), Benjamin argued that progressive cultural creators should "refunction" the apparatus of cultural production, turning theater and film, for instance, into a forum of political enlightenment and discussion rather than a medium of "culinary" audience pleasure. Both Brecht and Benjamin wrote radio plays and were interested in film as an instrument of progressive social change. In an essay on radio theory, Brecht anticipated the Internet in his call for reconstructing the apparatus of broadcasting from one-way transmission to a more interactive form of two-way, or multiple, communication (in Silberman 2000: 41ff.)-- a form first realized in CB radio and then electronically-mediated computer communication.

Moreover, Benjamin wished to promote a radical cultural and media politics concerned with the creation of alternative oppositional cultures. Yet he recognized that media such as film could have conservative effects. While he thought it was progressive that mass-produced works were losing their "aura," their magical force, and were opening cultural artifacts for more critical and political discussion, he recognized that film could create a new kind of ideological magic through the cult of celebrity and techniques like the close-up that fetishized certain stars or images via the technology of the cinema. Benjamin was thus one of the first radical cultural critics to look carefully at the form and technology of media culture in appraising its complex nature and effects. Moreover, he developed a unique approach to cultural history that is one of his most enduring legacies, constituting a micrological history of Paris in the 18th century, an uncompleted project that contains a wealth of material for study and reflection (see Benjamin 2000 and the study in Buck-Morss 1989).

Max Horkheimer and T.W. Adorno answered Benjamin's optimism in a highly influential analysis of the culture industry published in their book *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, which first appeared in 1948 and was translated into English in 1972. They argued that the system of cultural production dominated by film, radio broadcasting, newspapers, and magazines, was controlled by advertising and commercial imperatives, and served to create subservience to the system of consumer capitalism. While later critics pronounced their approach too manipulative, reductive, and elitist, it provides an important corrective to more populist approaches to media culture that downplay the way the media industries exert power over audiences and help produce thought and behavior that conforms to the existing society.

The Frankfurt School also provide useful historical perspectives on the transition from traditional culture and modernism in the arts to a mass-produced media and consumer society. In his path-breaking book *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*,

Jurgen Habermas further historicizes Adorno and Horkheimer's analysis of the culture industry. Providing historical background to the triumph of the culture industry, Habermas notes how bourgeois society in the late 18th and 19th century was distinguished by the rise of a public sphere that stood between civil society and the state and which mediated between public and private interests. For the first time in history, individuals and groups could shape public opinion, giving direct expression to their needs and interests while influencing political practice. The bourgeois public sphere made it possible to form a realm of public opinion that opposed state power and the powerful interests that were coming to shape bourgeois society.

Habermas notes a transition from the liberal public sphere which originated in the Enlightenment and the American and French Revolution to a media-dominated public sphere in the current stage of what he calls "welfare state capitalism and mass democracy." This historical transformation is grounded in Horkheimer and Adorno's analysis of the culture industry, in which giant corporations have taken over the public sphere and transformed it from a site of rational debate into one of manipulative consumption and passivity. In this transformation, "public opinion" shifts from rational consensus emerging from debate, discussion, and reflection to the manufactured opinion of polls or media experts. For Habermas, the interconnection between the sphere of public debate and individual participation has thus been fractured and transmuted into that of a realm of political manipulation and spectacle, in which citizen-consumers ingest and absorb passively entertainment and information. "Citizens" thus become spectators of media presentations and discourse which arbitrate public discussion and reduce its audiences to objects of news, information, and public affairs. In Habermas's words: "Inasmuch as the mass media today strip away the literary husks from the kind of bourgeois self-interpretation and utilize them as marketable forms for the public services provided in a culture of consumers, the original meaning is reversed" (1989: 171).

Habermas's critics, however, contend that he idealizes the earlier bourgeois public sphere by presenting it as a forum of rational discussion and debate when in fact many social groups and most women were excluded. Critics also contend that Habermas neglects various oppositional working class, plebeian, and women's public spheres developed alongside of the bourgeois public sphere to represent voices and interests excluded in this forum (see the studies in Calhoun 1992). Yet Habermas is right that in the period of the democratic revolutions a public sphere emerged in which for the first time in history ordinary citizens could participate in political discussion and debate, organize, and struggle against unjust authority. Habermas's account also points to the increasingly important role of the media in politics and everyday life and the ways that corporate interests have colonized this sphere, using the media and culture to promote their own interests.

The culture industry thesis described both the production of massified cultural products and homogenized subjectivities. Mass culture for the Frankfurt School produced desires, dreams, hopes, fears, and longings, as well as unending desire for consumer products. The culture industry produced cultural consumers who would consume its products and conform to the dictates and the behaviors of the existing society. And yet, as Walter

Benjamin pointed out (1969), the culture industry also produces rational and critical consumers able to dissect and discriminate among cultural texts and performances, much as sports fans learn to analyze and criticize sports events.

In retrospect, one can see the Frankfurt school work as articulation of a theory of the stage of state and monopoly capitalism that became dominant during the 1930s. This was an era of large organizations, theorized earlier by Austro-Marxist Rudolf Hilferding as "organized capitalism" (1980 [1910]), in which the state and giant corporations managed the economy and in which individuals submitted to state and corporate control. This period is often described as "Fordism" to designate the system of mass production and the homogenizing regime of capital which wanted to produce mass desires, tastes, and behavior. It was thus an era of mass production and consumption characterized by uniformity and homogeneity of needs, thought, and behavior producing a mass society and what the Frankfurt school described as "the end of the individual." No longer was individual thought and action the motor of social and cultural progress; instead giant organizations and institutions overpowered individuals. The era corresponds to the staid, conformist, and conservative world of corporate capitalism that was dominant in the 1950s with its organization men and women, its mass consumption, and its mass culture.

During this period, mass culture and communication were instrumental in generating the modes of thought and behavior appropriate to a highly organized and massified social order. Thus, the Frankfurt school theory of the culture industry articulates a major historical shift to an era in which mass consumption and culture was indispensable to producing a consumer society based on homogeneous needs and desires for mass-produced products and a mass society based on social organization and homogeneity. It is culturally the era of highly controlled network radio and television, insipid top forty pop music, glossy Hollywood films, national magazines, and other mass-produced cultural artifacts

Of course, media culture was never as massified and homogeneous as in the Frankfurt school model and one could argue that the model was flawed even during its time of origin and influence and that other models were preferable, such as those of Walter Benjamin, Siegfried Kracauer, Ernst Bloch, and others of the Weimar generation and, later, British cultural studies. Yet the original Frankfurt school model of the culture industry did articulate the important social roles of media culture during a specific regime of capital and provided a model, still of use, of a highly commercial and technologically advanced culture that serves the needs of dominant corporate interests, plays a major role in ideological reproduction, and in enculturating individuals into the dominant system of needs, thought, and behavior.

Douglas Kellner

References and Further Readings

Adorno, T.W. (1991) *The Culture Industry*. London: Routledge.

_____ (1994) *The Stars Down to Earth and Other Essays on the Irrational in Culture*. London: Routledge.

Benjamin, Walter (1969) *Illuminations*. New York: Schocken.

_____ (1999) "The Artist as Producer," in Walter Benjamin, *Collected Writings, Volume II*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

_____ (2000) *The Arcades Project*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Buck-Morss, Susan (1989) *The Dialectics of Seeing*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Calhoun, Craig (1992), ed. *Habermas and the Public Sphere*. Cambridge: The MIT Press.

Habermas, Jurgen (1989a) *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.

Hertog, Herta (1941), "On Borrowed Experience. An Analysis of Listening to Daytime Sketches," *Studies in Philosophy and Social Science*, Vol. IX, No. 1: 65-95.

Hilferding, Rudolf (1981 [1910]) *Finance Capital*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Horkheimer, Max and T.W. Adorno (1972) *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. New York: Herder and Herder.

Kellner, Douglas (1989) *Critical Theory, Marxism, and Modernity*. Cambridge and Baltimore: Polity and John Hopkins University Press.

_____ (1995) *Media Culture. Cultural Studies, Identity, and Politics Between the Modern and the Postmodern*. London and New York: Routledge.

_____ (2000) "Habermas, the Public Sphere, and Democracy: A Critical Intervention," in *Perspectives on Habermas*, edited by Lewis Hahn. Open Court Press.

Lazarsfeld, Paul (1941) "Administrative and Critical Communications Research," *Studies in Philosophy and Social Science*, Vol. IX, No. 1: 2-16.

Lowenthal, Leo (1961) *Literature, Popular Culture and Society*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Marcuse, Herbert (1941) *Studies in Philosophy and Social Science*, Vol. IX, No. 1: 414-439.

Silberman, Marc (2000) *Bertolt Brecht on Film and Radio*. London: Methuen.

Wiggershaus, Rolf (1994), *The Frankfurt School*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

See also British cultural studies; Hollywood film; popular music; television; political economy;

Douglas Kellner
Graduate School of Education
Moore Hall Mailbox 951521
UCLA
Los Angeles, CA 90095
kellnerATucla.edu

Source: <http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/faculty/kellner/papers/fs.htm>

The Four Horsemen of the Frankfort School

By Charles A. Morse

web posted January 14, 2002

In his new book "*The Death of the West*" Patrick J. Buchanan examines the origin of what he contends is the modern decline of America. He asserts that while Soviet style Marxism is largely dead, our society remains enthralled by Cultural Marxism, which is strangling our freedom, and threatening our future. This threat to our culture and way of life accelerated to a deadly speed with the establishment, in 1933 at Columbia University, of the Institute for Social Research, originally called "The Institute for Marxism." This institution became known as the Frankfort School.

The destructive nature of the Frankfort School, founded in New York after it's theoreticians fled there from Frankfort, Germany when Hitler came to power, is obvious from even a cursory examination of its primary texts. The four horsemen of the school were music critic Theodor Adorno, psychologist Erich Fromm, sociologist Wilhelm Reich and professor Herbert Marcuse. Their ideas, echoing through the halls of academia and from the ink stained hands of writers and journalists, would lead to, as Buchanan calls it, the establishment of today's politically correct catechism.

The original strategy to destroy America, employed by the Frankfort School, came from Italian Communist Antonio Gramsci who realized that in order to achieve a Socialist victory, cultural institutions would have to be infiltrated and subverted. Gramsci realized that America, steeped in traditions of freedom and liberty, would never succumb to a frontal assault and its workers were too busy accumulating capital to allow themselves to be used as cannon fodder for a bloody revolution.

The Frankfort School would patent the familiar "Critical Theory" which was accurately defined by a student as the "essentially destructive criticism of all the main elements of Western culture, including Christianity, capitalism, authority, the family, patriarchy, hierarchy, morality, tradition, sexual restraint, loyalty, patriotism, nationalism, heredity, ethnocentrism, convention, and conservatism." Under Critical Theory, anything emanating from the west is to be libeled and attacked over and over again while at the same time, anything emerging from a "progressive" country or group is to be applauded including the murder of over 100 million people. All blame for societal and economic ills are to be shifted to the west.



Theodor Adorno

The saturating drumbeat of Critical Theory would lead to "Cultural Pessimism" which is when a person grows to loathe the society, which nurtured him and provided him unprecedented levels of success. This describes the attitude of so many leftists living in comfort and safety yet viewing America, the society that made their lifestyle possible, with hatred and contempt. I am amazed by the degree in which both Critical Theory and Cultural Pessimism has been internalized by all of us.



Erich Fromm

Erich Fromm's "*Escape from Freedom*" and Wilhelm Reich's "*The Mass Psychology of Fascism*" and "*The Sexual Revolution*" are central texts of Critical Theory according to Buchanan, who also calls "*The Authoritarian Personality*" by Theodor Adorno the "altarpiece of the Frankfurt School." Adorno's thesis is that anyone imbued with middle class, conservative, or Christian values is a racist and a fascist. Charles Sykes, senior fellow at the Wisconsin Policy Research Center, says Adorno's book is "an uncompromising indictment of bourgeois civilization, with the twist that what was considered merely old-fashioned by previous critics was now declared both fascistic and psychologically warped." This libelous indictment of the American people is comparable to Hitler's equally libelous indictment of the Jews of Europe.



Wilhelm Reich

The Frankfurt School introduced the idea of psychological conditioning as a means of changing the culture to fit their image. This would largely replace the traditional American approach to learning which was rational philosophical argument. Buchanan calls this the root of the "therapeutic state" where "sin is redefined as sickness, crime becomes anti-social behavior, and the psychiatrist replaces the priest." To Adorno and his comrades, all Americans who refused to conform to the new morality were viewed as mentally ill and in need of treatment. The Soviet Union offers a clear example of this philosophy in action with it's millions sent to gulags for "mental" maladies such as "anti-social" attitudes.



Herbert Marcuse

The forth horseman, Brandeis professor Herbert Marcuse, was the pied piper of the sixties as he fostered the development of, as Buchanan points out, "radical youth, feminists, black militants, homosexuals, the alienated, the asocial, Third World revolutionaries, all the angry voices of the persecuted 'victims' of the West." In "Eros and Civilization" Marcuse encouraged sex and drugs and introduced "polymorphous perversity" where all moral and cultural order is rejected. Marcuse coined the slogan "Make love not war" and was a cult figure on College campuses. His book "i" advocates educational dictatorship. He calls for "Repressive Tolerance" which means "intolerance against movements from the right, and toleration of movements from the left." When the left speaks of tolerance, this is what they mean.

The Frankfurt School would mainstream the diktat of the Moscow Central Committee laid down in 1943. This declaration, right from the horse's mouth, illustrates exactly what

were up against:

"Members and front organizations must continually embarrass, discredit and degrade our critics. When obstructionists become too irritating, label them as fascist, or Nazi or anti-Semitic...The association will, after enough repetition, become 'fact' in the public mind."

Chuck Morse is the author of "Why I'm a Right-Wing Extremist" which is available at <http://www.1stbooks.com/bookview/7510>.

Source: <http://www.enterstageright.com/archive/articles/0102/0102frankfortschool.htm>



This article is reprinted from the Winter, 1992 issue of FIDELIO Magazine.

The people of North America and Western Europe now accept a level of ugliness in their daily lives which is almost without precedent in the history of Western civilization. Most of us have become so inured, that the death of millions from starvation and disease draws from us no more than a sigh, or a murmur of protest. Our own city streets, home to legions of the homeless, are ruled by *Dope, Inc.*, the largest industry in the world, and on those streets Americans now murder each other at a rate not seen since the Dark Ages.

At the same time, a thousand smaller horrors are so commonplace as to go unnoticed. Our children spend as much time sitting in front of television sets as they do in school, watching with glee, scenes of torture and death which might have shocked an audience in the Roman Coliseum. Music is everywhere, almost unavoidable—but it does not uplift, nor even tranquilize—it claws at the ears, sometimes spitting out an obscenity. Our plastic arts are ugly, our architecture is ugly, our clothes are ugly. There have certainly been periods in history where mankind has lived through similar kinds of brutishness, but our time is crucially different. Our post-World War II era is the first in history in which these horrors are completely avoidable. Our time is the first to have the technology and resources to feed, house, educate, and humanely employ every person on earth, no matter what the growth of population. Yet, when shown the ideas and proven technologies that can solve the most horrendous problems, most people retreat into implacable passivity. We have become not only ugly, but impotent.

Nonetheless, there is no reason why our current moral-cultural situation had to lawfully or naturally turn out as it has; and there is no reason why this tyranny of ugliness should continue one instant longer.

Consider the situation just one hundred years ago, in the early 1890's. In music, Claude Debussy was completing his *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun*, and Arnold Schönberg

was beginning to experiment with atonalism; at the same time, Dvorak was working on his Ninth Symphony, while Brahms and Verdi still lived. Edvard Munch was showing *The Scream*, and Paul Gauguin his *Self-Portrait with Halo*, but in America, Thomas Eakins was still painting and teaching. Mechanists like Helmholtz and Mach held major university chairs of science, alongside the students of Riemann and Cantor. Pope Leo XIII's *De Rerum Novarum* was being promulgated, even as sections of the Socialist Second International were turning terrorist, and preparing for class war.

The optimistic belief that one could compose music like Beethoven, paint like Rembrandt, study the universe like Plato and Nicolaus of Cusa, and change world society without violence, was alive in the 1890's—admittedly, it was weak, and under siege, but it was hardly dead. Yet, within twenty short years, these Classical traditions of human civilization had been all but swept away, and the West had committed itself to a series of wars of inconceivable carnage.

What started about a hundred years ago, was what might be called a counter-Renaissance. The Renaissance of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was a religious celebration of the human soul and mankind's potential for growth. Beauty in art could not be conceived of as anything less than the expression of the most-advanced scientific principles, as demonstrated by the geometry upon which Leonardo's perspective and Brunelleschi's great Dome of Florence Cathedral are based. The finest minds of the day turned their thoughts to the heavens and the mighty waters, and mapped the solar system and the route to the New World, planning great projects to turn the course of rivers for the betterment of mankind. About a hundred years ago, it was as though a long checklist had been drawn up, with all of the wonderful achievements of the Renaissance itemized—each to be reversed. As part of this "New Age" movement, as it was then called, the concept of the human soul was undermined by the most vociferous intellectual campaign in history; art was forcibly separated from science, and science itself was made the object of deep suspicion. Art was made ugly because, it was said, life had become ugly.

The cultural shift away from the Renaissance ideas that built the modern world, was due to a kind of freemasonry of ugliness. In the beginning, it was a formal political conspiracy to popularize theories that were specifically designed to weaken the soul of Judeo-Christian civilization in such a way as to make people believe that creativity was not possible, that adherence to universal truth was evidence of authoritarianism, and that reason itself was suspect. This conspiracy was decisive in planning and developing, as means of social manipulation, the vast new sister industries of radio, television, film, recorded music, advertising, and public opinion polling. The pervasive psychological hold of the media was purposely fostered to create the passivity and pessimism which afflict our populations today. So successful was this conspiracy, that it has become embedded in our culture; it no longer needs to be a "conspiracy," for it has taken on a life of its own. Its successes are not debatable—you need only turn on the radio or television. Even the nomination of a Supreme Court Justice is deformed into an erotic soap opera, with the audience rooting from the sidelines for their favorite character.

Our universities, the cradle of our technological and intellectual future, have become

overwhelmed by Comintern-style New Age "Political Correctness." With the collapse of the Soviet Union, our campuses now represent the largest concentration of Marxist dogma in the world. The irrational adolescent outbursts of the 1960's have become institutionalized into a "permanent revolution." Our professors glance over their shoulders, hoping the current mode will blow over before a student's denunciation obliterates a life's work; some audio-tape their lectures, fearing accusations of "insensitivity" by some enraged "Red Guard." Students at the University of Virginia recently petitioned successfully to drop the requirement to read Homer, Chaucer, and other DEMS ("Dead European Males") because such writings are considered ethnocentric, phallogocentric, and generally inferior to the "more relevant" Third World, female, or homosexual authors.

This is not the academy of a republic; this is Hitler's Gestapo and Stalin's NKVD rooting out "deviationists," and banning books—the only thing missing is the public bonfire.

We will have to face the fact that the ugliness we see around us has been consciously fostered and organized in such a way, that a majority of the population is losing the cognitive ability to transmit to the next generation, the ideas and methods upon which our civilization was built. The loss of that ability is the primary indicator of a Dark Age. And, a new Dark Age is exactly what we are in. In such situations, the record of history is unequivocal: either we create a Renaissance—a rebirth of the fundamental principles upon which civilization originated—or, our civilization dies.

I. The Frankfurt School: Bolshevik Intelligentsia

The single, most important organizational component of this conspiracy was a Communist thinktank called the Institute for Social Research (I.S.R.), but popularly known as the Frankfurt School.

In the heady days immediately after the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, it was widely believed that proletarian revolution would momentarily sweep out of the Urals into Europe and, ultimately, North America. It did not; the only two attempts at workers' government in the West— in Munich and Budapest—lasted only months. The Communist International (Comintern) therefore began several operations to determine why this was so. One such was headed by Georg Lukacs, a Hungarian aristocrat, son of one of the Hapsburg Empire's leading bankers. Trained in Germany and already an important literary theorist, Lukacs became a Communist during World War I, writing as he joined the party, "Who will save us from Western civilization?" Lukacs was well-suited to the Comintern task: he had been one of the Commissars of Culture during the short-lived Hungarian Soviet in Budapest in 1919; in fact, modern historians link the shortness of the Budapest experiment to Lukacs' orders mandating sex education in the schools, easy access to contraception, and the loosening of divorce laws—all of which revulsed Hungary's Roman Catholic population.

Fleeing to the Soviet Union after the counter-revolution, Lukacs was secreted into Germany in 1922, where he chaired a meeting of Communist-oriented sociologists and

intellectuals. This meeting founded the Institute for Social Research. Over the next decade, the Institute worked out what was to become the Comintern's most successful psychological warfare operation against the capitalist West.

Lukacs identified that any political movement capable of bringing Bolshevism to the West would have to be, in his words, "demonic"; it would have to "possess the religious power which is capable of filling the entire soul; a power that characterized primitive Christianity." However, Lukacs suggested, such a "messianic" political movement could only succeed when the individual believes that his or her actions are determined by "not a personal destiny, but the destiny of the community" in a world "*that has been abandoned by God* [emphasis added-MJM]." Bolshevism worked in Russia because that nation was dominated by a peculiar gnostic form of Christianity typified by the writings of Fyodor Dostoyevsky. "The model for the new man is Alyosha Karamazov," said Lukacs, referring to the Dostoyevsky character who willingly gave over his personal identity to a holy man, and thus ceased to be "unique, pure, and therefore abstract."

This abandonment of the soul's uniqueness also solves the problem of "the diabolic forces lurking in all violence" which must be unleashed in order to create a revolution. In this context, Lukacs cited the Grand Inquisitor section of Dostoyevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*, noting that the Inquisitor who is interrogating Jesus, has resolved the issue of good and evil: once man has understood his alienation from God, then any act in the service of the "destiny of the community" is justified; such an act can be "neither crime nor madness.... For crime and madness are objectifications of transcendental homelessness."

According to an eyewitness, during meetings of the Hungarian Soviet leadership in 1919 to draw up lists for the firing squad, Lukacs would often quote the Grand Inquisitor: "And we who, for their happiness, have taken their sins upon ourselves, we stand before you and say, 'Judge us if you can and if you dare.' "

The Problem of Genesis

What differentiated the West from Russia, Lukacs identified, was a Judeo-Christian cultural matrix which emphasized exactly the uniqueness and sacredness of the individual which Lukacs abjured. At its core, the dominant Western ideology maintained that the individual, through the exercise of his or her reason, could discern the Divine Will in an unmediated relationship. What was worse, from Lukacs' standpoint: this reasonable relationship necessarily implied that the individual could and should change the physical universe in pursuit of the Good; that Man should have dominion over Nature, as stated in the Biblical injunction in Genesis. The problem was, that as long as the individual had the belief—or even the hope of the belief—that his or her divine spark of reason could solve the problems facing society, then that society would never reach the state of hopelessness and alienation which Lukacs recognized as the necessary prerequisite for socialist revolution.

The task of the Frankfurt School, then, was first, to undermine the Judeo-Christian legacy through an "abolition of culture" (*Aufhebung der Kultur* in Lukacs' German); and,

second, to determine new cultural forms which would *increase the alienation of the population*, thus creating a "new barbarism." To this task, there gathered in and around the Frankfurt School an incredible assortment of not only Communists, but also non-party socialists, radical phenomenologists, Zionists, renegade Freudians, and at least a few members of a self-identified "cult of Astarte." The variegated membership reflected, to a certain extent, the sponsorship: although the Institute for Social Research started with Comintern support, over the next three decades its sources of funds included various German and American universities, the Rockefeller Foundation, Columbia Broadcasting System, the American Jewish Committee, several American intelligence services, the Office of the U.S. High Commissioner for Germany, the International Labour Organization, and the Hacker Institute, a posh psychiatric clinic in Beverly Hills.

Similarly, the Institute's political allegiances: although top personnel maintained what might be called a sentimental relationship to the Soviet Union (and there is evidence that some of them worked for Soviet intelligence into the 1960's), the Institute saw its goals as higher than that of Russian foreign policy. Stalin, who was horrified at the undisciplined, "cosmopolitan" operation set up by his predecessors, cut the Institute off in the late 1920's, forcing Lukacs into "self-criticism," and briefly jailing him as a German sympathizer during World War II.

Lukacs survived to briefly take up his old post as Minister of Culture during the anti-Stalinist Imre Nagy regime in Hungary. Of the other top Institute figures, the political perambulations of **Herbert Marcuse** are typical. He started as a Communist; became a protégé of philosopher Martin Heidegger even as the latter was joining the Nazi Party; coming to America, he worked for the World War II Office of Strategic Services (OSS), and later became the U.S. State Department's top analyst of Soviet policy during the height of the McCarthy period; in the 1960's, he turned again, to become the most important guru of the New Left; and he ended his days helping to found the environmentalist extremist Green Party in West Germany.

In all this seeming incoherence of shifting positions and contradictory funding, there is no ideological conflict. The invariant is the desire of all parties to answer Lukacs' original question: "Who will save us from Western civilization?"

Theodor Adorno and Walter Benjamin

Perhaps the most important, if least-known, of the Frankfurt School's successes was the shaping of the electronic media of radio and television into the powerful instruments of social control which they represent today. This grew out of the work originally done by two men who came to the Institute in the late 1920's, **Theodor Adorno** and **Walter Benjamin**.

After completing studies at the University of Frankfurt, Walter Benjamin planned to emigrate to Palestine in 1924 with his friend **Gershom Scholem** (who later became one of Israel's most famous philosophers, as well as Judaism's leading gnostic), but was prevented by a love affair with Asja Lacis, a Latvian actress and Comintern stringer. Lacis whisked him off to the Italian island of Capri, a cult center from the time of the

Emperor Tiberius, then used as a Comintern training base; the heretofore apolitical Benjamin wrote Scholem from Capri, that he had found "an existential liberation and an intensive insight into the actuality of radical communism."

Lacis later took Benjamin to Moscow for further indoctrination, where he met playwright **Bertolt Brecht**, with whom he would begin a long collaboration; soon thereafter, while working on the first German translation of the drug-enthusiast French poet Baudelaire, Benjamin began serious experimentation with hallucinogens. In 1927, he was in Berlin as part of a group led by Adorno, studying the works of Lukacs; other members of the study group included Brecht and his composer-partner Kurt Weill; Hans Eisler, another composer who would later become a Hollywood film score composer and co-author with Adorno of the textbook *Composition for the Film*; the avant-garde photographer **Imre Moholy-Nagy**; and the conductor **Otto Klemperer**.

From 1928 to 1932, Adorno and Benjamin had an intensive collaboration, at the end of which they began publishing articles in the Institute's journal, the *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*. Benjamin was kept on the margins of the Institute, largely due to Adorno, who would later appropriate much of his work. As Hitler came to power, the Institute's staff fled, but, whereas most were quickly spirited away to new deployments in the U.S. and England, there were no job offers for Benjamin, probably due to the animus of Adorno. He went to France, and, after the German invasion, fled to the Spanish border; expecting momentary arrest by the Gestapo, he despaired and died in a dingy hotel room of self-administered drug overdose.

Benjamin's work remained almost completely unknown until 1955, when Scholem and Adorno published an edition of his material in Germany. The full revival occurred in 1968, when **Hannah Arendt**, Heidegger's former mistress and a collaborator of the Institute in America, published a major article on Benjamin in the *New Yorker* magazine, followed in the same year by the first English translations of his work. Today, every university bookstore in the country boasts a full shelf devoted to translations of every scrap Benjamin wrote, plus exegesis, all with 1980's copyright dates.

Adorno was younger than Benjamin, and as aggressive as the older man was passive. Born Teodoro Wiesengrund-Adorno to a Corsican family, he was taught the piano at an early age by an aunt who lived with the family and had been the concert accompanist to the international opera star Adelina Patti. It was generally thought that Theodor would become a professional musician, and he studied with Bernard Sekles, Paul Hindemith's teacher. However, in 1918, while still a *gymnasium* student, Adorno met **Siegfried Kracauer**. Kracauer was part of a Kantian-Zionist salon which met at the house of **Rabbi Nehemiah Nobel** in Frankfurt; other members of the Nobel circle included philosopher **Martin Buber**, writer **Franz Rosenzweig**, and two students, **Leo Lowenthal** and **Erich Fromm**. Kracauer, Lowenthal, and Fromm would join the I.S.R. two decades later. Adorno engaged Kracauer to tutor him in the philosophy of Kant; Kracauer also introduced him to the writings of Lukacs and to Walter Benjamin, who was around the Nobel clique.

In 1924, Adorno moved to Vienna, to study with the atonalist composers Alban Berg and **Arnold Schönberg**, and became connected to the avant-garde and occult circle around the old Marxist **Karl Kraus**. Here, he not only met his future collaborator, Hans Eisler, but also came into contact with the theories of Freudian extremist **Otto Gross**. Gross, a long-time cocaine addict, had died in a Berlin gutter in 1920, while on his way to help the revolution in Budapest; he had developed the theory that mental health could only be achieved through the revival of the ancient cult of Astarte, which would sweep away monotheism and the "bourgeois family."

Saving Marxist Aesthetics

By 1928, Adorno and Benjamin had satisfied their intellectual wanderlust, and settled down at the I.S.R. in Germany to do some work. As subject, they chose an aspect of the problem posed by Lukacs: how to give aesthetics a firmly materialistic basis. It was a question of some importance, at the time. Official Soviet discussions of art and culture, with their wild gyrations into "socialist realism" and "proletkult," were idiotic, and only served to discredit Marxism's claim to philosophy among intellectuals. Karl Marx's own writings on the subject were sketchy and banal, at best.

In essence, Adorno and Benjamin's problem was Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, Leibniz had once again obliterated the centuries-old gnostic dualism dividing mind and body, by demonstrating that matter does not think. A creative act in art or science apprehends the truth of the physical universe, but it is not determined by that physical universe. By self-consciously concentrating the past in the present to effect the future, the creative act, properly defined, is as immortal as the soul which envisions the act. This has fatal philosophical implications for Marxism, which rests entirely on the hypothesis that mental activity is determined by the social relations excreted by mankind's production of its physical existence.

Marx sidestepped the problem of Leibniz, as did Adorno and Benjamin, although the latter did it with a lot more panache. It is wrong, said Benjamin in his first articles on the subject, to start with the reasonable, hypothesizing mind as the basis of the development of civilization; this is an unfortunate legacy of Socrates. As an alternative, Benjamin posed an Aristotelian fable in interpretation of Genesis: Assume that Eden were given to Adam as the primordial physical state. The origin of science and philosophy does not lie in the investigation and mastery of nature, but in the *naming* of the objects of nature; in the primordial state, to name a thing was to say all there was to say about that thing. In support of this, Benjamin cynically recalled the opening lines of the Gospel according to St. John, carefully avoiding the philosophically-broader Greek, and preferring the Vulgate (so that, in the phrase "In the beginning was the Word," the connotations of the original Greek word *logos*—speech, reason, ratiocination, translated as "Word"—are replaced by the narrower meaning of the Latin word *verbum*). After the expulsion from Eden and God's requirement that Adam eat his bread earned by the sweat of his face (Benjamin's Marxist metaphor for the development of economies), and God's further curse of Babel on Nimrod (that is, the development of nation-states with distinct languages, which Benjamin and Marx viewed as a negative process away from the "primitive communism" of Eden), humanity became "estranged" from the physical world.

Thus, Benjamin continued, objects still give off an "aura" of their primordial form, but the truth is now hopelessly elusive. In fact, speech, written language, art, creativity itself—that by which we master physicality—merely furthers the estrangement by attempting, in Marxist jargon, to incorporate objects of nature into the social relations determined by the class structure dominant at that point in history. The creative artist or scientist, therefore, is a vessel, like Ion the rhapsode as he described himself to Socrates, or like a modern "chaos theory" advocate: the creative act springs out of the hodgepodge of culture as if by magic. The more that bourgeois man tries to convey what he intends about an object, the less truthful he becomes; or, in one of Benjamin's most oft-quoted statements, "Truth is the death of intention."

This philosophical sleight-of-hand allows one to do several destructive things. By making creativity historically-specific, you rob it of both immortality and morality. One cannot hypothesize universal truth, or natural law, for truth is completely relative to historical development. By discarding the idea of truth and error, you also may throw out the "obsolete" concept of good and evil; you are, in the words of Friedrich Nietzsche, "beyond good and evil." Benjamin is able, for instance, to defend what he calls the "Satanism" of the French Symbolists and their Surrealist successors, for at the core of this Satanism "one finds the cult of evil as a political device ... to disinfect and isolate against all moralizing dilettantism" of the bourgeoisie. To condemn the Satanism of Rimbaud as evil, is as incorrect as to extol a Beethoven quartet or a Schiller poem as good; for both judgments are blind to the historical forces working *unconsciously* on the artist.

Thus, we are told, the late Beethoven's chord structure was striving to be atonal, but Beethoven could not bring himself *consciously* to break with the structured world of Congress of Vienna Europe (Adorno's thesis); similarly, Schiller really wanted to state that creativity was the liberation of the erotic, but as a true child of the Enlightenment and Immanuel Kant, he could not make the requisite renunciation of reason (Marcuse's thesis). Epistemology becomes a poor relation of public opinion, since the artist does not consciously create works in order to uplift society, but instead unconsciously transmits the ideological assumptions of the culture into which he was born. The issue is no longer what is universally true, but what can be plausibly interpreted by the self-appointed guardians of the *Zeitgeist*.

"The Bad New Days"

Thus, for the Frankfurt School, the goal of a cultural elite in the modern, "capitalist" era must be to strip away the belief that art derives from the self-conscious emulation of God the Creator; "religious illumination," says Benjamin, must be shown to "reside in a profane illumination, a materialistic, anthropological inspiration, to which hashish, opium, or whatever else can give an introductory lesson." At the same time, *new cultural forms must be found to increase the alienation of the population*, in order for it to understand how truly alienated it is to live without socialism. "Do not build on the good old days, but on the bad new ones," said Benjamin.

The proper direction in painting, therefore, is that taken by the late Van Gogh, who began

to paint objects in disintegration, with the equivalent of a hashish-smoker's eye that "loosens and entices things out of their familiar world." In music, "it is not suggested that one can compose better today" than Mozart or Beethoven, said Adorno, but one must compose atonally, for atonalism is sick, and "the sickness, dialectically, is at the same time the cure....The extraordinarily violent reaction protest which such music confronts in the present society ... appears nonetheless to suggest that the dialectical function of this music can already be felt ... negatively, as 'destruction.' "

The purpose of modern art, literature, and music must be to destroy the uplifting—therefore, bourgeois — potential of art, literature, and music, so that man, *bereft of his connection to the divine*, sees his only creative option to be political revolt. "To organize pessimism means nothing other than to expel the moral metaphor from politics and to discover in political action a sphere reserved one hundred percent for images." Thus, Benjamin collaborated with Brecht to work these theories into practical form, and their joint effort culminated in the *Verfremdungseffekt* ("estrangement effect"), Brecht's attempt to write his plays so as to make the audience leave the theatre demoralized and aimlessly angry.

Political Correctness

The Adorno-Benjamin analysis represents almost the entire theoretical basis of all the politically correct aesthetic trends which now plague our universities. The Poststructuralism of **Roland Barthes**, **Michel Foucault**, and **Jacques Derrida**, the Semiotics of **Umberto Eco**, the Deconstructionism of **Paul DeMan**, all openly cite Benjamin as the source of their work. The Italian terrorist Eco's best-selling novel, *The Name of the Rose*, is little more than a paean to Benjamin; DeMan, the former Nazi collaborator in Belgium who became a prestigious Yale professor, began his career translating Benjamin; Barthes' infamous 1968 statement that "[t]he author is dead," is meant as an elaboration of Benjamin's dictum on intention. Benjamin has actually been called the heir of Leibniz and of Wilhelm von Humboldt, the philologist collaborator of Schiller whose educational reforms engendered the tremendous development of Germany in the nineteenth century. Even as recently as September 1991, the *Washington Post* referred to Benjamin as "the finest German literary theorist of the century (and many would have left off that qualifying German)."

Readers have undoubtedly heard one or another horror story about how an African-American Studies Department has procured a ban on *Othello*, because it is "racist," or how a radical feminist professor lectured a Modern Language Association meeting on the witches as the "true heroines" of *Macbeth*. These atrocities occur because the perpetrators are able to plausibly demonstrate, in the tradition of Benjamin and Adorno, that Shakespeare's intent is irrelevant; what is important, is the racist or phallogocentric "subtext" of which Shakespeare was unconscious when he wrote.

When the local Women's Studies or Third World Studies Department organizes students to abandon classics in favor of modern Black and feminist authors, the reasons given are pure Benjamin. It is not that these modern writers are better, but they are somehow more truthful because their alienated prose reflects the modern social problems of which the

older authors were ignorant! Students are being taught that language itself is, as Benjamin said, merely a conglomeration of false "names" foisted upon society by its oppressors, and are warned against "logocentrism," the bourgeois over-reliance on words.

If these campus antics appear "retarded" (in the words of Adorno), that is because they are designed to be. The Frankfurt School's most important breakthrough consists in the realization that their monstrous theories could become dominant in the culture, as a result of the changes in society brought about by what Benjamin called "the age of mechanical reproduction of art."

II. The Establishment Goes Bolshevik: "Entertainment" Replaces Art

Before the twentieth century, the distinction between art and "entertainment" was much more pronounced. One could be entertained by art, certainly, but the experience was active, not passive. On the first level, one had to make a conscious choice to go to a concert, to view a certain art exhibit, to buy a book or piece of sheet music. It was unlikely that any more than an infinitesimal fraction of the population would have the opportunity to see *King Lear* or hear Beethoven's Ninth Symphony more than once or twice in a lifetime. Art demanded that one bring one's full powers of concentration and knowledge of the subject to bear on each experience, or else the experience were considered wasted. These were the days when memorization of poetry and whole plays, and the gathering of friends and family for a "parlor concert," were the norm, even in rural households. These were also the days before "music appreciation"; when one studied music, as many did, they learned to play it, not appreciate it.

However, the new technologies of radio, film, and recorded music represented, to use the appropriate Marxist buzz-word, (see "Nazi-Communist Hippies of the 1920's", posted after this article) a dialectical potential. On the one hand, these technologies held out the possibility of bringing the greatest works of art to millions of people who would otherwise not have access to them. On the other, the fact that the experience was infinitely reproducible could tend to disengage the audience's mind, making the experience less sacred, thus increasing alienation. Adorno called this process, "demythologizing." This new passivity, Adorno hypothesized in a crucial article published in 1938, could fracture a musical composition into the "entertaining" parts which would be "fetishized" in the memory of the listener, and the difficult parts, which would be forgotten. Adorno continues,

The counterpart to the fetishism is a regression of listening. This does not mean a relapse of the individual listener into an earlier phase of his own development, nor a decline in the collective general level, since the millions who are reached musically for the first time by today's mass communications cannot be compared with the audiences of the past. Rather, it is the contemporary listening which has regressed, arrested at the infantile stage. Not only do the listening subjects lose, along with the freedom of choice and responsibility, the capacity for the conscious perception of music [t]hey fluctuate between comprehensive forgetting and sudden dives into recognition. They listen

atomistically and dissociate what they hear, but precisely in this dissociation they develop certain capacities which accord less with the traditional concepts of aesthetics than with those of football or motoring. They are not childlike ... but they are childish; their primitivism is not that of the undeveloped, but that of the *forcibly retarded*. [emphasis added]

This conceptual retardation and preconditioning caused by listening, suggested that programming could determine preference. The very act of putting, say, a Benny Goodman number next to a Mozart sonata on the radio, would tend to amalgamate both into entertaining "music-on-the-radio" in the mind of the listener. This meant that even new and unpalatable ideas could become popular by "re-naming" them through the universal homogenizer of the culture industry. As Benjamin puts it,

Mechanical reproduction of art changes the reaction of the masses toward art. The reactionary attitude toward a Picasso painting changes into a progressive reaction toward a Chaplin movie. The progressive reaction is characterized by the direct, intimate fusion of visual and emotional enjoyment with the orientation of the expert... With regard to the screen, the critical and receptive attitudes of the public coincide. The decisive reason for this is that the individual reactions are predetermined by the mass audience response they are about to produce, and this is nowhere more pronounced than in the film.

At the same time, the magic power of the media could be used to re-define previous ideas. "Shakespeare, Rembrandt, Beethoven will all make films," concluded Benjamin, quoting the French film pioneer **Abel Gance**, "... all legends, all mythologies, all myths, all founders of religions, and the very religions themselves ... await their exposed resurrection."

Social Control: The "Radio Project"

Here, then, were some potent theories of social control. The great possibilities of this Frankfurt School media work were probably the major contributing factor in the support given the I.S.R. by the bastions of the Establishment, after the Institute transferred its operations to America in 1934.

In 1937, the Rockefeller Foundation began funding research into the social effects of new forms of mass media, particularly radio. Before World War I, radio had been a hobbyist's toy, with only 125,000 receiving sets in the entire U.S.; twenty years later, it had become the primary mode of entertainment in the country; out of 32 million American families in 1937, 27.5 million had radios — a larger percentage than had telephones, automobiles, plumbing, or electricity! Yet, almost no systematic research had been done up to this point. The Rockefeller Foundation enlisted several universities, and headquartered this network at the School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University. Named the Office of Radio Research, it was popularly known as "the Radio Project."

The director of the Project was **Paul Lazarsfeld**, the foster son of Austrian Marxist economist Rudolph Hilferding, and a long-time collaborator of the I.S.R. from the early 1930's. Under Lazarsfeld was **Frank Stanton**, a recent Ph.D. in industrial psychology

from Ohio State, who had just been made research director of Columbia Broadcasting System—a grand title but a lowly position. After World War II, Stanton became president of the CBS News Division, and ultimately president of CBS at the height of the TV network's power; he also became Chairman of the Board of the RAND Corporation, and a member of President Lyndon Johnson's "kitchen cabinet." Among the Project's researchers were **Herta Herzog**, who married Lazarsfeld and became the first director of research for the Voice of America; and **Hazel Gaudet**, who became one of the nation's leading political pollsters. Theodor Adorno was named chief of the Project's music section.

Despite the official gloss, the activities of the Radio Project make it clear that its purpose was to test empirically the Adorno-Benjamin thesis that the net effect of the mass media could be to atomize and increase lability—what people would later call "brainwashing."

Soap Operas and the Invasion from Mars

The first studies were promising. Herta Herzog produced "On Borrowed Experiences," the first comprehensive research on soap operas. The "serial radio drama" format was first used in 1929, on the inspiration of the old, cliff-hanger "Perils of Pauline" film serial. Because these little radio plays were highly melodramatic, they became popularly identified with Italian grand opera; because they were often sponsored by soap manufacturers, they ended up with the generic name, "soap opera."

Until Herzog's work, it was thought that the immense popularity of this format was largely with women of the lowest socioeconomic status who, in the restricted circumstances of their lives, needed a helpful escape to exotic places and romantic situations. A typical article from that period by two University of Chicago psychologists, "The Radio Day-Time Serial: Symbol Analysis" published in the *Genetic Psychology Monographs*, solemnly emphasized the positive, claiming that the soaps "function very much like the folk tale, expressing the hopes and fears of its female audience, and on the whole contribute to the integration of their lives into the world in which they live."

Herzog found that there was, in fact, no correlation to socioeconomic status. What is more, there was surprisingly little correlation to content. The key factor — as Adorno and Benjamin's theories suggested it would be — was the form itself of the serial; women were being effectively addicted to the format, not so much to be entertained or to escape, but to "find out what happens next week." In fact, Herzog found, you could almost double the listenership of a radio play by dividing it into segments.

Modern readers will immediately recognize that this was not a lesson lost on the entertainment industry. Nowadays, the serial format has spread to children's programming and high-budget prime time shows. The most widely watched shows in the history of television, remain the "Who Killed JR?" installment of *Dallas*, and the final episode of *M*A*S*H*, both of which were premised on a "what happens next?" format. Even feature films, like the *Star Wars* and *Back to the Future* trilogies, are now produced as serials, in order to lock in a viewership for the later installments. The humble daytime soap also retains its addictive qualities in the current age: 70% of all American women

over eighteen now watch at least two of these shows each day, and there is a fast-growing viewership among men and college students of both sexes.

The Radio Project's next major study was an investigation into the effects of **Orson Welles'** Halloween 1938 radioplay based on H.G. Wells' *War of the Worlds*. Six million people heard the broadcast realistically describing a Martian invasion force landing in rural New Jersey. Despite repeated and clear statements that the show was fictional, approximately 25% of the listeners thought it was real, some panicking outright. The Radio Project researchers found that a majority of the people who panicked did not think that men from Mars had invaded; they actually thought that *the Germans* had invaded.

It happened this way. The listeners had been psychologically pre-conditioned by radio reports from the Munich crisis earlier that year. During that crisis, CBS's man in Europe, **Edward R. Murrow**, hit upon the idea of breaking into regular programming to present short news bulletins. For the first time in broadcasting, news was presented not in longer analytical pieces, but in short clips—what we now call "audio bites." At the height of the crisis, these flashes got so numerous, that, in the words of Murrow's producer **Fred Friendly**, "news bulletins were interrupting news bulletins." As the listeners thought that the world was moving to the brink of war, CBS ratings rose dramatically. When Welles did his fictional broadcast later, after the crisis had receded, he used this news bulletin technique to give things verisimilitude: he started the broadcast by faking a standard dance-music program, which kept getting interrupted by increasingly terrifying "on the scene reports" from New Jersey. Listeners who panicked, reacted not to content, but to format; they heard "We interrupt this program for an emergency bulletin," and "invasion," and immediately concluded that Hitler had invaded. The soap opera technique, transposed to the news, had worked on a vast and unexpected scale.

Little Annie and the "Wagnerian Dream" of TV

In 1939, one of the numbers of the quarterly *Journal of Applied Psychology* was handed over to Adorno and the Radio Project to publish some of their findings. Their conclusion was that Americans had, over the last twenty years, become "radio-minded," and that their listening had become so fragmented that repetition of format was the key to popularity. The play list determined the "hits"—a truth well known to organized crime, both then and now—and repetition could make any form of music or any performer, even a classical music performer, a "star." As long as a familiar form or context was retained, almost any content would become acceptable. "Not only are hit songs, stars, and soap operas cyclically recurrent and rigidly invariable types," said Adorno, summarizing this material a few years later, "but the specific content of the entertainment itself is derived from them and only appears to change. The details are interchangeable."

The crowning achievement of the Radio Project was "Little Annie," officially titled the Stanton-Lazersfeld Program Analyzer. Radio Project research had shown that all previous methods of preview polling were ineffectual. Up to that point, a preview audience listened to a show or watched a film, and then was asked general questions: did you like the show? what did you think of so-and-so's performance? The Radio Project realized that this method did not take into account the test audience's atomized perception

of the subject, and demanded that they make a rational analysis of what was intended to be an irrational experience. So, the Project created a device in which each test audience member was supplied with a type of rheostat on which he could register the intensity of his likes or dislikes on a moment-to-moment basis. By comparing the individual graphs produced by the device, the operators could determine, not if the audience liked the whole show — which was irrelevant—but, which situations or characters produced a positive, if momentary, feeling state.

Little Annie transformed radio, film, and ultimately television programming. CBS still maintains program analyzer facilities in Hollywood and New York; it is said that results correlate 85% to ratings. Other networks and film studios have similar operations. This kind of analysis is responsible for the uncanny feeling you get when, seeing a new film or TV show, you think you have seen it all before. You have, many times. If a program analyzer indicates that, for instance, audiences were particularly titillated by a short scene in a World War II drama showing a certain type of actor kissing a certain type of actress, then that scene format will be worked into dozens of screenplays—transposed to the Middle Ages, to outer space, etc., etc.

The Radio Project also realized that television had the potential to intensify all of the effects that they had studied. TV technology had been around for some years, and had been exhibited at the 1936 World's Fair in New York, but the only person to attempt serious utilization of the medium had been Adolf Hitler. The Nazis broadcast events from the 1936 Olympic Games "live" to communal viewing rooms around Germany; they were trying to expand on their great success in using radio to Nazify all aspects of German culture. Further plans for German TV development were sidetracked by war preparations.

Adorno understood this potential perfectly, writing in 1944:

Television aims at the synthesis of radio and film, and is held up only because the interested parties have not yet reached agreement, but its consequences will be quite enormous and promise to intensify the impoverishment of aesthetic matter so drastically, that by tomorrow the thinly veiled identity of all industrial culture products can come triumphantly out in the open, derisively fulfilling the Wagnerian dream of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*—the fusion of all the arts in one work.

The obvious point is this: the profoundly irrational forms of modern entertainment—the stupid and eroticized content of most TV and films, the fact that your local Classical music radio station programs Stravinsky next to Mozart—don't have to be that way. They were designed to be that way. The design was so successful, that today, no one even questions the reasons or the origins. (see "The New Age Paradigm Shift", posted separately underneath this article)

III. Creating "Public Opinion": The "Authoritarian Personality" Bogeyman and the OSS

The efforts of the Radio Project conspirators to manipulate the population, spawned the modern pseudoscience of public opinion polling, in order to gain greater control over the methods they were developing.

Today, public opinion polls, like the television news, have been completely integrated into our society. A "scientific survey" of what people are said to think about an issue can be produced in less than twenty-four hours. Some campaigns for high political office are completely shaped by polls; in fact, many politicians try to create issues which are themselves meaningless, but which they know will look good in the polls, purely for the purpose of enhancing their image as "popular." Important policy decisions are made, even before the actual vote of the citizenry or the legislature, by poll results. Newspapers will occasionally write pious editorials calling on people to think for themselves, even as the newspaper's business agent sends a check to the local polling organization.

The idea of "public opinion" is not new, of course. Plato spoke against it in his Republic over two millenia ago; Alexis de Tocqueville wrote at length of its influence over America in the early nineteenth century. But, nobody thought to *measure* public opinion before the twentieth century, and nobody before the 1930's thought to use those measurements for decision-making.

It is useful to pause and reflect on the whole concept. The belief that public opinion can be a determinant of truth is philosophically insane. It precludes the idea of the rational individual mind. Every individual mind contains the divine spark of reason, and is thus capable of scientific discovery, and understanding the discoveries of others. The individual mind is one of the few things that cannot, therefore, be "averaged." Consider: at the moment of creative discovery, it is possible, if not probable, that the scientist making the discovery is the *only* person to hold that opinion about nature, whereas everyone else has a different opinion, or no opinion. One can only imagine what a "scientifically-conducted survey" on Kepler's model of the solar system would have been, shortly after he published the Harmony of the World: 2% for, 48% against, 50% no opinion.

These psychoanalytic survey techniques became standard, not only for the Frankfurt School, but also throughout American social science departments, particularly after the I.S.R. arrived in the United States. The methodology was the basis of the research piece for which the Frankfurt School is most well known, the "authoritarian personality" project. In 1942, I.S.R. director *Max Horkheimer* made contact with the American Jewish Committee, which asked him to set up a Department of Scientific Research within its organization. The American Jewish Committee also provided a large grant to study anti-Semitism in the American population. "Our aim," wrote Horkheimer in the introduction to the study, "is not merely to describe prejudice, but to explain it in order to help in its eradication.... Eradication means reeducation scientifically planned on the basis of understanding scientifically arrived at."

The A-S Scale

Ultimately, five volumes were produced for this study over the course of the late 1940's; the most important was the last, *The Authoritarian Personality*, by Adorno, with the help of three Berkeley, California social psychologists.

In the 1930's Erich Fromm had devised a questionnaire to be used to analyze German workers psychoanalytically as "authoritarian," "revolutionary" or "ambivalent." The heart of Adorno's study was, once again, Fromm's psychoanalytic scale, but with the positive end changed from a "revolutionary personality," to a "democratic personality," in order to make things more palatable for a postwar audience.

Nine personality traits were tested and measured, including:

- **conventionalism**—rigid adherence to conventional, middle-class values
- **authoritarian aggression**—the tendency to be on the look-out for, to condemn, reject and punish, people who violate conventional values
- **projectivity**—the disposition to believe that wild and dangerous things go on in the world
- **sex**—exaggerated concern with sexual goings-on.

From these measurements were constructed several scales: the E Scale (ethnocentrism), the PEC Scale (political and economic conservatism), the A-S Scale (anti-Semitism), and the F Scale (fascism). Using Rensis Lickert's methodology of weighting results, the authors were able to tease together an empirical definition of what Adorno called "a new anthropological type," the authoritarian personality. The legerdemain here, as in all psychoanalytic survey work, is the assumption of a Weberian "type." Once the type has been statistically determined, all behavior can be explained; if an anti-Semitic personality does not act in an anti-Semitic way, then he or she has an ulterior motive for the act, or is being discontinuous. The idea that a human mind is capable of transformation, is ignored.

The results of this very study can be interpreted in diametrically different ways. One could say that the study proved that the population of the U.S. was generally conservative, did not want to abandon a capitalist economy, believed in a strong family and that sexual promiscuity should be punished, thought that the postwar world was a dangerous place, and was still suspicious of Jews (and Blacks, Roman Catholics, Orientals, etc. — unfortunately true, but correctable in a social context of economic growth and cultural optimism). On the other hand, one could take the same results and prove that anti-Jewish pogroms and Nuremberg rallies were simmering just under the surface, waiting for a new Hitler to ignite them. Which of the two interpretations you accept is a political, not a scientific, decision. Horkheimer and Adorno firmly believed that all religions, Judaism included, were "the opiate of the masses." Their goal was not the protection of Jews from prejudice, but the creation of a definition of authoritarianism and anti-Semitism which could be exploited to force the "scientifically planned reeducation" of Americans and Europeans away from the principles of Judeo-Christian

civilization, which the Frankfurt School despised. In their theoretical writings of this period, Horkheimer and Adorno pushed the thesis to its most paranoid: just as capitalism was inherently fascistic, the philosophy of Christianity itself is the source of anti-Semitism. As Horkheimer and Adorno jointly wrote in their 1947 "Elements of Anti-Semitism":

Christ, the spirit become flesh, is the deified sorcerer. Man's self-reflection in the absolute, the humanization of God by Christ, is the *proton pseudos* [original falsehood]. Progress beyond Judaism is coupled with the assumption that the man Jesus has become God. The reflective aspect of Christianity, the intellectualization of magic, is the root of evil.

At the same time, Horkheimer could write in a more-popularized article titled "Anti-Semitism: A Social Disease," that "at present, the only country where there does not seem to be any kind of anti-Semitism is Russia"(!).

This self-serving attempt to maximize paranoia was further aided by Hannah Arendt, who popularized the authoritarian personality research in her widely-read *Origins of Totalitarianism*. Arendt also added the famous rhetorical flourish about the "banality of evil" in her later *Eichmann in Jerusalem*: even a simple, shopkeeper-type like Eichmann can turn into a Nazi beast under the right psychological circumstances—every Gentile is suspect, psychoanalytically.

It is Arendt's extreme version of the authoritarian personality thesis which is the operant philosophy of today's Cult Awareness Network (CAN), a group which works with the U.S. Justice Department and the Anti-Defamation League of the B'nai B'rith, among others. Using standard Frankfurt School method, CAN identifies political and religious groups which are its political enemies, then re-labels them as a "cult," in order to justify operations against them. (See "The Theory of the Authoritarian Personality", posted separately underneath this article)

The Public Opinion Explosion

Despite its unprovable central thesis of "psychoanalytic types," the interpretive survey methodology of the Frankfurt School became dominant in the social sciences, and essentially remains so today. In fact, the adoption of these new, supposedly scientific techniques in the 1930's brought about an explosion in public-opinion survey use, much of it funded by Madison Avenue. The major pollsters of today—**A.C. Nielsen**, **George Gallup**, **Elmo Roper**—started in the mid-1930's, and began using the I.S.R. methods, especially given the success of the Stanton-Lazersfeld Program Analyzer. By 1936, polling activity had become sufficiently widespread to justify a trade association, the American Academy of Public Opinion Research at Princeton, headed by Lazarsfeld; at the same time, the University of Chicago created the National Opinion Research Center. In 1940, the Office of Radio Research was turned into the Bureau of Applied Social Research, a division of Columbia University, with the indefatigable Lazarsfeld as director.

After World War II, Lazarsfeld especially pioneered the use of surveys to psychoanalyze American voting behavior, and by the 1952 Presidential election, Madison Avenue advertising agencies were firmly in control of Dwight Eisenhower's campaign, utilizing Lazarsfeld's work. Nineteen fifty-two was also the first election under the influence of television, which, as Adorno had predicted eight years earlier, had grown to incredible influence in a very short time. Batten, Barton, Durstine & Osborne — the fabled "BBD&O" ad agency—designed Ike's campaign appearances entirely for the TV cameras, and as carefully as Hitler's Nuremberg rallies; one-minute "spot" advertisements were pioneered to cater to the survey-determined needs of the voters.

This snowball has not stopped rolling since. The entire development of television and advertising in the 1950's and 1960's was pioneered by men and women who were trained in the Frankfurt School's techniques of mass alienation. Frank Stanton went directly from the Radio Project to become the single most-important leader of modern television. Stanton's chief rival in the formative period of TV was NBC's **Sylvester "Pat" Weaver**; after a Ph.D. in "listening behavior," Weaver worked with the Program Analyzer in the late 1930's, before becoming a Young & Rubicam vice-president, then NBC's director of programming, and ultimately the network's president. Stanton and Weaver's stories are typical.

Today, the men and women who run the networks, the ad agencies, and the polling organizations, even if they have never heard of Theodor Adorno, firmly believe in Adorno's theory that the media can, and should, turn all they touch into "football." Coverage of the 1991 Gulf War should make that clear.

The technique of mass media and advertising developed by the Frankfurt School now effectively controls American political campaigning. Campaigns are no longer based on political programs, but actually on alienation. Petty gripes and irrational fears are identified by psychoanalytic survey, to be transmogrified into "issues" to be catered to; the "Willy Horton" ads of the 1988 Presidential campaign, and the "flag-burning amendment," are but two recent examples. Issues that will determine the future of our civilization, are scrupulously reduced to photo opportunities and audio bites—like Ed Murrow's original 1930's radio reports—where the dramatic effect is maximized, and the idea content is zero.

Who Is the Enemy?

Part of the influence of the authoritarian personality hoax in our own day also derives from the fact that, incredibly, the Frankfurt School and its theories were officially accepted by the U.S. government during World War II, and these Cominternists were responsible for determining who were America's wartime, *and postwar*, enemies. In 1942, the Office of Strategic Services, America's hastily-constructed espionage and covert operations unit, asked former Harvard president James Baxter to form a Research and Analysis (R&A) Branch under the group's Intelligence Division. By 1944, the R&A Branch had collected such a large and prestigious group of emigré scholars that H. Stuart Hughes, then a young Ph.D., said that working for it was "a second graduate education"

at government expense. The Central European Section was headed by historian **Carl Schorske**; under him, in the all-important Germany/Austria Section, was **Franz Neumann**, as section chief, with **Herbert Marcuse**, **Paul Baran**, and **Otto Kirchheimer**, all I.S.R. veterans. **Leo Lowenthal** headed the German-language section of the Office of War Information; **Sophie Marcuse**, Marcuse's wife, worked at the Office of Naval Intelligence. Also at the R&A Branch were: **Siegfried Kracauer**, Adorno's old Kant instructor, now a film theorist; **Norman O. Brown**, who would become famous in the 1960's by combining Marcuse's hedonism theory with **Wilhelm Reich's** orgone therapy to popularize "polymorphous perversity"; **Barrington Moore, Jr.**, later a philosophy professor who would co-author a book with Marcuse; **Gregory Bateson**, the husband of anthropologist **Margaret Mead** (who wrote for the Frankfurt School's journal), and **Arthur Schlesinger**, the historian who joined the Kennedy Administration. Marcuse's first assignment was to head a team to identify both those who would be tried as war criminals after the war, and also those who were potential leaders of postwar Germany. In 1944, Marcuse, Neumann, and Kirchheimer wrote the *Denazification Guide*, which was later issued to officers of the U.S. Armed Forces occupying Germany, to help them identify and suppress pro-Nazi behaviors. After the armistice, the R&A Branch sent representatives to work as intelligence liaisons with the various occupying powers; Marcuse was assigned the U.S. Zone, Kirchheimer the French, and Barrington Moore the Soviet. In the summer of 1945, Neumann left to become chief of research for the Nuremberg Tribunal. Marcuse remained in and around U.S. intelligence into the early 1950's, rising to the chief of the Central European Branch of the State Department's Office of Intelligence Research, an office formally charged with "planning and implementing a program of positive-intelligence research ... to meet the intelligence requirements of the Central Intelligence Agency and other authorized agencies." During his tenure as a U.S. government official, Marcuse supported the division of Germany into East and West, noting that this would prevent an alliance between the newly liberated left-wing parties and the old, conservative industrial and business layers. In 1949, he produced a 532-page report, "The Potentials of World Communism" (declassified only in 1978), which suggested that the Marshall Plan economic stabilization of Europe would limit the recruitment potential of Western Europe's Communist Parties to acceptable levels, causing a period of hostile co-existence with the Soviet Union, marked by confrontation only in faraway places like Latin America and Indochina—in all, a surprisingly accurate forecast. Marcuse left the State Department with a Rockefeller Foundation grant to work with the various Soviet Studies departments which were set up at many of America's top universities after the war, largely by R&A Branch veterans.

At the same time, Max Horkheimer was doing even greater damage. As part of the denazification of Germany suggested by the R&A Branch, U.S. High Commissioner for Germany John J. McCloy, using personal discretionary funds, brought Horkheimer back to Germany to reform the German university system. In fact, McCloy asked President Truman and Congress to pass a bill granting Horkheimer, who had become a naturalized American, dual citizenship; thus, for a brief period, Horkheimer was the only person in the world to hold both German and U.S. citizenship. In Germany, Horkheimer began the spadework for the full-blown revival of the Frankfurt School in that nation in the late 1950's, including the training of a whole new generation of anti-Western civilization

scholars like **Hans-Georg Gadamer** and **Jürgen Habermas**, who would have such destructive influence in 1960's Germany. In a period of American history when some individuals were being hounded into unemployment and suicide for the faintest aroma of leftism, Frankfurt School veterans—all with superb Comintern credentials — led what can only be called charmed lives. America had, to an incredible extent, handed the determination of who were the nation's enemies, over to the nation's own worst enemies.

IV. The Aristotelian *Eros*: Marcuse and the CIA's Drug Counterculture

In 1989, Hans-Georg Gadamer, a protégé of Martin Heidegger and the last of the original Frankfurt School generation, was asked to provide an appreciation of his own work for the German newspaper, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. He wrote,

One has to conceive of Aristotle's ethics as a true fulfillment of the Socratic challenge, which Plato had placed at the center of his dialogues on the Socratic question of the good.... Plato described the idea of the good ... as the ultimate and highest idea, which is supposedly the highest principle of being for the universe, the state, and the human soul. Against this Aristotle opposed a decisive critique, under the famous formula, "Plato is my friend, but the truth is my friend even more." He denied that one could consider the idea of the good as a universal principle of being, which is supposed to hold in the same way for theoretical knowledge as for practical knowledge and human activity.

This statement not only succinctly states the underlying philosophy of the Frankfurt School, it also suggests an inflection point around which we can order much of the philosophical combat of the last two millennia. In the simplest terms, the Aristotelian correction of Plato sunders physics from metaphysics, relegating the Good to a mere object of speculation about which "our knowledge remains only a hypothesis," in the words of Wilhelm Dilthey, the Frankfurt School's favorite philosopher. Our knowledge of the "real world," as Dilthey, Nietzsche, and other precursors of the Frankfurt School were wont to emphasize, becomes *erotic*, in the broadest sense of that term, as object fixation. The universe becomes a collection of things which each operate on the basis of their own natures (that is, genetically), and through interaction between themselves (that is, mechanistically). Science becomes the deduction of the appropriate categories of these natures and interactions. Since the human mind is merely a sensorium, waiting for the Newtonian apple to jar it into deduction, humanity's relationship to the world (and vice versa) becomes an erotic attachment to objects. The comprehension of the universal—the mind's seeking to be the living image of the living God—is therefore illusory. That universal either does not exist, or it exists incomprehensibly as a *deus ex machina*; that is, the Divine exists as a superaddition to the physical universe — God is really Zeus, flinging thunderbolts into the world from some outside location. (Or, perhaps more appropriately: God is really Cupid, letting loose golden arrows to make objects attract, and leaden arrows to make objects repel.) The key to the entire Frankfurt School program, from originator Lukacs on, is the "liberation" of Aristotelian eros, to make individual feeling states psychologically primary. When the I.S.R. leaders arrived in the United States in the mid-1930's, they exulted that here was a place which had no adequate philosophical defenses against their brand of *Kulturpessimismus* [cultural pessimism].

However, although the Frankfurt School made major inroads in American intellectual life before World War II, that influence was largely confined to academia and to radio; and radio, although important, did not yet have the overwhelming influence on social life that it would acquire during the war. Furthermore, America's mobilization for the war, and the victory against fascism, sidetracked the Frankfurt School schedule; America in 1945 was almost sublimely optimistic, with a population firmly convinced that a mobilized republic, backed by science and technology, could do just about anything. The fifteen years after the war, however, saw the domination of family life by the radio and television shaped by the Frankfurt School, in a period of political erosion in which the great positive potential of America degenerated to a purely negative posture against the real and, oftentimes manipulated, threat of the Soviet Union. At the same time, hundreds of thousands of the young generation—the so-called baby boomers—were entering college and being exposed to the Frankfurt School's poison, either directly or indirectly. It is illustrative, that by 1960, sociology had become the most popular course of study in American universities. Indeed, when one looks at the first stirrings of the student rebellion at the beginning of the 1960's, like the speeches of the Berkeley Free Speech Movement or the Port Huron Statement which founded the Students for a Democratic Society, one is struck with how devoid of actual content these discussions were. There is much anxiety about being made to conform to the system—"I am a human being; do not fold, spindle, or mutilate" went an early Berkeley slogan—but it is clear that the "problems" cited derive much more from required sociology textbooks, than from the real needs of the society.

The CIA's Psychedelic Revolution

The simmering unrest on campus in 1960 might well too have passed or had a positive outcome, were it not for the traumatic decapitation of the nation through the Kennedy assassination, plus the simultaneous introduction of widespread drug use. Drugs had always been an "analytical tool" of the nineteenth century Romantics, like the French Symbolists, and were popular among the European and American Bohemian fringe well into the post-World War II period. But, in the second half of the 1950's, the CIA and allied intelligence services began extensive experimentation with the hallucinogen LSD to investigate its potential for social control. It has now been documented that millions of doses of the chemical were produced and disseminated under the aegis of the CIA's Operation MK-Ultra. LSD became the drug of choice within the agency itself, and was passed out freely to friends of the family, including a substantial number of OSS veterans. For instance, it was OSS Research and Analysis Branch veteran Gregory Bateson who "turned on" the Beat poet **Allen Ginsberg** to a U.S. Navy LSD experiment in Palo Alto, California. Not only Ginsberg, but novelist **Ken Kesey** and the original members of the Grateful Dead rock group opened the doors of perception courtesy of the Navy. The guru of the "psychedelic revolution," **Timothy Leary**, first heard about hallucinogens in 1957 from Life magazine (whose publisher, **Henry Luce**, was often given government acid, like many other opinion shapers), and began his career as a CIA contract employee; at a 1977 "reunion" of acid pioneers, Leary openly admitted, "everything I am, I owe to the foresight of the CIA." Hallucinogens have the singular effect of making the victim asocial, totally self-centered, and concerned with objects. Even the most banal objects take on the "aura" which Benjamin had talked about, and

become timeless and delusionarily profound. In other words, hallucinogens instantaneously achieve a state of mind identical to that prescribed by the Frankfurt School theories. And, the popularization of these chemicals created a vast psychological lability for bringing those theories into practice. Thus, the situation at the beginning of the 1960's represented a brilliant re-entry point for the Frankfurt School, and it was fully exploited. One of the crowning ironies of the "Now Generation" of 1964 on, is that, for all its protestations of utter modernity, none of its ideas or artifacts was less than thirty years old. The political theory came completely from the Frankfurt School; **Lucien Goldmann**, a French radical who was a visiting professor at Columbia in 1968, was absolutely correct when he said of Herbert Marcuse in 1969 that "the student movements ... found in his works and ultimately *in his works alone* the theoretical formulation of their problems and aspirations [emphasis in original]." The long hair and sandals, the free love communes, the macrobiotic food, the liberated lifestyles, had been designed at the turn of the century, and thoroughly field-tested by various, Frankfurt School-connected New Age social experiments like the Ascona commune before 1920. (See box.) Even Tom Hayden's defiant "Never trust anyone over thirty," was merely a less-urbane version of Rupert Brooke's 1905, "Nobody over thirty is worth talking to." The social planners who shaped the 1960's simply relied on already-available materials.

Eros and Civilization

The founding document of the 1960's counterculture, and that which brought the Frankfurt School's "revolutionary messianism" of the 1920's into the 1960's, was Marcuse's *Eros and Civilization*, originally published in 1955 and funded by the Rockefeller Foundation. The document masterfully sums up the Frankfurt School ideology of *Kulturpessimismus* in the concept of "dimensionality." In one of the most bizarre perversions of philosophy, Marcuse claims to derive this concept from Friedrich Schiller. Schiller, whom Marcuse purposefully misidentifies as the heir of Immanuel Kant, discerned two dimensions in humanity: a sensuous instinct and an impulse toward form. Schiller advocated the harmonization of these two instincts in man in the form of a creative play instinct. For Marcuse, on the other hand, the only hope to escape the one-dimensionality of modern industrial society was to liberate the erotic side of man, the sensuous instinct, in rebellion against "technological rationality." As Marcuse would say later (1964) in his *One-Dimensional Man*, "A comfortable, smooth, reasonable, democratic unfreedom prevails in advanced industrial civilization, a token of technical progress." This erotic liberation he misidentifies with Schiller's "play instinct," which, rather than being erotic, is an expression of charity, the higher concept of love associated with true creativity. Marcuse's contrary theory of erotic liberation is something implicit in **Sigmund Freud**, but not explicitly emphasized, except for some Freudian renegades like **Wilhelm Reich** and, to a certain extent, **Carl Jung**. Every aspect of culture in the West, including reason itself, says Marcuse, acts to repress this: "The totalitarian universe of technological rationality is the latest transmutation of the idea of reason." Or: "Auschwitz continues to haunt, not the memory but the accomplishments of man—the space flights, the rockets and missiles, the pretty electronics plants...."

This erotic liberation should take the form of the "Great Refusal," a total rejection of the "capitalist" monster and all his works, including "technological" reason, and "ritual-

authoritarian language." As part of the Great Refusal, mankind should develop an "aesthetic ethos," turning life into an aesthetic ritual, a "life-style" (a nonsense phrase which came into the language in the 1960's under Marcuse's influence). With Marcuse representing the point of the wedge, the 1960's were filled with obtuse intellectual justifications of contentless adolescent sexual rebellion. *Eros and Civilization* was reissued as an inexpensive paperback in 1961, and ran through several editions; in the preface to the 1966 edition, Marcuse added that the new slogan, "Make Love, Not War," was exactly what he was talking about: "The fight for *eros* is a *political fight* [emphasis in original]." In 1969, he noted that even the New Left's obsessive use of obscenities in its manifestoes was part of the Great Refusal, calling it "a systematic linguistic rebellion, which smashes the ideological context in which the words are employed and defined." Marcuse was aided by psychoanalyst Norman O. Brown, his OSS protege, who contributed *Life Against Death* in 1959, and *Love's Body* in 1966—calling for man to shed his reasonable, "armored" ego, and replace it with a "Dionysian body ego," that would embrace the instinctual reality of polymorphous perversity, and bring man back into "union with nature." The books of Reich, who had claimed that Nazism was caused by monogamy, were re-issued. Reich had died in an American prison, jailed for taking money on the claim that cancer could be cured by rechanneling "orgone energy." Primary education became dominated by Reich's leading follower, A.S. Neill, a Theosophical cult member of the 1930's and militant atheist, whose educational theories demanded that students be taught to rebel against teachers who are, by nature, authoritarian. Neill's book *Summerhill* sold 24,000 copies in 1960, rising to 100,000 in 1968, and 2 million in 1970; by 1970, it was required reading in 600 university courses, making it one of the most influential education texts of the period, and still a benchmark for recent writers on the subject. Marcuse led the way for the complete revival of the rest of the Frankfurt School theorists, re-introducing the long-forgotten Lukacs to America. Marcuse himself became the lightning rod for attacks on the counterculture, and was regularly attacked by such sources as the Soviet daily *Pravda*, and then-California Governor Ronald Reagan. The only critique of any merit at the time, however, was one by Pope Paul VI, who in 1969 named Marcuse (an extraordinary step, as the Vatican usually refrains from formal denunciations of living individuals), along with Freud, for their justification of "disgusting and unbridled expressions of eroticism"; and called Marcuse's theory of liberation, "the theory which opens the way for license cloaked as liberty ... an aberration of instinct." The eroticism of the counterculture meant much more than free love and a violent attack on the nuclear family. It also meant the legitimization of philosophical *eros*. People were trained to see themselves as objects, determined by their "natures." The importance of the individual as a person gifted with the divine spark of creativity, and capable of acting upon all human civilization, was replaced by the idea that the person is important because he or she is black, or a woman, or feels homosexual impulses. This explains the deformation of the civil rights movement into a "black power" movement, and the transformation of the legitimate issue of civil rights for women into feminism. Discussion of women's civil rights was forced into being just another "liberation cult," complete with bra-burning and other, sometimes openly Astarte-style, rituals; a review of **Kate Millet's** *Sexual Politics* (1970) and **Germaine Greer's** *The Female Eunuch* (1971), demonstrates their complete reliance on Marcuse, Fromm, Reich, and other Freudian extremists.

The Bad Trip

This popularization of life as an erotic, pessimistic ritual did not abate, but in fact deepened over the twenty years leading to today; it is the basis of the horror we see around us. The heirs of Marcuse and Adorno completely dominate the universities, teaching their own students to replace reason with "Politically Correct" ritual exercises. There are very few theoretical books on arts, letters, or language published today in the United States or Europe which do not openly acknowledge their debt to the Frankfurt School.

The witchhunt on today's campuses is merely the implementation of Marcuse's concept of "repressive toleration"—"tolerance for movements from the left, but intolerance for movements from the right"—enforced by the students of the Frankfurt School, now become the professors of women's studies and Afro-American studies. The most erudite spokesman for Afro-American studies, for instance, Professor **Cornell West** of Princeton, publicly states that his theories are derived from Georg Lukacs. At the same time, the ugliness so carefully nurtured by the Frankfurt School pessimists, has corrupted our highest cultural endeavors. One can hardly find a performance of a Mozart opera, which has not been utterly deformed by a director who, following Benjamin and the I.S.R., wants to "liberate the erotic subtext." You cannot ask an orchestra to perform Schönberg and Beethoven on the same program, and maintain its integrity for the latter. And, when our highest culture becomes impotent, popular culture becomes openly bestial. One final image: American and European children daily watch films like *Nightmare on Elm Street* and *Total Recall*, or television shows comparable to them. A typical scene in one of these will have a figure emerge from a television set; the skin of his face will realistically peel away to reveal a hideously deformed man with razor-blade fingers, fingers which start growing to several feet in length, and—suddenly—the victim is slashed to bloody ribbons. This is not entertainment. This is the deeply paranoid hallucination of the LSD acid head. The worst of what happened in the 1960's is now daily fare. Owing to the Frankfurt School and its co-conspirators, the West is on a "bad trip" from which it is not being allowed to come down.

The principles through which Western Judeo-Christian civilization was built, are now no longer dominant in our society; they exist only as a kind of underground resistance movement. If that resistance is ultimately submerged, then the civilization will not survive—and, in our era of incurable pandemic disease and nuclear weapons, the collapse of Western civilization will very likely take the rest of the world with it to Hell.

The way out is to create a Renaissance. If that sounds grandiose, it is nonetheless what is needed. A renaissance means, to start again; to discard the evil, and inhuman, and just plain stupid, and to go back, hundreds or thousands of years, to the ideas which allow humanity to grow in freedom and goodness. Once we have identified those core beliefs, we can start to rebuild civilization.

Ultimately, a new Renaissance will rely on scientists, artists, and composers, but in the first moment, it depends on seemingly ordinary people who will defend the divine spark

of reason in themselves, and tolerate no less in others. Given the successes of the Frankfurt School and its New Dark Age sponsors, these ordinary individuals, with their belief in reason and the difference between right and wrong, will be "unpopular." But, no really good idea was ever popular, in the beginning.

Source: http://www.schillerinstitute.org/fid_91-96/921_frankfurt.html

The 'boxes' that accompany the above article:

Nazi-Communist Hippies of the 1920's

An overwhelming amount of the philosophy and artifacts of the American counterculture of the 1960's, plus the New Age nonsense of today, derives from a large-scale social experiment sited in Ascona, Switzerland from about 1910 to 1935. Originally a resort area for members of Helena Blavatsky's Theosophy cult, the little Swiss village became the haven for every occult, leftist and racist sect of the original New Age movement of the early twentieth century. By the end of World War I, Ascona was indistinguishable from what Haight-Ashbury would later become, filled with health food shops, occult book stores hawking the *I Ching*, and *Naturmenschen*, "Mr. Naturals" who would walk about in long hair, beads, sandals, and robes in order to "get back to nature." The dominant influence in the area came from Dr. Otto Gross, a student of Freud and friend of Carl Jung, who had been part of Max Weber's circle when Frankfurt School founder Lukacs was also a member. Gross took Bachofen to its logical extremes, and, in the words of a biographer, "is said to have adopted Babylon as his civilization, in opposition to that of Judeo-Christian Europe.... if Jezebel had not been defeated by Elijah, world history would have been different and better. Jezebel was Babylon, love religion, Astarte, Ashtoreth; by killing her, Jewish monotheistic moralism drove pleasure from the world." Gross's solution was to recreate the cult of Astarte in order to start a sexual revolution and destroy the bourgeois, patriarchal family. Among the members of his cult were: **Frieda and D.H. Lawrence**; **Franz Kafka**; **Franz Werfel**, the novelist who later came to Hollywood and wrote *The Song of Bernadette*; philosopher **Martin Buber**; **Alma Mahler**, the wife of composer Gustave Mahler, and later the liaison of Walter Gropius, Oskar Kokoschka, and Franz Werfel; among others. The Ordo Templis Orientalis (OTO), the occult fraternity set up by Satanist **Aleister Crowley**, had its only female lodge at Ascona. It is sobering to realize the number of intellectuals now worshipped as cultural heroes who were influenced by the New Age madness in Ascona—including almost all the authors who enjoyed a major revival in America in the 1960's and 1970's. The place and its philosophy figures highly in the works of not only Lawrence, Kafka and Werfel, but also Nobel Prize winners **Gerhardt Hauptmann** and **Hermann Hesse**, **H.G. Wells**, **Max Brod**, **Stefan George**, and the poets **Rainer Maria Rilke** and **Gustav Landauer**. In 1935 Ascona became the headquarters for Carl Jung's annual Eranos Conference to popularize gnosticism. Ascona was also the place of creation for most of what we now call modern dance. It was headquarters to **Rudolf von Laban**, inventor of the most popular form of dance notation, and **Mary Wigman**. **Isadora Duncan** was a frequent

visitor. Laban and Wigman, like Duncan, sought to replace the formal geometries of classical ballet with re-creations of cult dances which would be capable of ritualistically dredging up the primordial racial memories of the audience. When the Nazis came to power, Laban became the highest dance official in the Reich, and he and Wigman created the ritual dance program for the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin—which was filmed by Hitler's personal director **Leni Reifenstahl**, a former student of Wigman. The peculiar occult psychoanalysis popular in Ascona was also decisive in the development of much of modern art. The Dada movement originated in nearby Zurich, but all its early figures were Asconans in mind or body, especially **Guillaume Apollinaire**, who was a particular fan of Otto Gross. When "Berlin Dada" announced its creation in 1920, its opening manifesto was published in a magazine founded by Gross. The primary document of Surrealism also came from Ascona. Dr. **Hans Prinzhorn**, a Heidelberg psychiatrist, commuted to Ascona, where he was the lover of Mary Wigman. In 1922, he published a book, "The Artwork of the Mentally Ill," based on paintings by his psychotic patients, accompanied by an analysis claiming that the creative process shown in this art was actually more liberated than that of the Old Masters. Prinzhorn's book was widely read by the modern artists of the time, and a recent historian has called it, "the Bible of the Surrealists."

Source: http://www.schillerinstitute.org/fid_91-96/921_frankfurt.html#box1

The New Age Paradigm Shift

The Frankfurt School's original 1930's survey work, including the "authoritarian personality," was based on psychoanalytic categories developed by Erich Fromm. Fromm derived these categories from the theories of J.J. Bachofen, a collaborator of Nietzsche and Richard Wagner, who claimed that human civilization was originally "matriarchal." This primordial period of "gynocratic democracy" and dominance of the Magna Mater (Great Mother) cult, said Bachofen, was submerged by the development of rational, authoritarian "patriarchism," including monotheistic religion. Later, Fromm utilized this theory to claim that support for the nuclear family was evidence of authoritarian tendencies.

In 1970, forty years after he first proclaimed the importance of Bachofen's theory, the Frankfurt School's Erich Fromm surveyed how far things had developed. He listed seven "social-psychological changes" which indicated the advance of matriarchism over patriarchy:

- "The women's revolution;"
- "Children's and adolescents' revolution," based on the work of Benjamin Spock and others, allowing children new, and more-adequate ways to express rebellion;
- The rise of the radical youth movement, which fully embraces Bachofen, in its emphasis on group sex, loose family structure, and unisex clothing and behaviors;

- The increasing use of Bachofen by professionals to correct Freud's overly-sexual analysis of the mother-son relationship—this would make Freudianism less threatening and more palatable to the general population;
- "The vision of the consumer paradise.... In this vision, technique assumes the characteristics of the Great Mother, a technical instead of a natural one, who nurses her children and pacifies them with a never-ceasing lullaby (in the form of radio and television). In the process, man becomes emotionally an infant, feeling secure in the hope that mother's breasts will always supply abundant milk, and that decisions need no longer be made by the individual."

Source: http://www.schillerinstitute.org/fid_91-96/921_frankfurt.html#box2

The Theory of the Authoritarian Personality

The Frankfurt School devised the "authoritarian personality" profile as a weapon to be used against its political enemies. The fraud rests on the assumption that a person's actions are not important; rather, the issue is the psychological attitude of the actor—as determined by social scientists like those of the Frankfurt School. The concept is diametrically opposed to the idea of natural law and to the republican legal principles upon which the U.S. was founded; it is, in fact, fascistic, and identical to the idea of "thought crime," as described by George Orwell in his *1984*, and to the theory of "volitional crime" developed by Nazi judge Roland Freisler in the early 1930's.

When the Frankfurt School was in its openly pro-Bolshevik phase, its authoritarian personality work was designed to identify people who were not sufficiently revolutionary, so that these people could be "re-educated." When the Frankfurt School expanded its research after World War II at the behest of the American Jewish Committee and the Rockefeller Foundation, its purpose was not to identify anti-Semitism; that was merely a cover story. Its goal was to measure adherence to the core beliefs of Western Judeo-Christian civilization, so that these beliefs could be characterized as "authoritarian," and discredited.

For the Frankfurt School conspirators, the worst crime was the belief that each individual was gifted with sovereign reason, which could enable him to determine what is right and wrong for the whole society; thus, to tell people that you have a reasonable idea to which they should conform, is authoritarian, paternalistic extremism.

By these standards, the judges of Socrates and Jesus were correct in condemning these two individuals (as, for example, I.F. Stone asserts in one case in his "Trial of Socrates.") It is the measure of our own cultural collapse, that this definition of authoritarianism is acceptable to most citizens, and is freely used by political operations like the Anti-Defamation League and the Cult Awareness Network to "demonize" their political enemies.

When Lyndon LaRouche and six of his colleagues faced trial on trumped-up charges in 1988, LaRouche identified that the prosecution would rely on the Frankfurt School's authoritarian personality fraud, to claim that the defendants' intentions were *inherently* criminal. During the trial, LaRouche's defense attorney attempted to demonstrate the Frankfurt School roots of the prosecution's conspiracy theory, but he was overruled by Judge Albert Bryan, Jr., who said, "I'm not going back into the early 1930's in opening statements or in the testimony of witnesses."

Source: http://www.schillerinstitute.org/fid_91-96/921_frankfurt.html#box3

From Cybernetics to Littleton Techniques in Mind Control

by Jeffrey Steinberg

The \$9 billion a year video-game industry in America, which contributed mightily to the carnage at Littleton, Paducah, and Jonesboro, is far more than the mere commercial exploitation of techniques and technologies developed as "legitimate" training instruments for the military and law enforcement agencies. To understand the roots of this new form of "Manchurian Candidate" programmed terrorism, it is necessary to go back to World War II and the immediate postwar period, when there was a concerted effort launched, by the Frankfurt School and the London Tavistock Institute, to use the Marxist/Freudian perversion of psychology and other social sciences, as instruments for mass social control and brainwashing. The two pillars of the assault on the American intellectual tradition were cybernetics and the drug counterculture.

At that time, a number of prominent social scientists openly spelled out their goal, of using the wartime-tested techniques of mass psychological manipulation, to pervert and control the American people. And in most instances, their emphasis was on children, and the need to destroy the fabric of family life.

Lord Bertrand Russell, who joined with the **Frankfurt School** in this effort at mass social engineering, spilled the beans, in his 1951 book, *The Impact of Science on Society*. He wrote:

"Physiology and psychology afford fields for scientific technique which still await development. Two great men, Pavlov and Freud, have laid the foundation. I do not accept the view that they are in any essential conflict, but what structure will be built on their foundations is still in doubt. I think the subject which will be of most importance politically is mass psychology.... Its importance has been enormously increased by the growth of modern methods of propaganda. Of these the most influential is what is called "education." Religion plays a part, though a diminishing one; the press, the cinema, and the radio play an increasing part.... **It may be hoped that in time anybody will be able to persuade anybody of anything if he can catch the patient young and is provided by the State with money and equipment.**"

Russell continued, "The subject will make great strides when it is taken up by scientists under a scientific dictatorship....The social psychologists of the future will have a number of classes of school children on whom they will try different methods of **producing an unshakable conviction that snow is black**. Various results will soon be arrived at. First, that the influence of home is obstructive. Second, that not much can be done unless indoctrination begins before the age of ten. Third, that verses set to music and repeatedly intoned are very effective. Fourth, that the opinion that snow is white must be held to show a morbid taste for eccentricity. But I anticipate. It is for future scientists to make these maxims precise and discover exactly how much it costs per head to make children believe that snow is black, and how much less it would cost to make them believe it is

dark gray."

Russell concluded with a warning: "Although this science will be diligently studied, it will be rigidly confined to the governing class. The populace will not be allowed to know how its convictions were generated. **When the technique has been perfected, every government that has been in charge of education for a generation will be able to control its subjects securely without the need of armies or policemen.**"

Russell and the "Lethal Chamber"

Russell had been working on the concept of the scientific dictatorship for decades. In his 1931 book, *The Scientific Outlook*, he had devoted a chapter to "*Education in a Scientific Society*." Here, he was equally blunt about his oligarchical totalitarian vision. Drawing the parallel to the two levels of education provided by the Jesuits, Russell asserted: "In like manner, the scientific rulers will provide one kind of education for ordinary men and women, and another for those who are to become holders of scientific power. Ordinary men and women will be expected to be docile, industrious, punctual, thoughtless, and contented. Of these qualities probably contentment will be considered the most important. In order to produce it, all the researches of psycho-analysis, behaviourism, and biochemistry will be brought into play.... All the boys and girls will learn from an early age to be what is called 'co-operative,' i.e., to do exactly what everybody is doing. Initiative will be *discouraged* in these children, and insubordination, without being punished, will be scientifically trained out of them."

For the children chosen to be among the scientific ruling class, education was to be quite different. "Except for the one matter of loyalty to the world State and to their own order," Russell explained, "members of the governing class will be encouraged to be adventurous and full of initiative. It will be recognized that it is their business to improve scientific technique, and to keep the manual workers contented by means of continual new amusements."

Russell, however, added one very strong caveat. "On those rare occasions," he warned, "when a boy or girl who has passed the age at which it is usual to determine social status shows such marked ability as to seem the intellectual equal of the rulers, a difficult situation will arise, requiring serious consideration. If the youth is content to abandon his previous associates and to throw in his lot whole-heartedly with the rulers, he may, after suitable tests, be promoted, but if he shows any regrettable solidarity with his previous associates, the rulers will reluctantly conclude that there is nothing to be done with him except to send him to the lethal chamber before his ill-disciplined intelligence has had time to spread revolt. This will be a painful duty to the rulers, but I think they will not shrink from performing it."

Huxley's 'Concentration Camp of the Mind'

Russell's blunt description of a "scientific dictatorship" was matched by the account of **Aldous Huxley**, author of the utopian tract *Brave New World*, in a speech on the U.S. State Department's Voice of America, in 1961, of a world of pharmacologically

manipulated slaves, living in a "concentration camp of the mind," enhanced by propaganda and psychotropic drugs, learning to "love their servitude," and abandoning all will to resist. **"This," Huxley concluded, "is the final revolution."**

Speaking at the California Medical School in San Francisco, Huxley announced: "There will be in the next generation or so **a pharmacological method of making people love their servitude and producing dictatorship without tears**, so to speak. Producing a kind of painless concentration camp for entire societies so that **people will in fact have their liberties taken away from them but will rather enjoy it**, because they will be distracted from any desire to rebel by propaganda, or brainwashing, or brainwashing enhanced by pharmacological methods. And this seems to be the final revolution."

Huxley's cohort in the 1950s experimentation with psychotropic drugs, Dr. **Timothy Leary**, of Harvard University's Psychology Department, provided another glimpse into the perverted minds of the Russell/Huxley/Frankfurt School crowd, in his autobiographical account of the Harvard University Psychedelic Drug Project, **Flashback**. Leary first quoted Huxley:

"These brain drugs, mass produced in the laboratories, will bring about vast changes in society. This will happen with or without you or me. All we can do is spread the word. The obstacle to this evolution, Timothy, is the Bible."

Leary then added his own two cents: "We had run up against the Judeo-Christian commitment to one God, one religion, one reality, that has cursed Europe for centuries and America since our founding days. Drugs that open the mind to multiple realities inevitably lead to a polytheistic view of the universe. We sensed that the time for a new humanist religion based on intelligence, good-natured pluralism and scientific paganism had arrived."

As these monstrous notions of mass social engineering were being presented as the "humanistic" alternative to world war in the age of the atomic and hydrogen bomb, two crucial projects were being launched, that would shape the implementation of this Brave New World, and bring us, today, to the world of Littleton, Paducah, Jonesboro, Doom, Quake, and Duke Nukem.

The Authoritarian Personality

The first of the two projects was launched in January 1943, by a team of three social psychologists at the University of California at Berkeley, **Else Frenkel-Brunswik** (a founding member of the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research, known as the "Frankfurt School"), **Daniel J. Levinson**, and **R. Nevitt Sanford**. What started out as a modest \$500 grant to study the roots of anti-Semitism, would soon mushroom into the biggest mass social-profiling project ever undertaken in America, up until that time.

In May 1944, the American Jewish Committee established a Department of Scientific Research, which was headed by Frankfurt School director **Max Horkheimer**. Horkheimer established a project, called Studies in Prejudice, with generous funding

from the AJC and other agencies, including the Rockefeller foundations. The Studies in Prejudice offered employment to a number of Frankfurt School members who, for various reasons, were not coopted directly into the war effort (for example, **Herbert Marcuse** and **Franz Neumann** were brought into the Research and Analysis Section of the Office of Strategic Services, or OSS, the forerunner to today's Central Intelligence Agency). **Hedda Massing**, **Marie Jahoda**, **Morris Janowitz**, and **Theodor W. Adorno** all worked on the Studies, and, under Horkheimer's direction, they all formally reconstituted the **International Institute of Social Research**, the transplanted incarnation of the original Frankfurt School of Weimar Germany.

The most significant of the five Studies in Prejudice, produced for the AJC during 1944-50, was *The Authoritarian Personality* (New York: Harper, 1950). Authors Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, and Sanford assembled a large research team from the Berkeley Public Opinion Study and the International Institute of Social Research, to conduct thousands of interviews of Americans, to profile their allegedly deep-seated tendencies toward authoritarianism, prejudice, and anti-Semitism. **Dr. William Morrow**, the leading protégé of **Dr. Kurt Lewin**, who was one key, bridge figure between the **Frankfurt School and the Tavistock Institute**, was a research director for the Authoritarian Personality project.

The study was an exercise in self-fulfilling prophecy and Marxist/Freudian self-delusion. Long before the first survey questionnaire was drafted, Horkheimer and Adorno had written exhaustively about the "authoritarian" character of the American nuclear family, about the "problem" of the American people's belief in a transcendent monotheistic God, and about the underlying fascist character of all forms of American patriotism. They "cooked" the survey data, in advance, by devising a series of scales, purporting to measure the American population's tendency toward anti-Semitism, ethnocentricity, anti-democratic ideology, and, ultimately, fascism. Not surprisingly, the research team found the American public "guilty as charged," and produced dire warnings that, unless a dramatic overhaul of the American ideology and mass culture were carried out, America would soon emerge as a Fourth Reich, repeating the horrors of Hitler on an even grander scale.

The authors of *The Authoritarian Personality* let it all hang out in the concluding chapter of the book, in which they summarized their findings and spelled out their recipe for social transformation:

"It seems obvious, that the modification of the potentially fascist structure cannot be achieved by psychological means alone. The task is comparable to that of eliminating neurosis, or delinquency, or nationalism from the world. These are products of the total organization of society and are to be changed only as that society is changed. It is not for the psychologist to say how such changes are to be brought about. The problem is one which requires the efforts of all social scientists. All that we would insist upon is that in the councils or round tables where the problem is considered and action planned the psychologist should have a voice.

We believe that the scientific understanding of society must include an understanding of what it does to people, and that it is possible to have social reforms, even broad and sweeping ones, which though desirable in their own right would not necessarily change the structure of the prejudiced personality. For the fascist potential to change, or even to be held in check, there must be an increase in people's capacity to see themselves and to be themselves. This cannot be achieved by the manipulation of people, however well grounded in modern psychology the devices of manipulation might be.

... It is here that psychology may play its most important role. Techniques for overcoming resistance, developed mainly in the field of individual psychotherapy, can be improved and adapted for use with groups and even for use on a mass scale."

*The authors conclude with this most revealing proposition: "We need not suppose that appeal to emotion belongs to those who strive in the direction of fascism, while democratic propaganda must limit itself to reason and restraint. If fear and destructiveness are the major emotional sources of fascism, **eros** belongs mainly to democracy."*

Eros was precisely the weapon that the Frankfurt School and their fellow-travellers employed, over the next 50 years, to create a **cultural paradigm shift** away from the so-called "authoritarian" matrix of man in the living image of God (imago viva Dei), the sanctity of the nuclear family, and the superiority of the republican form of nation-state over all other forms of political organization. They transformed American culture toward an erotic, perverse matrix, associated with the present "politically correct" tyranny of tolerance for dehumanizing drug abuse, sexual perversion, and the glorification of violence. For the Marxist/Freudian revolutionaries of the Frankfurt School, the ultimate antidote to the hated Western Judeo-Christian civilization was to tear that civilization down, from the inside, by turning out generations of necrophiliacs.

If this statement seems harsh, consider the following. In his 1948 work on *The Philosophy of Modern Music*, Frankfurt School leader Theodor Adorno argued that the purpose of modern music is to literally drive the listener insane. He justified this by asserting that modern society was a hotbed of evil, authoritarianism, and potential fascism, and that, only by first destroying civilization, through the spread of all forms of cultural pessimism and perversity, could liberation occur. On the role of modern music, he wrote, "It is not that schizophrenia is directly expressed therein; but the music imprints upon itself an attitude similar to that of the mentally ill. The individual brings about his own disintegration.... He imagines the fulfillment of the promise through magic, but nonetheless within the realm of immediate actuality.... Its concern is to dominate schizophrenic traits through the aesthetic consciousness. In so doing, it would hope to vindicate insanity as true health." Necrophilia, he added, is the ultimate expression of "true health" in this sick society.

Erich Fromm, another leading Frankfurt School figure, who was instrumental as early as the 1930s in devising the scales used in the Authoritarian Personality study, devoted much of his seminal 1972 work, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*, to the analysis

of necrophilia, which he pronounced to be the dominant trend in modern society. Fromm defined necrophilia as all forms of obsession with death and destruction, particularly those with intense sexual overtones. Ironically, his ostensible "cure" for this mass social perversion was the drug, rock, sex counterculture of the late 1960s. "Simultaneously with the increasing necrophilous development," Fromm wrote in his chapter on "*Malignant Aggression: Necrophilia*," "the opposite trend, that of love of life, is also developing. It manifests itself in many forms: in the protest against the deadening of life, a protest by people among all social strata and age groups, but particularly by the young. There is hope in the rising protest against pollution and war.... This protest is also to be understood in the attraction to drugs among the young."

Liberation through Drug Abuse

It is noteworthy that one of the four directors of the Authoritarian Personality project, **R. Nevitt Sanford**, played a pivotal role in the 1950s and '60s experimentation and eventual mass usage of psychedelic drugs. In 1965, Sanford wrote the forward to *Utopiates: The Use and Users of LSD 25*, which was published by Tavistock Publications, the publishing arm of Great Britain's pre-eminent psychological warfare agency, the Tavistock Institute. Tavistock directed the Psychiatric Division of the British Army during World War II, and dispatched many of its top brainwashers to the United States in the immediate postwar period, to work on the secret mind-control projects of the CIA and the Pentagon, including the MK-Ultra project, devoted to the study of LSD and other psychedelics.

In his foreword to *Utopiates*, Sanford, who headed up the Stanford University Institute for the Study of Human Problems, a major outpost for **MK-Ultra** secret LSD experimentation, spelled out the argument for drug legalization that is, to this day, at the heart of the pro-drug movement's propaganda. "The nation," Sanford wrote, "seems to be fascinated by our 40,000 or so drug addicts who are seen as alarmingly wayward people who must be curbed at all costs by expensive police activity. Only an uneasy Puritanism could support the practice of focusing on the drug addicts (rather than our 5 million alcoholics) and treating them as a police problem instead of a medical one, while suppressing harmless drugs such as marijuana and peyote along with the dangerous ones." The leading propagandists of the drug lobby today--**George Soros, Ethan Nadelman**, et al.--base their argument for legalization on the exact same scientific quackery that Dr. Sanford spelled out in *Utopiates* 36 years ago.

The Cybernetics Group

One of the "Big Lies" permeating Fromm's *Anatomy* was the idea that the erotic drug-rock-sex counterculture was the antidote to the cybernetic, technetronic "necrophilous" society. In reality, the Frankfurt School and their closest allies among the Russell/Wells/Huxley British oligarchy, were the architects of both the cybernetics project and the counterculture project of the 1960s. In fact, the Cybernetics Group, sponsored by the Josiah Macy Foundation, was the umbrella, under which the CIA and British intelligence conducted their mass experimentation with mind-altering psychedelic drugs, including LSD-25, which experiment was, eventually, spilled out onto the streets

of San Francisco, New York's Greenwich Village, and every American college campus, giving us the counterculture "paradigm shift" of 1966-72.

The Cybernetics Group, known among its members as the "Man-Machine Project," was unofficially launched in May 1942 at a New York City conference called the Cerebral Inhibition Meeting, sponsored by the medical director of the Josiah Macy Foundation, **Frank Fremont-Smith**. Among the participants were Warren McCulloch, Arturo Rosenblueth, Gregory Bateson, Margaret Mead, and Lawrence K. Frank. Rosenblueth, a protégé of Norbert Wiener, set out the broad parameters of the proposed effort. Speaking on behalf of Wiener and John von Neumann, he proposed to draw together a group of engineers, biologists, neurologists, anthropologists, and psychologists, to devise experiments in social control, based on the quack claim that the human brain was nothing more than a complex input/output machine, and that human behavior could, in effect, be programmed, on both an individual and societal scale. [fn1]

World War II prevented the project from getting off the ground for four years. But shortly after the Japanese surrendered, McCulloch asked Fremont-Smith to convene a second gathering under the formal sponsorship of the Macy Foundation. The first of what would be a series of ten major conferences and year-long research efforts, between 1946 and 1953, took place in New York City on March 8-9, 1946, under the title, "The Feedback Mechanisms and Circular Causal Systems in Biology and the Social Sciences Meeting."

What came out of that first meeting was not only a demonic drive to create the ultimate engineered society, based on the fusion of man and machine. A core group of 20 people constituted themselves as a task force to carry out this mission, and would spawn a series of permanent institutions, where the work would continue, to the present day. A year after the founding session of the Macy project, Wiener would coin the term "cybernetics" to describe their effort.

Who were the "Dr. Jekylls" gathered around the table for the first of the Macy conferences?

Warren McCulloch was the titular chairman of all ten of the conferences. At the time of the first meeting, he was a professor of psychiatry and physiology at the University of Illinois, but he would soon move to the Research Laboratory of Electronics at MIT.

Walter Pitts, McCulloch's protégé, first at Illinois, and later at MIT.

Gregory Bateson, the anthropologist and then-spouse of Margaret Mead, who would soon become the director of research at the Veterans Hospital in Palo Alto, California, where he was a pivotal player in MK-Ultra and other secret government experiments with mind-altering drugs.

Margaret Mead, then the assistant curator of ethnology at the American Museum of Natural History in New York, who would function as the "earth goddess" of the Cybernetics Group, and would help launch the modern feminist movement, through her

patronage of Betty Friedan, a student-protégé of Kurt Lewin.

Kurt Lewin, founder of the Research Center for Group Dynamics at MIT, a leading Frankfurt School fellow-traveller, whose work with Frankfurt School founder **Karl Korsch** on linguistics would form a foundation of the field of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Lewin's National Training Laboratory would later become part of the National Education Association, and would facilitate the transformation of public education in America into an approximation of Bertrand Russell's nightmarish scheme for teaching children that "snow is black."

Paul Lazarsfeld, the director of the Bureau of Applied Social Research at Columbia University, who had been the wartime head of the Radio Research Laboratory at Princeton University, and had been the patron there of the Frankfurt School's Theodor Adorno.

LSD Freaks Meet Cyber-Hackers

In 1974, **Stewart Brand**, chief propagandist for both the psychotropic drug revolution and the personal computer revolution, published a collection of his previously published essays under the title, *II Cybernetic Frontiers*. Two of the essays consisted of interviews he had conducted with Gregory Bateson, one of the architects of the psychedelic revolution in America, through his posting at the Palo Alto Veterans Hospital, where much MK-Ultra experimentation took place. Bateson was one of the four or five most influential members of the Cybernetics Group. The other, longer essay in the book, "Fanatic Life and Symbolic Death Among the Computer Bums," was first published in the December 1972 issue of the leading counterculture publication, *Rolling Stone*.

Brand began the *Rolling Stone* piece with the startling boast: "Ready or not, computers are coming to the people. That's good news, maybe the best since psychedelics." He continued, "It's way off the track of the 'Computers--Threat or Menace?' school of liberal criticism but surprisingly in line with the romantic fantasies of the fore-fathers of the science, such as **Norbert Wiener**, **Warren McCulloch**, **J.C.R. Licklider**, **John von Neumann**, and **Vannevar Bush**. The trend owes its health to an odd array of influences: the youthful fervor and firm dis-Establishmentarianism of the freaks who design computer science; an astonishingly enlightened research program from the very top of the Defense Department; an unexpected market-flanking movement by the manufacturers of small calculating machines; and an irrepressible midnight phenomenon known as *Spacewar*."

Brand provided a detailed explanation of **Spacewar**, perhaps the very first computer war game to be designed. "Ah, *Spacewar*. Reliably, at any night-time moment (i.e., non-business hours) in North America, hundreds of computer technicians are effectively out of their bodies, computer-projected onto cathode ray tube display screens, locked in life-or-death space combat for hours at a time, ruining their eyes, numbing their fingers in frenzied mashing of control buttons, joyously slaying their friends and wasting their employers' valuable computer time."

If this sounds like a mild version of the latter-day souped-up sex and violence video games of today--it is!

Beginning in 1963, when the U.S. space program was moved out of the military and housed under NASA, J.C.R. Licklider convinced his boss at ARPA (what would later be called DARPA) to devote a fraction of the agency's budget to computer research. At the time, the Department of Defense was the world's largest consumer of computers. Licklider became the director of an ARPA unit called IPTO (Information Processing Techniques Office), and, over the next years, disbursed millions of dollars to a wide range of computer and Artificial Intelligence research centers.

Until 1969, when the Mansfield Amendment placed restrictions on how the Pentagon could spend its research and development money, there were no boundary conditions on the kinds of projects that IPTO could bankroll. Billions of dollars went into the early development of computer networking, computer graphics, "virtual reality," simulation, and other key facets of what, today, is a \$9-11 billion-a-year commercial industry of point-and-shoot video games. The Media Lab at MIT and the Stanford Artificial Intelligence Lab were two of the magnets for this money and the research work which fueled both the Pentagon training-simulation programs and the evolving video-game industry.

In his book *On Killing*, Lt. Col. David Grossman recounts how the advent of high-speed computers allowed the social engineers, responsible for training soldiers to overcome their aversion to killing, provided an unsurpassed technology for stimulus-response behavior modification. The increasingly realistic video graphics, the advanced work on neurological processes--all hallmarks of the cybernetic "man-machine" project--transformed the U.S. military into a force of programmed killers, and ultimately became the social engineers' "weapon of choice" for twisting the minds of millions of America's youth.

The social engineers seeking to fulfill Adorno, Horkheimer, Russell, and Huxley's visions of a perfectly engineered society, led by a "scientific dictatorship," were never far removed from the computer and AI labs where the technologies were being developed and tested.

It was only a matter of time that, like the LSD experiments of the 1960s, the secret military experimental phase ended, and the American population became the targets, this time, of the sex and violence self-programming of Doom, Quake, and the rest.

Source: http://www.schillerinstitute.org/new_viol/cybmindcontrol_js0400.html