Counter-Culture and Consumer Society

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This paper addresses a topic which has been relatively neglected in the marketing and consumer research literature. Our aim is to rejuvenate discussion of what constitutes counter-culture and what it implies about culture and consumption. Drawing on Hegel's lordbondsman tale, we present three different ways of framing this complex subject. These frames are entitled authentic counterculture, the mediation of counter-culture and counter-culture as difference. Through the frames we chart the transition from revolutionary to aesthetic counter-culture and the central role played in this process by the developing commodity culture. Next we discuss the implications of the aestheticization of social space for counter-cultural theory and practice, illustrating this with examples of various British and American counter-cultural groupings and activities. In charting these changes we discuss how the ultimate aim of counter-culture has shifted from transcendence to resistance, and ask whether the return to some more global theory might ever again be possible. Finally we evaluate the usefulness of Hegel's tale in the light of the previous discussion and suggest issues which require further attention from researchers interested in culture and consumption.

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INTRODUCTION

The nature of counter-culture, and its implications for marketing and consumer society, have virtually been ignored in the consumer research literature. This is scarcely surprising as nowadays the term may seem to be over-loaded and anachronistic, a throwback to what some describe as the misplaced angst of the 1960s (Arnold and Fisher 1996). Our interest in revisiting counter-culture at this point is not motivated by nostalgia, but by a conviction that it has considerable contemporary significance. The idea of counter-culture is irretrievably bound up with, and central to, an understanding of the culture to which it refers and as culture evolves, so too does counter-culture. Furthermore, the concept of counter-culture seems to resonate with recent phenomena, such as the demonstrations and riots surrounding the meeting of the World Trade Organization in Seattle, consumer protests against genetically modified foods, and the use of the internet as a way of linking disparate groups of consumer activists.

Despite the lack of explicit attention devoted to counter-culture in recent marketing literature, there has been much discussion of related issues, such as the colonizing tendencies of consumer culture (Miller 1996; Klein 2000), consumer resistance and its relation to culture or community (Gabriel and Lang 1995; Hermann 1993; Penaloza and Price 1993; Firat and Venkatesh 1995; Firat and Dholokia 1998; Cova and Cova 2000), and the status of the movement towards voluntary simplicity (Rudmin and Kilbourne 1996). We believe that revisiting the concept of "counter-culture" can add to these literatures, providing fresh contexts for the understanding of terms such as "power" and "resistance".

This raises the question of how counter-culture might be contextualized or framed. Two approaches are available. The first would be to judge the usefulness of a frame which has already been developed as a means for organizing the maze of different definitions and descriptions of counter-culture. Alternatively one could seek to build a frame from the ground up. In this paper we consider the usefulness of an "off-the-shelf" frame provided by Hegel in his tale of the relation between the lord and the bondsman. This was chosen for the following reasons. Firstly Hegel's master-slave dialectic forms the context for the work of a range of authors in social theory, including Kojève (1996) (who changed the ending), Marx (Kedourie 1995), (who inverted it), Lacan (1977) (who turned it inside out) and more recently, Fukuyama (1992), who out-hegelianized Hegel in suggesting...
that the end of history was not reached at the battle of Jena, but resulted from the end of the Cold War. Secondly, as perhaps the most enduring myth of the twentieth century, Hegel's tale provides a useful template to explore all "centre-periphery" views which seek to relate culture to its other. In particular, it serves to illuminate accounts of the counter-culture in various ways. We will elaborate upon these in more depth following a brief articulation of the tale itself.

THE LORD-BONDSMAN TALE

The myth of the Lord and Bondsman, which Hegel described in the Phenomenology of Spirit (Hegel 1996) retails the story of the dramatic events surrounding the first of all human conflicts, its outcome, and the contradictions which ensue from it. In seeking to explain how consciousness comes into being, Hegel suggested that self-awareness can only spring from the consciousness of that which is other to the self. Consciousness requires an object from which to differentiate itself. In the first instance this object is to be found in nature. Once perceived as separate from consciousness, the object (nature) is feared as it is now thought to be foreign and opposed to the self. At the same time consciousness mourns its loss and craves to be reunited. The other thus becomes the object of an intense desire, in that consciousness wants to strip the foreignness away and make the object at one with itself; however this is impossible as it would entail its own destruction. Hegel sought to get around the unsatisfactory situation of this unresolved desire by postulating not consciousness and its object, but two self-consciousnesses which are locked in a deadly struggle for recognition. This outcome of the struggle is that one self-consciousness emerges victorious, the lord. The other consciousness is reduced to the role of bondsman as it is no longer for itself but in thrall to another. The conflict ends with the bondsman recognizing the master: to the bondsman the lord's view is the only view; he is pinned in place by the gaze of the lord. However while the lord may have won he has not really gained the craved recognition (of an equal) but only that of a bondsman. The bondsman is regarded as an object by the lord and works on (subjugated) nature to create the fruits for the lord's enjoyment. As the narrative unfolds a transformation takes place. Through work, by recognizing himself in the objects which he has fashioned, the bondsman comes to recognize his own mind as his own creation. The master who is alienated from nature may come to pine for the lost
unity and seek to rejoin with it. Change and transcendence are now possible.

Hegel's tale frames the relation between "mainstream" and "counter" culture in a complex manner. Counter-cultures are admixtures of two groups: slaves who have achieved consciousness or self-awareness to the extent that they demand recognition, and masters who feel alienated from nature and who seek reconciliation with their "true" natures. The fashioning of a "counter-cultural" identity, like any identity, requires a leap of imagination which supersedes otherness or difference in reaching for self-sameness. The implication is that in making a claim to recognition and identity a counter-cultural movement seeks to create itself around the myth that it is the real, true, authentic counter-culture. This provides the first frame for our analysis of the diverse literature on the topic.

This brings us to the second frame which is employed in the paper; the mediation of counter-culture. Hegel's tale illustrates the paradoxical relation between the slave and the master. This is characterized by the interplay of struggle and desire, involving mirroring and the fear of absorption and loss of identity. From the slave's perspective, the master seems to fill the horizon and there is always the danger that in acting out its resistance to the master, the slave comes to mirror that which it seeks to destroy. The master fears and at the same time desires re-integration with nature from which he is now separated. This can lead to an intense drive to incorporate nature and emerging slave "counterculture" by taming it and reproducing it, and to an equally intense desire to turn away from identity (from convention and culture) in a bid to return to nature.

The third and final frame emerges as we push the second frame to an extreme. If culture is mediated, then perhaps the driving tendency behind counter-culture is not identity or sameness but othering or difference. This is because when viewed in terms of its composition, the counter-culture is not monolithic but rather comprises different groupings. This "reveals" the first countercultural frame as a typical instance of identity construction which requires processes of abstraction and totalization if it is to succeed (through constructing a fiction of the counter-culture counterposed to the mainstream).

The "lord-bondsman" tale also illuminates the linkage between knowledge and power. Initially the lord knows (the fear of) the other and this is his power. However the bondsman comes to a sense of his worth through his work on nature and this knowledge provides him with the means to recognize himself in the fruits of his production.
Relations between identity and power are threaded through our discussion, as are themes of space and time. Hegel's tale highlights the importance of locating the subject in space and time. The story unfolds in space and through time; indeed, prior to the rupture which produces identity (consciousness) there can be no space or time because these require a consciousness to perceive them. We now proceed to the first frame in considering counter-culture as the counter-culture.

COUNTER-CULTURE I: THE AUTHENTIC COUNTERCULTURE

Within the hegelian perspective the term counter-culture is rooted in ideas of identity and its formation in relation to an other. With counter-culture there is an automatic link to the (un-articulated and anonymous) mainstream. Within this binary scheme issues of coherence, power (A/b) and of right and wrong (white/black) are simplified; the counter-culture is the authentic counter-culture and there are no shades of grey. There is evidence to substantiate this in a number of texts on counter-culture, most strikingly in the extent to which authors refer to the particular counter-culture which interests them as the counter-culture (cf. for example Roszak 1970; Nelson 1989; Green 1986; Davidson 1992). Within this view the counter-culture is counterposed to the mainstream across a whole range of dimensions. Examples of such definitions are "a minority culture marked by a set of values, norms and behavior patterns which contradict those of the dominant society" (Batzell 1994, p. 116) and "a way of life and philosophy which at central points is in conflict with the mainstream society" (Leech 1973). Similarly, for Dessaur et al. (1974), counter-culture...

...refers to a coherent system of norms and values that not only differ from those of the dominant system (where this and nothing else is the case we speak of subcultures) but also comprise at least one norm or value that calls for commitment to cultural change, that is to a transformation of the dominant system of norms and values.

Represented in the terms of the lord-bondsman tale, Dessaur's view of counter-culture as a coherent system of values, which differs substantively from the mainstream and calls for change, implies a conscious critical self-awareness. The counter-culture does not represent the (unreflective state of) the slave who has been subjugated (which approximates better to the term "subculture") but rather the
slave who has attained a sense of self-recognition and who seeks to challenge the "mainstream". This is the sense within which counterculture is set apart as being "authentic". For example, Braungart and Braungart (1994) appear to draw upon this frame in arguing that subcultural groups tend to withdraw from conventional society, while counter-cultural groups are more rejecting and confrontational—either in expressive (punk) terms or by engaging in rebellious political activity. Similarly, Langman (1971-72, p. 82) argues that

The counter-culture seeks a fundamental transvaluation of ethics, alternate life styles, and transformations of consciousness. The "youth culture", as we call it, is more of an ideology, theme, or style than a clearly designated group.

This view is shared by Umberto Eco (1994). Despite offering several readings of counter-culture, Eco elevates over others the definition of counter-culture as "an active critique or transformation of the existing social, scientific or aesthetic paradigm".

Within this frame youth culture is labeled as being inchoate, literally "sub-culture", subaltern to the mainstream and lacking in the vital ingredients of self-recognition and self-awareness indicative of genuine, authentic counter-culture. Awareness is key to the idea of "resistance"; it is only through becoming self-aware that the slave can come to recognize his or her self-worth and can develop those values which are different to the mainstream. Dependent on the mainstream, sub-culture can do little more than mirror the values of the mainstream within whose bounds it is immersed. In this context authors describe drug culture and hippy culture as being parasitic (Eco Ibid., p. 123), dependent on the mainstream for their very existence (Ruether 1972).

The question of authenticity played a key role in the discourse surrounding youth culture and counter-culture during the 1950s and 1960s. The preoccupation with authenticity is scarcely surprising when one considers that much of 1960s US and European counterculture was fuelled by middle-class intellectuals and youth, who, one could argue, were able to play with the idea of counter-culture and if they didn't like it, move back to their comfortable lives. For example, Emmett Grogan talks of the "pleasant fakery" of the "adventure of poverty" followed by many young white people (Fountain 1988). In this context, it is not difficult to understand why within this view much of 1960s counter-culture was considered ersatz and inauthentic.
Where does the demand for authenticity spring from? This may be answered by addressing the foundational myth of the very idea of culture itself, for is not counter-culture the other of culture? Auge's (1995) discussion of "anthropological place" is helpful here in linking cultural identity to myth. During the course of his research, Auge noted the tendency for different groups to construct unique foundational narratives or myths; often tales of war and flight across the territory which secured the identity of the tribe as being the people. The metonymic substitution of the part (the tribe) for the whole (the people) is of course, patently false, as it masks the reality of the existence of other groups and as such the foundational myth is always a semi-fantasy because nobody has ever been unaware of existence of other groups:

There is nothing to suggest that yesterday or today, the image of a closed and self-sufficient world could ever even to those who diffuse it and therefore identify with it be anything more than a useful and necessary image: not a lie but a myth, roughly inscribed on the soil, fragile as the territory whose singularity it founds (1995, p. 47).

The reality of other groups is dealt with by casting their stories as being inauthentic; "we" are "the" people; our story is the one true story, all others are false. While a number of such alternative cultures may exist at any point in time the members of each come to believe that their culture represents the one true culture. The difficulty in believing that "my" culture is the culture lies in the need to dis-confirm the presence of others. The simultaneous preservation of a foundational fantasy and its projection into the future is reflected ironically by Lacan (1977) who substitutes the impossible space/time of the future anterior "I am where I will have been" for that of the self-knowing subject in the present. Keeping the faith by preserving and transferring the values of the culture is central to the idea of being authentic.

The above discussion provides a possible explanation for the importance of authenticity in relation to concepts of culture and counter-culture and how such identities are based on the preservation of a foundational myth or fantasy, constituting a sense of place, which is projected into the future. Such myths are embedded in many of those "countercultural" texts where the author discusses a particular instance of counter-cultural development as if it were the counterculture (Green 1986; Roszak 1970). The discussion also highlights the fragility of such identities in that the myths which sustain them can of
necessity be challenged by others. Next we describe two exemplars of "authentic" counter-culture, revolutionary and aesthetic counterculture.

Revolutionary and Aesthetic Counter-Cultures

Several authors (Ruether 1972; Harvey 1989; Bauman 1993) have discussed movements in culture and counter-culture which are characteristic of two broad tributaries, the apocalyptic or revolutionary, and the aesthetic, or gnostic. These represent different space/time responses to living with the otherwise intolerable reality of the crushing power of the mainstream. Revolutionaries are motivated by the principle of Becoming, the promise of transcendence in the time to come, and invest all their will and effort in fighting the mainstream in the furtherance of this vision. In contrast the aesthetic response to force is to privilege Being, or space over time, in searching for timeless and immutable values. The search for such values may lead in any number of directions, in terms of seeking to build the space of community through the projection of a foundational fantasy into the present, mysticism or drugs.

Revolutionary Counter-Culture

During the twentieth century, a revolutionary ethos became equated not only with the idea of counter-culture but as the only way of doing social theory. Harvey (1989, p. 205) notes with some astonishment that until very recently, social theory focused on processes of social change, modernization and revolution which take progress as the key theoretical object and time as the main dimension (to the exclusion of the aesthetic). Revolutionary counter-culture was composed of a mixture of disaffected intellectuals and the downtrodden-with the downtrodden portrayed by the intellectuals as those whose consciousness must be raised in order to provide the cut-throat blow to the mainstream. For Marx the vanguard was to be the working class; for Lenin, faced with the practical non-existence of a working class it was to be the peasantry, raised to the collective critical consciousness of a "second culture" (Semsek and Stauth 1988). In later years the intellectual stimulus came from critical theorists such as the "Frankfurt School", those fringe professors of the French Academy of 1968, artists of the avant-garde and many others united by their urge to transform the values of "mainstream" society. For most radical...
intellectuals the twentieth century was a period of waiting for the (never to be realized) revolution.

Within the marxist perspective, authenticity (via the need to provide "credentials" and a constant vigilance against "revisionism") has been considered crucial as the culture orients itself towards the preservation into the future of a text (Das Kapital). Classification is of the utmost importance as the entire edifice is based on class. Thus in early "base-superstructure" models the "superstructure" or culture, is entirely dependent on the interest of the economic "base". The insistence on the primacy of social class has been remarkably persistent. Writing many years later within a much more sophisticated genre where the primary topic is youth sub-culture, Clarke et al. (1989) are at pains to insist that social class or "class culture" is the most fundamental "parent" category of which sub-cultures are smaller, more localized and differentiated structures. In its simplest manifestation society is composed of two mutually opposed classes, capital and labor (which take the roles of "master" and of "slave" respectively). Social transformation is linked to the developing class-consciousness of labor and to the ultimate collapse of capitalism under its own contradictions (through the extraction of surplus value, the immiseration of the working class and the creation of a collective consciousness). The aim is ultimately one of transcendence, the creation of a truly free and "truly" rational society based on the liberation of labor. As we shall see under the discussion of "mediation", while capitalist social organization constitutes the "mainstream" to which revolutionary counter-culture is counterposed, two things are notable about their relation. The first is that both "mainstream" and revolutionary "counter-culture" share several fundamental aspects in common and secondly that both "mainstream" and "counter-cultural" writers have combined to attack a quite different form of social organization based on a different system of value-the aesthetic.

Aesthetic Counter-Culture

While the Soviets were organizing their revolution, a group of academics and other intellectuals settled on Mount Verita near Ascona in 1917 in an attempt to live out a solution to the problem of unbehagen, civilization and unhappiness posed by Freud; Green (1986) describes this as the emergence of the counterculture. This economically and educationally privileged group felt themselves to be more unhappy than primitive peoples. They laid the burden of their unhappiness at
the doors of industrialization and urbanization, which they linked in turn to a rootless individualism and atomization associated with a process of "Americanization" (1986, p. 220). By withdrawing from the cities to Ascona, the group sought to recreate a sense of rootedness and community in their own (German) cultural past. Inspired by the writings of Nietzsche, by theosophy, Tolstoyism and nature cure, the Ascona group lived out a radical social experiment which celebrated the values of Dionysus, Eros and Pan and challenged "refined" taste by privileging the instinctual, the feminine, the "primitive" act and "untamed" creativity. Aesthetics was the primary mode of expression of this group and in their daring experiment on Mount Verita the Ascona group sought to fashion their own communal alternative space in which to live. Because the main point of Ascona was to act out new possibilities they have left no written legacy:

...they thought of Freud and Weber as enemies; Freud and Weber thought of them as fools... these "fools" have been consigned to the dustbin of history it was a risk which they ran-now, they look flimsy against the serried volumes of Freud and Weber (Green, 1986, p. 2).

Authenticity was important to the Ascona group to the extent that in the midst of massive social changes they sought to retreat to the authenticity of timeless "primordial" values. While each group may have shared a common concern with the apparently voracious onslaught of industrial capitalism on all that they held to be sacred, they adopted quite different responses to it. Marxist revolutionaries chose to engage with capitalism head-on, on its own turf, by seeking to supplant it with a more rational society based on free labor; in contrast, the Ascona group actively withdrew from the maelstrom in order to (re)create a new set of values based on the notion of a "primitive" community. While the revolutionary concern with authenticity was linked centrally to classification, this aesthetic was concerned with the creation of an experiential community. We now turn to discuss these and other issues in our second frame on the mediation of counter-culture.

COUNTER-CULTURE II: MEDIATION OF COUNTERCULTURE

The mediation of counter-culture which we explore in this section considers that knowledge which both master and slave repress from
view, namely that identity is mediated. While some authors sought to claim the entire territory of "counter-culture" for "their" version, such claims have been greeted incredulously by McKay (1996, 1998) who charts the narratives linking "sixties" counterculture in Britain with later expressions such as punk. With other authors (cf. Fountain 1988), McKay traces lines of resistance (and the often heavy-handed response of police) from the actions, lifestyles and cultural productions of hippy and punk eras to the 1990s. In this frame the counter-cultural "voice" is mediated through time and is also (at times) transmitted across cultures.

In this section we first consider a range of definitions of counterculture which overtly recognize the mediation of counterculture and follow through the implications of this for the "counter-cultural" status of terms such as "sub-culture". We next consider the mediation of counter-culture given the major shift towards aestheticization in social spacing during the twentieth century, and we suggest that the proliferation of media has contributed significantly to this process. We then proceed to discuss how, depending upon which frame is used, the meaning of terms such as "power", "resistance" and indeed the very idea of what may be "counter-cultural" is changed. Finally we consider the implications of changes in cultural spacing for what it means to be counter-cultural.

Mediation within Counterculture

Ruether (1972) argues that revolutionary and aesthetic "countercultural" movements can be traced to the most ancient societies, further suggesting that these are composed of disaffected intellectuals and others from the dominant class in addition to those from the subordinate class. Thus while a strict focus on identity (sameness) seeks to preclude difference, as in the first frame which we used, it is clear that counter-cultures are not unitary formations. The Ascona group for example was composed of radically different points of view. However it could still be argued that the members of this group shared an interest in common in that, by and large, they came from the upper echelons of society. This is the argument deployed by Clarke et al. (1976) with respect to the U.K. variants of "Beat", "Peacenik" and "Hippie" 1960s counter-culture, which they suggest were almost exclusively composed of middle-class youth in dissenting from their "parent" culture; "dropping-out" of society might be cool but it probably could only be achieved comfortably with parental support. The
authors argue that in contrast working-class youth found expression through the stylish re-appropriation of commodities through a succession of sub-cultural milieu, from "Teddy Boys" to "Mod", to "Skinhead"-developments which, they argue, only made sense with reference to their working-class "parent" culture. Similar themes are evident in a more recent study of the symbolic creativity threaded through the everyday lives of working class youths in Britain; Willis (1990) documents the ways in which these young people "use, humanize, decorate and invest with meanings their common and immediate life spaces and social practices" (p. 2).

Ruether (1972) suggests that the pre-cursor to the US counterculture of the 1960s was when young, white, middle-class, civil rights activists experienced the "immiseration" which was taken for granted by Southern blacks. One could perhaps tentatively reinterpret Clarke et al.'s analysis (op. cit.) to suggest that by "dropping out" of society middle-class youth were motivated by a desire to rid themselves of the trappings of their parents' material consumer culture, in order to get closer to nature, while working class youth were motivated by the opposite desire to gain entry to and expression in the world of goods. The continued association of the middle-classes with counter-culture is currently reflected in the composition of cyberpunk and Hacker culture (Ross 2000).

Mediation between Counter-Cultures

The idea of the mediation of counter-culture lends itself to definitions which frame it as a "collective label" (O'Sullivan et al. 1983) or "a variegated procession constantly in flux, acquiring and losing members all along the route of the march" (Roszak 1971). According to this perspective, a diverse group of interests acts collectively to form the meta-level of "counter-culture"; different counter-cultural groups relate to the centre in different ways, and the cumulative effects of their activities are then referred to as "counter-culture". In the American "counter-culture" of the 1960s, for example, there were some who sought to revolutionise society by engaging in the South's civil rights campaigns or new-left campus politics while others withdrew into bohemian lifestyles, drugs, religious cults, or some combination of these (Batzell 1994; Anderson 1995). Within this context authors argue that "subcultures" are counter-cultural. For example McKay (1996, p. 6) states that "Cultures of resistance feed the culture of resistance. Put another way, subcultures feed the counterculture".

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This argument is bolstered by O'Sullivan et al. (1983) who argue that the ideologies and actions of these diverse groups could as a whole be seen as expressions of youthful political protest and resistance against the older establishment. The range of subcultural movements from hippy through punk through rave and others contributes to the increasingly resistant lifestyle or perspective of counterculture. McKay (1996, 1998) notes that contemporary counter-cultures sometimes refer to previous counter-cultures in constructing a sense of identity; on other occasions he detects a considerable amount of "ahistoricism" at play.

Mediation between Revolutionary and Aesthetic Counter-Cultures

Within the context of revolutionary and aesthetic counter-cultures discussed in our first frame, the issue of mediation invites us to consider what relation (if any) existed between these movements and others and also between them and the mainstream to which they were opposed. With respect to their wider impact, the massive impact of revolutionary counter-culture on twentieth-century social and political organization is beyond doubt. However what of the aesthetic counter-culture of the Ascona group which actively withdrew from the political scene? Despite this withdrawal it seems clear that this group was extremely influential at the time and for subsequent generations. The group formed part of an elite European social milieu including many of the European literati who visited Ascona (such as Hermann Hesse, Kafka, Isadora Duncan, Jung and D. H. Lawrence) and those who shared some of their ethos, such as the English critic F. R. Leavis (who was also concerned about "Americanization") and Mahatma Gandhi (who formulated his resistance movement based on passive resistance, simple living and Swadeshi, self-reliance). Despite the fact that they left virtually no written legacy, this group inspired a number of subsequent groups and styles including the Nazis, Essalen, the German "Greens", the "Peace Movement" and modern dance.

What of the relations between such groups? While Green (1986) does not mention the relations between those at Ascona and the Soviet revolutionaries, one can deduce from the former's rejection and the latter's embrace of scientific rationality, that they did not see eye to eye on that subject. The rejection of modernity, flight from industrial "progress" towards a simpler way of life and the aesthetic preoccupation of the Ascona group stands in stark contrast to the
rational, progressive urge of revolutionary counter-culture. In general it seems fair to say that revolutionary writers have been quite disparaging about aesthetic counter-culture, seeing it as a waste of time or just downright dangerous. Thus for Norman Brown (1966), steeped in the aesthetic tradition, 1960s countercultural experimentation with new aesthetic forms and drugs offered the promise of a trip on the royal road to transcendence. For Marcuse (.1964), however, it bred nothing more than doped and duped dependency. Marcuse's reaction calls to mind Adorno's infamous lumping together of everything from polkas to Charlie Parker under the banner of the "opiate of popular music", positioning this against more "authentic" classical music (Eisenberg 1987, p.19). Writing after the event Clarke et al. (1976, p. 73) noted that two distinctive strands of the 1960s counterculture were

...via drugs and mysticism to a revolution in life style into a Utopian alternative culture or alternatively via community action, protest action and libertarian goals into a more activist street politics.

The play on action/ (passivity) and Utopian/(non-Utopian) in this passage convey the impression that while the aesthetes fiddle with style, revolutionaries get things done. In a later passage the authors joke that the (aesthetic) notion that a "revolution is in the mind" is "mindless" (1976, p. 77) There is (or ought to be) some irony here: it could be argued that the Clarke et al. paper (Ibid.) with its focus on various spaces of resistance, is itself a product of the gradual aestheticization of English revolutionary discourse. In the 1950s, authors had to fight for the view that it was admissable to research culture (and not class). By the 1990s, however, it had become difficult to find anyone in "cultural studies" who was not exploring the dynamics of incorporation and resistance with respect to cultural spaces. We now turn to consider the role played by counter-culture in this process of aestheticization.

Triumph of the Aesthetic

While we have discussed several differences between aesthetic and revolutionary views of counter-culture, there does appear to be one concern which united those at Ascona, their revolutionary counterparts and the mainstream of the time. We have already mentioned that those at Ascona shared a concern about "Americanization" with
F. R. Leavis. According to Green (1986), this sprung from the fear that industrial progress linked to rapid urbanization and individualization would destroy all hope for community or collective action and which in turn led to their withdrawal from society. In a text which partially covers similar ground with respect to English culture Dick Hebdige (1988) discusses the fear of "Americanization" shared by Leavis and others in the British cultural elite, including the BBC, journalists, cultural critics, the British Modern Design establishment, authors and critical theorists who together stood up against the decadence of American commodity culture:

They are seen to pose a threat to native traditions of rugged self-reliance, self-discipline and the muscular puritanism of the stereotyped (male) workforce, thereby leading to a "softening up" and "feminisation" of the national stock (Hebdige 1988, p. 9).

Hebdige (1988) argues that the main target of critical theory was not consumer society per se, but the associations that this had with aesthetic, feminine and American values. Thus "authentic" masculine values associated with social stability, substance and a form of elitism were placed under threat by the fear of incorporation by a brash new American culture which celebrated style over substance via such vulgar pursuits as jazz and rock n'roll and constituted a levelling down of (British) "high" culture by means of standardisation and streamlining. (Hebdige 1988, pp. 68-71). Given Bourdieu's (1994) insights into the working of cultural capital, it is hardly surprising that those possessing it in abundance should be concerned about the devaluation of their currency (through the "levelling-down" effects of popular culture and the rise in the currency of the female).

According to a number of prominent authors the rapid growth of a popular culture centred around commodities came to play a central role in the transformation of social space itself from a cognitive to an aesthetic logic (Harvey 1989; Baudrillard 1990; Bauman 1993, 1995). This transformation involved breaking down the rigidity of existing social structures based on the codified regulation of social distances, and replacing them with a panoply of new spaces (mass media, retail, body-zones). Various authors suggest that the rational, hierarchical, linear and progressive organization of space/time has lurched towards a more fragmented scene characterized by pools of space/time where hopes of sustaining identity, never mind progress have reached vanishing point (Bauman 1995). This change has had major implications for counter-culture which itself in the 1960s played
a pivotal role in the transition towards this new state of postmodernity (Harvey 1989, p. 38). As we shall see, this shift in sensibility has led authors to reinterpret the dynamics of twentieth-century counterculture, reaching conclusions that would no doubt have startled those who felt that they were participants in social transformation at the time. The shift has also had profound implications for the very idea of "counter-culture" and for related ideas of "power" and "resistance". For example Hebdige (1988) describes how, in Britain, this transformation emerged in youth culture, first in the "Teddy Boys" in the early 1950s. It was to reach its apotheosis in the shift from the motorcycle to the scooter; from "substance" to "style" and from "masculine" to "feminine" as expressed in the transition to "Mod". As Hebdige (1988, p. 110) notes,

> According to sociological and marketing sources, Mod was largely a matter of commodity selection. It was through commodity choices that mods marked themselves out as mods, using goods as "weapons of exclusion" to avoid contamination from other alien worlds of teenaged taste that orbited round their own (the teds, the beats and later the rockers).

Hebdige suggests that Mod's significance and influence stretched beyond the confines of the "subcultural mileu". It led to the creation of new aesthetic spaces, from coffee stores, shirt stores, boutiques and discotheques to the development of Mod television programs such as Ready Steady Go. One would be hard pressed to detect the revolutionary flavor of a "second culture" here. From an "authentic", "revolutionary" perspective, Mod has none of the credentials of the repressed struggle for transcendence; Mod would be taken as a form of capitulation, a sign of absorption by mass consumer culture. In commenting on the aestheticization of everyday life, Hebdige's work is itself illustrative of that "seachange" which, we noted earlier took effect in English social theory. But how did this come about?

Mechanics of Transformation

What of the mechanics of this transformation from a cognitive (apocalyptic, revolutionary) to an aesthetic organization of social space? Several authors (Harvey 1989; Bauman 1993, 1995, 1997; Brennan 1993) suggest that the revolutionary excavating impulse of modernism is itself responsible for this change. As an example, Harvey (1989) invokes Marx's famous description of capital as the "annihilation of space through time" to describe the modern imperative to pulverize
space, and capital's forward rush to overcome the friction of distance in the bid to colonize every space. Harvey notes that while this process has been ongoing for at least 100 years, it has accelerated as the turnover time of capital has itself accelerated. However the key contradiction noted by Harvey is that in seeking to colonize space, new spaces must be created. For example since the early days of the Industrial Revolution there has been a vast proliferation of new spaces: the railway, vast networks of roads, motorways and bypasses, the telegraph, "air-space", the media spaces of TV, radio and the internet and the "space" of the body. Political space has been redefined and with it the spatialization of power. This has had profound implications for the conception of what constitutes power. The Hobbesian notion of a unitary sovereign space with a ruler at its center, the aristocracy at its core and subjects at its periphery, gave way to a differentiated classificatory control apparatus, more fitting to the exercise of discipline in the faceless state of modern liberal democracy. Power has become more diffuse and faceless as the liberal state has itself been "rolled back" and its functions privatized.

According to Harvey (1989) and Bauman (1993, 1995) the pulverization of space into a series of pools of space-time has led to the fragmentation of life, a life which can no longer be lived as a coherent project, with the consequent disembedding of identity. Within this situation where all seems ephemeral these authors note a nostalgic common desire for immutable timeless values (the aesthetic), leading some tribes to retrench, with frequently appalling consequences for those "strangers" who inhabit the same space (as evidenced by the conflict in the former Yugoslavia, for example, and increasing support for fascism in parts of Europe). On the other hand, as Maffesoli (1996) has observed, new tribes are formed who come to inhabit new spaces, such as cyberspace with its associated promise of new forms of community (Venkatesh et al. 1997; Bell and Kennedy 2000).

The effect of this change had truly shattering consequences for social theory, as the fundamental category of "class" unravelled amidst a sea of counter-claims (from feminists, gays, ethnic groups, disabled people and other minorities). Baudrillard notes, in the context of the collapse and interpenetration of all categories that; "Everything is sexual. Everything is political. Everything is aesthetic". He adds that: "(T)he fact is that the revolution has well and truly happened, but not in the way we expected" (1990, p. 4). With the benefit of hindsight it makes sense to argue that what was truly "counter-cultural" in that it represented a radical break with the past.
was the irruption of popular culture which rode in on the crest of a wave of styles, commodities and ultimately commodity-styles. This view is advocated by Clarke et al. (1989) in noting for example that long before Oz began its campaign against a restrictive sexual morality, that morality had been undermined by the language of mass advertising and magazines-noting that Playgirl moved in where Oz had feared to tread (1989, p. 77). When viewed through the aesthetic lens revolutionary counterculture loses much of its radical edge as it mirrors the form of the mainstream modernism to which it is opposed, by dint of its focus on rationality, the future resolution of contradictions and of revolutionary progress to the "time to come", whether this be the millennium, or the revolution. The view that twentieth-century revolutionary countercultural organization acts as a double or mirror of the mainstream has been argued and noted by a number of authors (Marcuse 1964; Roszak 1970; Baudrillard 1981). Bauman (1997, p. 38) reflects on the process by which modernity bred cadres of revolutionaries pledging to replace the revolutionary generalizing, classificatory style of modernism:

From that perspective, the counter-order could appear only as another, opposing classification and a reversal of categorical hierarchy. Those bent on doing the reversal could be seen only as aspiring alternative classifiers and legislators of categories.

Aestheticization of Space: Spaces of Resistance

We have mentioned that nowadays one hears little talk of transcendence. In its stead is a stream of discourse which seeks to prise open and pore over spaces of resistance; the resistance of advertising space (through anti-advertising and the "tactics" of resistance), resistance against roads (through tunnelling and seeking to "reclaim the streets"); resistance against capitalism (through spectacular rallies); resistance against consumer society (through skip diving, No Shop Day and a myriad other actions); resistance to home ownership (Gurney 1999); resistance around the dinner-table (Martens and Warde 1999); resistance through the construction of temporary autonomous zones, including "rave" spaces and "mystic spaces" (Bey 1996); the "reclamation" of the body through tattooing or piercing, resistance through the creation of web-spaces via the development of new "communities" (Gals on Web, netchicks, Napster.com). If the sheer weight of reported action counts for anything then surely the Western
world is passing through its most resistant phase ever! What is the nature of such "resistance", however? How does "resistance" relate to the actions of the self-critical subject? How is such resistance mediated? These questions are addressed below.

Strategic and Tactical Spaces

De Certeau's (1984) division of spaces into strategic and tactical corresponds broadly to the division between the revolutionary and the aesthetic. Taking a relatively naive conception of space, what matters to revolutionaries is the occupation of strategic spaces—those public spaces, the streets and squares which make up the city together with the strategic public media of radio and television. On the other hand De Certeau's concept of tactical space sits well with the aesthetic, in that it is micro-political (fashioned in response to the totalizing discourse of Foucault's Discipline and Punish) and composed by the actions of those millions of people who daily traverse public spaces. De Certeau likens such action to that of the nomadic reader, arguing that this is one action which must always be free of determination because it is neither here nor there, it has no place. Much of the discussion of counter-cultural media centres on the one hand on counter-cultural attempts to gain a voice through the construction of strategic spaces (via magazines and TV programmes). Others have eagerly seized upon de Certeau's ideas in discussing consumers' tactical resistance to the spaces and texts of "mainstream" media.

Mediation of Strategic Space

The power of counter-culture is portrayed quite differently depending on whether one is talking of strategic space or tactical space. With respect to strategic space, narratives of countercultural media often chart a path from the optimism of beginnings to the bitterness of closure. While authors point out the more positive aspects of countercultural media, the discourse is haunted by the fear (and realisation) of mainstream incorporation. One of the most well-known counter-cultural media organisations is the Toronto-based Adbusters Media Foundation (incorporating the "Culture-Jamming" network and Adbusters magazine). Seeking no less than "to topple existing power structures and forge a major shift in the way we will live in the 21st century", it works towards this goal by providing a focal point for developing and
disseminating critical thought, parodic advertising and resources for those interested in countering consumer culture. Adbusters was inspired by the FTF (First Things First) 6 Manifesto developed by Ken Garland, a London based graphic designer in 1964. One change worth noting since the 1960s is that the ambivalent approach to technology of those days has given way to its wholehearted embrace: the Adbusters website plays a crucial role in providing content for and making links with likeminded individuals and organizations.

How might we interpret the work of the Adbusters Media Foundation? A modest interpretation would place this as the latest development in the stream of counter-cultural mediation (McKay 1996). The notion of "counterproductions" resonates with Firat and Dholakia's (1998) discussion of how consumption became separated from production in modernity. Postmodern consumption, they suggest, resynthesizes the two, to the extent that "the separation between moments and sites of production and consumption will gradually disappear" (1998, p. 101) and possibilities for a new space open up. On the other hand we may read Adbusters' counter-productions as a rather picturesque form of incorporation, a constant theme in studies of counter-cultural media (Fountain 1988; Nelson 1989). After all, Handelman (1998) notes that a significant proportion of Adbusters magazine subscriptions are taken out by inhabitants of Madison Avenue. 8 Fountain (1988) notes how Oz became trapped in "mainstream" discussions with respect to hierarchies and disputes with labour unions. The irony in such situations was detected by Eco (1967), long before those in the firing line:

Certain phenomena of "mass dissent"(hippies, beatniks, new Bohemias, student movements) today seem to us negative replies to the industrial society: The society of Technological Communication is rejected in order to look for alternative forms, using the means of technological society (television, press, record companies...). So there is no leaving the circle: you are trapped in it willy-nilly. Revolutions are often resolved in more picturesque forms of integration.

Penaloza and Price (1993) make the point more succinctly in suggesting that one cannot fight fire with fire. The warning that the use of technology to defeat Technology merely recuperates and invigorates Technology has largely fallen on deaf ears. Rudmin and Kilbourne (1996) make a telling point when they describe how the "adbusters" of the 1920s, those media which had been set up to espouse the values of voluntary simplicity later became so thoroughly assimilated into

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the mainstream that they became beacons for the values of consumption. Foucault (1979) might have argued that power generates its own forms of resistance. This illustrates Davidson's (1992) point that advertising's reflexivity allows it to use the forces ranged against it for its own ends. It also supports the broader argument that the boundaries between consumption and resistance are porous, and that there is an immediate and recursive interplay between resisters and marketing agents and institutions (Penaloza and Price 1993; Gabriel and Lang 1995).

Turning to the mass media, these tend to be viewed in three main ways from a counter-cultural perspective. First they are depicted as having the ability to render the suffering of the oppressed and protest movements visible as famously happened at Kent State University and with respect to Vietnam (Ruether 1972). Secondly they are accused of rendering the activities of counter-cultural groups risible. Finally they are held responsible for simulating images of "counterculture" and circulating them within media discourse as just another referent system for the composition of style. The incorporation of "counter-cultural" imagery within commodity-culture is most noteworthy with respect to youth culture, for example with respect to the appropriation of signifiers of punk or street fashion (Ewen 1988; Davidson 1992). As the 1960s counter-culture took the commodity to its heart, so commodification has advanced to the heart of those spectacular spaces which once constituted the core of counter-cultural expression, the rock concert, where everything (including the grass) is now a vehicle for some form of promotion (Klein 2000). Within an advertising system where brands routinely base themselves on the "anti-hero" referent system (Williamson 1979), where some (such as Sprite) even de-bunk the consumerism on which they rely for their survival, Adbusters' parodic "antiadvertising" may simply be regarded as another form of advertising.

Mediation of Tactical Space

In the media consumption literature much of the research with respect to tactics applied a useful corrective to the "mass ideology" thesis, with authors noting that audiences are active and can decode texts in radically different ways to those intended by the sender, depending on the frame of reference (Roscoe et al. 1985) or as shaped by prior ideological discourses (Morley 1995). Writing in this vein, Miller (1996) deploys a semiotic approach in suggesting that the
"Coca-Colonization" thesis (exemplified in the homogenizing and globalizing tendencies of consumer culture) cannot be sustained. However a veritable industry has sprung up around the deployment of tactics which seeks to radicalize these to the level of resistance. For example Fiske (1989, p. 37) likens youth to "shopping mall guerillas par excellence" and likens their "tactics" (changing price tags on clothing) to those used by the Vietcong. With respect to advertising, Elliott and Ritson (1997, p. 192) describe a "battle of the titans" with "the powerful commodity-text of advertising" on one side of the ring and "countervailing opportunities for symbolic resistance through polysemy and active re-signification of meaning by subcultural practices", on the other. Others challenge the appropriation of "resistance" for such purposes. Roach (1997, p. 59) for one argues that it "belongs to a political vocabulary of movements in opposition to real oppression, where the physical and personal stakes (such as life/death) are extremely high".

By the end of the 1980s it seemed the audience was always active and that media content was always polysemic (Evans 1990). This led to concern that the freedom of the media consumer has been romanticized to the extent that the question of media power is becoming invisible. Morley (1995, p. 310) laments the "facile insistence on the polysemy of media products and... an undocumented presumption that forms of interpretive resistance". Indeed, Morris (1988, p. 20) suggests that writing about resistance has become an industry in its own right, with "thousands of versions of the same article about pleasure, resistance and the politics of consumption... run off under different names with minor variation".

In our view the issue of what is, and what is not resistance owes much to the "aestheticization" of the entire social space. We share the disquiet of Roach and others about the manner in which petty theft or different readings of soap opera storylines is rendered similar to situations where people risk injury or even death. One could argue, however, that in the current age the "heroic" or revolutionary conception of "resistance" to which these authors refer becomes increasingly nostalgic. This shift in the conception of "resistance" from that of the self-critical subject to the micro, or what Baudrillard (1990) refers to as the fractal level, chimes well with the idea of the fragmentation of social space into a series of space-time pools. However this raises a conceptual problem about the meaning of the signifier "resistance". As mentioned earlier, Eco (1994) offered a definition of "authentic" or "heroic" countercultural resistance as "an active critique or transformation".
of the existing social, scientific or aesthetic paradigm". If in its "heroic" manifestation, resistance refers to conscious, self-critical action; then in its aesthetic or "everyday" dimension one might say that "resistance" is equated with the tactical, those largely unconscious, unreflective actions which produce what Eco (1979) calls the "aberrant" decoding of texts. At the very least, as Willis (1990, p. 156) argues,

"...common culture has produced increasing numbers of independent and recalcitrant ordinary citizens and voters who are very much more difficult for everybody to handle or understand."

In this incarnation, the signifier "resistance" loses much of its substance and takes on the appearance of pure formality; resistance as the (inevitable) return of the repressed, of the excess over the power which seeks to control it. We do not believe that this conceptualization of "resistance" is necessarily a bad thing, just that it can quickly become a "catch-all" label for many diversely motivated and un-motivated actions and so requires much further discussion. Cova and Cova (2000) offer a welcome step in this direction with their distinction between appropriation of unordered space (mastery over the law of nature) and re-appropriation of ordered space (mastery over the law of the owner), and their discussion of "twist", consumers' reappropriation of marketing space. In this context, Aubert-Ginet's (1997) observation of consumers in two French banks led to the identification of 830 actions in the space which contravened the norms of the bank. This brings us to our third and final frame which considers what forms of action are appropriate for a fragmented space/time complex.

COUNTER-CULTURE III: COUNTER-CULTURE AS DIFFERENCE

The idea of counter-culture as difference rests on the idea that countercultural groups have long been characterised by looseness, openness, chaos and disorder (Musgrove 1974). They may also be "as hostile towards and out of step with one another as each of them is committed to the task of transforming the prevailing culture" (Dessaur et al. 1972, p. 2). On the other hand, the break between the counter-culture and the mainstream is not as clean as it seems. Roszak (1972) claimed that the enemy of 1960s counterculture sat across the breakfast table,
raising the notion that one can be a "part-time" member of the "counterculture". McKays (1998, p. 2) analysis of "DiY [do-it-yourself] culture" in contemporary Britain resonates with this perspective:

DiY culture, a youth-centred and-directed cluster of interests and practices around green radicalism, direct action politics, new musical sounds and experiences, is a kind of 1990s counterculture ...Like the 1960s version we tend to associate the word "counterculture" with, DiY Culture is a combination of inspiring action, narcissism, youthful arrogance, principle, ahistoricism, idealism, indulgence, creativity, plagiarism, as well as the rejection and embracing alike of technological innovation.

These views chime with the point made by Firat and Dholakia (1998) that the countercultural movement was "decentered, spontaneous, fluid, diverse, multi-hued and fragmented-a quintessentially postmodern movement". This notion of counterculture is quite different to the idea of the consciously self-critical "authentic" subject which we discussed in our first frame. In this section we consider how for many (but not for all) the idea of transcendence has given way to that of an infinitude of practices of resistance which seek to pervert, by means of re-signification, those codes which organize the various forms of aesthetic spacing. Within this view, class-the fundamental particle of revolutionary consciousness described in our first frame has imploded, leaving a thousand shattered spaces as the sites for discursive struggle. How then, does counter-cultural discourse" seeks to engage its other in the aesthetic age?

Countering Consumer Culture

Given that consumer culture is bound up with the production of aesthetic spaces then in what ways can it make sense to form a cultural mass which seeks to counter this? In a society in which the space-time of identity is increasingly fragmented is it possible to make the imaginative leap to identity, to formulate that other against whom self must be pitted? To select the aesthetic space of consumer culture as a mass against which to construct an identity seems as woolly as pitting oneself against candy floss, or in mounting a crusade against FUN. In Consumer Society, Baudrillard (1981, p. 54) presciently noted the fragmentary nature of the (post) modern consumer experience:

As a consumer, humans become again solitary, cellular and at best gregarious (for example in the family viewing TV, the crowd in a stadium or at a
movie house etc.) The structures of consumption are simultaneously fluid and enclosed. Can we imagine a coalition of drivers against car registration? Or a collective opposition to television? Even if every one of the million viewers is opposed to television advertising, advertisements will nonetheless be shown.

There is certainly evidence for the existence of different "countercultural" voices or "tribes" in contemporary society. Growing access to the internet makes it easier for these voices to locate and communicate with others, but these disparate voices defy totalization to the status of the counter-culture. As Bauman (1993, p. 199) points out, these are generally dedicated to the pursuit of a single task, "and by the very fact of being single issue they confirm the principle of singularity and the assumption of autonomy or the self-containment of issues".

Totalization of Identity in the Age of the Aesthetic?

One could perhaps seek to totalize the actions of animal rights activists, voluntary simplifiers, road protestors, anti-shopping protestors and even anorexics as united in their desire to resist the excess of contemporary (and often corporately motivated) aesthetic forms of spacing with respect to "speed-up" (Harvey 1989), roads, supermarkets and shopping malls, the activity of shopping itself, the body, etc. Klein (2000, p. xviii) moves some way towards this, characterising reactions against the "global logo web" as "a largely underground system of information, protest and planning, a system already coursing with activity and ideas crossing many national borders and several generations". It is important not to stretch this point too far, however, especially when it can be argued that such activism might simply enlarge the scope of these spaces. For some protesters the totalization of identity seems to be as strong as ever, particularly in the rush to target and demonize individual instances (companies such as McDonald's and Nestle) as exemplars of all that is rotten in society. For example, the 1997 "McLibel" court case in Britain involved two members of London Greenpeace being sued for libel by McDonald's Corporation due to allegations made in a leaflet distributed outside the restaurants. This resulted in a trial lasting 312 days, involving 180 witnesses and purportedly 18,000 pages of testimony (Vidal 1997). The creation of a "Mc Spotlight" website served as a focal point for those unhappy with McDonald's social, economic and environmental impact. The "McDonald's" portrayed on the "Mc Spotlight" site is
much more than a problematic peddler of burgers. It is constituted there as the "McDonald's" of George Ritzer's "McDonaldization of Society" (1996)-a cultural icon which provides a rallying point for "countercultural" forces. Parker (1997) however warns against adopting the potentially elitist anti-American critique of the "levelling down" of mass consumer culture and mockingly suggests that "Ritzer seems to see resistance as eating with a knife and folk". Resisting attempts to totalize McDonalds, Parker objects that this signifier means different things to different people in different places and parts of the world.

The refusal to totalize in this way leads to a Gramscian or Althusserian perspective, whereby we recognize that the centre itself is split between different interests which may in turn exert pressure on one another. This may better explain the complex web of relations between contemporary counter-cultural voices and the "centre". For example, a range of different interest groups participated in the McLibel trial, including the protagonists, the founders of the McSpotlight website, the courts and the media. This led to criticism of some practices engaged in by McDonald's by others who we may consider to inhabit "central" space with the corporation. The judge, for example, found that some of the claims made by London Greenpeace were justified, and many mainstream media accounts of the trial were favourable to those who took up arms against the Goliath of the burger industry.

The recent history of Napster.com is another interesting illustration of fissures and fluid alliances. Napster made it easy for consumers to share digital music files on-line, evoking the wrath of the music industry whose revenue and distribution systems were threatened. The company's anti-establishment aura was enhanced when during the recent controversy over Bruce Springsteen's "American Skin (41 shots)", the track could only be heard on Napster and copycat sites (Guterman 2000). Although Napster is at the time of writing engaged in legal battles with record companies, it has enjoyed the support of artists ranging from Limp Bizkit to Prince and the Grateful Dead. Ultimately, Napster may be a beacon for the record industry by showing how new distribution channels may operate. In the meantime, there is some evidence that this allegedly subversive company serves as a catalyst for on-line and off-line sales, with digital downloads increasing rather than sating consumers' appetite for CDs, etc. (Carr 2000). Indeed, Napster has requested its supporters to stage "buy-colts" by purchasing CDs of Napsterfriendly artists (Simon 2000).
A final example of such complex relations (which also resonates with our earlier discussion of mirroring and the fear of absorption) is provided by the experiences of Swampy, a British road protester. The mass media spotlight fell on him when he was the last person to be removed from the protest tunnel underneath a contested road development. He quickly became the "acceptable face" of eco-warriors, and took a break from his usual activities to model Armani suits for one newspaper, write a weekly column for another, and appear on a satirical current affairs television programme (Bellos 1997). Such activities may have softened mainstream views of road protestors and ecowarriors, but within movements like Swampy's, opinion has been sharply divided on the wisdom of "cuddling up" to mainstream media (Aufheben 1998). Indeed, Swampy later expressed regret at his involvement with the media, feeling that he had been exploited and patronised and that his activism had been trivialised.

These shifting, tactical alliances sit well with an age where, as Bauman (1997) says, life can no longer be lived as a project. Any person, it seems, may sample the terrors and delights of the entire gamut of post-modern identities in one lifetime: now a "stroller", then a "tourist", here a "player", and there a "vagabond". In this context, it is not surprising that we may find ourselves speaking in counter-cultural voices on one stage, and joining a more mainstream chorus on another.

Fractal-Culture and the TAZ

Taken to the extreme, counter-culture becomes synonymous with Hakim Bey's (1991) idea of the "Temporary Autonomous Zone" (TAZ). The idea of the TAZ resonates well within the general discourse of the aesthetic; for example Bey describes such zones as; "successful raids on consensus reality, breakthroughs into more intense and more abundant life ". Lest we become convinced that some possible transcendence is behind this, Bey adds that "we have attended parties where for one night a republic of gratified desires was attained". McKay (1996) seeks to make something more of the TAZ by characterising it as "a guerrilla operation" which liberates an area (of land, of time, or of imagination) and then dissolves itself to re-form elsewhere/ elsewhen. Rave culture, with its "discourse of technocelebration", its temporary and often illegal locations and its attempts to construct a new "sphere of sound" are offered as examples. Collin (1997, p. 5) describes the idea of the TAZ as "a mission to reappropriate consciousness, to invent, however briefly, an idea of utopia". This raises the possibility.
that such brief re-appropriations of consciousness comprise the terminus where "counter-culture" has come to a dead stop.

DISCUSSION

According to Arnold and Fisher (1996), American experiences of the 1960s had a profound impact on the development of marketing thought. One legacy was the development of a "reconstructionist paradigm", reflecting a climate where institutions were challenged, materialism was rejected, and new concerns for social justice were raised:

Materialist aspirations were highlighted as a common outcome of marketing activity and served as justification for deep introspection and conceptual reconstruction of marketing's foundations. In addition, the idea of social justice was a focal point in suggested humanistic revisions to the marketing concept (p.128).

Thirty years on, it seems that varying forms and notions of "counterculture" still give marketers, consumers and researchers pause for thought. Indeed, considering the rich terrain of culture and consumption from the vantage point of counter-culture allows us to look afresh, not just at phenomena which we may take for granted, but at the very ways we represent them. In this paper, we explored three frames for exploring the concept of counter-culture from Hegel's tale of the lord and bondsman. In what sense does this extend the understanding of counter-culture?

Uses of the Framework

We offer the framework derived from Hegel's tale as a rhetorical device which can help interrogate the complex topic of "counterculture". The framework encompasses three perspectives on counter-culture: as authentic, as mediated, and finally as difference. By framing counter-culture in these ways, we have sought to move beyond stereotypical approaches to counterculture which associate it with a particular place and time, such as the 1960s. Rather we suggest that the idea of "counter-culture" is as old as Western culture itself (in so far as this has been inscribed in Hebrew and Greek texts), and one which has suffered from widely varying definitions of the term and the often conflicting "dialogue" between authors on the subject.
Forms of mis-meeting between Authors

In the paper we have shown how a major source of conflict between authors is based on a form of "mis-meeting" between those who hold different perceptions of what "counter-culture" is and what it ought to be. We note how those who hold the view that counter-culture is related to transcendence, authenticity and revolutionary zeal believe that the concept of "resistance" has been trivialised by associating this with the pleasure-seeking actions of sub-cultural groups. For example Thornton (1995) recreates a typically "revolutionary" discourse in dismissing the idea that "rave" culture, which she associates with capitalist values, might in any way be associated with "resistance", which she sees as concerned with real political behavior (in what we call strategic space). We argue that this debate is not simply about "resistance" but is located in the long-standing antipathy between two ways of "doing" counter-culture, as expressed in revolutionary and aesthetic contexts. These are based on quite different principles of Becoming and Being, which in turn organize the orientation of other dimensions of: time/space; engagement/flight (withdrawal); categorization/togetherness; individual/crowd; cognition (rationality)/aesthetic; strategic/tactical. Within the context of revolution the only purpose of resistance is that form of struggle which can lead to transcendence; it takes place in the strategic spaces of politics, the streets and the television station, and projects its values and vision into the future. Such descriptions have little relation to the idea of resistance in the "eternally present" spaces of the aesthetic, where "resistance" itself becomes associated with the endless perversion of organizing discourses. We believe that in articulating more clearly the differences between revolutionary and aesthetic views we can usefully add to the project of providing a more differentiated understanding of consumer resistance initiated by Penaloza and Price (1993) and recently discussed by Cova and Cova (2000).

Mirroring Effects

The notion of an "authentic" counter-culture chimes well with the views of many authors that prevailing cultural values can only securely be challenged by a system of thought which is equally selfreflective. This begs the question of the process of mediation. The discussion of the mediation of counter-culture showed the extent to which "self-reflective" counter-cultural movements such as the
evolutionary counter-culture of the twentieth century, while being substantially different to the mainstream which they oppose, mirror the form of that system. We have discussed how authors have noted that such mirroring is also a feature of those who wish to practice an anti-aesthetics. This replication of the form is understandable if one holds of Foucault's (1979) view that resistance is constructed as a response to a system of power; as such, mirroring is implicated in the extent to which countercultural "resistance" is equated with the return of what has been repressed by power. We have noted how Galbraith and Bauman share the view that power is still intact in the postmodern aestheticized landscape. These authors cite as evidence the existence of those who are excluded from a consumer society which projects its disorder outwards, to those who must play out their lives in its shadow as members of the criminalized underclass. This pattern also appears to be developing in cyberculture, despite the democratizing potential of the internet, and the plentiful rhetoric (with some political action) towards the ideal of social inclusion (Hoffman and Novak 1998).

Mirroring: A Warning to Academics

Both Galbraith and Bauman also note the relative impossibility for an academic (who is after all a master, or one who is a product of the culture of contentment), to seek to mount a critique of this culture from inside this discourse. The ability to describe is thus linked, literally and intimately to a person's point of view. In this respect it is useful (if rather painful) to note how major cultural and political change, when it does come, seems to completely wrong-foot most academics, flying in the face of their cherished theories. For example as several authors have noted, prior to the "happening" of 1960s counter-culture, most academics considered social revolution to be the last thing on the mind of the well-fed, comfortable, duped US youth. In a striking replay of this folly, Diuk and Karatnycky (1993) cite evidence to support the view that, just prior to the developments which led to the collapse of the Soviet Union, most western experts had concluded that communism had produced "a new bland homogenized people who were beyond nationality", "a docile citizenry". The danger for the academic is not only to totalize and "massify" the other, but also to weave into the actions of the other the traces of one's own desire. This is incredibly difficult to avoid, indeed a useful debate could be engaged in considering whether it is actually possible or desirable to
suppress one's desire. It is rendered even more difficult through the point raised by Rudmin and Kilbourne (1996) that two people who are ostensibly engaged in the same activity, may be doing it for quite different reasons and be motivated by quite different economic circumstances and convictions. This raises a question as to what counts as evidence or data with respect to research. Given the difficulties we have described with respect to desire, observation alone would not be sufficient.

Counter-Cultures as Alternating Currents of Desire?

In the paper we discussed evidence to suggest the links between mirroring and desire, whereby desire (similar to the "grass is greener" idea) links what is desired to the position of the other. Those middleclass (masters) who are free to change position have always been able to play with identity. In this context, counter-cultural identities can represent a protest against what is perceived to be the flux of an oppressive and alienating culture and to offer the promise of binding once more with (alienated) nature. For the poor who are fixed into place, counter-culture represents the opposite ideal, of an escape from nature into the good life offered by culture. One might thus characterize counter-cultures as encompassing two alternating currents of desire. Castells (1997) offers yet more support for this view in describing the nature of the Mexican Zapatista movement as composed of educated left-wing radicals who were working towards a revolution and peasantry who wanted access to the goods offered by the consumer society.

Incorporation

The other side of reflection is incorporation. Hebdige (1988), Penaloza and Price (1993) and Gabriel and Lang (1995) remind us, that expressions of rebellion (such as bleached or torn jeans) can be commodified. As Davidson (1992, p.190) observes, the music and fashion industries frequently package the music and dress codes of the very groups who use music and clothes to counter their social subordination. Since industry's loyalty is to the profit motive, once that is catered for, companies "are hardly likely to feel the victims of consumer sedition". Such cautionary tales emphasize yet again the need for a more nuanced and differentiated understanding of what "resistance" is. In this paper we have placed more emphasis on the fear of incorporation
which runs as a constant theme through counter-cultural discourse. But what of the mainstream desire to incorporate the counterculture? Brennan (1993) seeks to explain this as an effect of mediation; in this view the counter-culture which has been projected by the mainstream as "other", is dangerous and represents an enemy which must be identified (made the same) by means of assimilation. In our view while Brennan's explanation fits well theoretically within the frame of a hegelian explanation, this is a topic which could be explored empirically.

The Dynamics of Change

The final aspect for discussion in relation to mediation is that of the dynamics of change. Despite the (serious) dangers of simulation, the retrospective manufacture of truth-effects, and the mirroring effects which we discussed above, it seems tempting to seek to open up lines of connection in order to better explain how processes of change come about, in focusing more attention on the historical patterning of the relations between culture and its counterpart(s). At the same time, it is important to construct "histories of the present", so that "thick descriptions" (Geertz 1973) are available for future analysis. We have mentioned how the dynamics of change has been partially addressed by several authors (cf. Harvey 1989). However there remains much to be done and there is thus much scope for historical study in this respect. This might enable researchers to tentatively ask some "big" questions such as: Does change come about as the result of the system collapsing in upon itself? Or by pushing the system to its extreme? By fighting it? Or by ignoring it? Then perhaps we might be in a better position to reflect on possibilities such as those suggested by Firat and Venkatesh (1995), who argue that the "way forward" is to seek a space beyond the market:

It is therefore necessary to identify a social space beyond the reach of the market by positioning the consumer in the "lifeworld" and outside the market system... True emancipation of the consumer can materialize if s/he were able to move in these social spaces without the perennial panopticon of the market.
NOTES

1. From the days of the ancient Greeks there have been those who have privileged the physis, the natural state of humanity against nomos, State imposed law (Kerford 1981, pp. 11819, 129).

2. One may usefully enquire as to how counter-cultural consciousness is attained. To fully explore this would require another paper. However since the time of ancient Greece the disaffected intellectual has played an important role in spearheading various counter-cultural movements. More recently Bourdieu (1984) and Roszak (1970) discuss the role played by intellectuals in counter-cultural moves in France and in the USA.

3. In the Weberian variant it is commodity rationality, the "machine culture" or the "technocracy" which is regarded as the point of focus.

4. In which the counter-culture played a major role.

5. Nelson (1989) highlights the role of IT and Oz in providing a unifying voice and sense of purpose for a range of disparate groups in the 1960s. For example the ninth issue of Oz in 1968 helped construct a narrative identity for contemporary countercultural groups through a long piece on the history of the "Diggers", which was then related to a recently established London Digger Love Commune. In America, the Village Voice and Rolling Stone are obvious candidates for playing such a role.

6. "The critical distinction drawn by the manifesto was between design as communication (giving people necessary information) and design as persuasion (trying to get them to buy things). In the signatories' view, a disproportionate amount of designers' talents and effort was being expended on advertising trivial items, from fizzy water to slimming diets, while more "useful and lasting" tasks took second place: "street signs, books and periodicals, catalogues, instruction manuals, educational aids, and so on". Source: http://www.adbusters.org/information/foundation/index.html

7. The use of the web by Adbusters is thus not surprising; Drew (1995), for example, describes the work of grass-roots political activists who have recognized that "new technology can be used for progressive ends", and become community radio DJs, "zine publishers, computer hackers, and low-budget camcorder documentary makers". For example, Paper Tiger Television and Deep Dish Television in America, and Undercurrents in Britain have taken advantage of camcorders, public access television and satellite technology to produce and disseminate material offering accounts which differ from the mainstream media in their treatment of issues such as racism, strikes, the Gulf War and environmental issues (Drew 1995; Harding 1998). Fiske (1994, p. 240) argues that the multiplication of technologies offers a major prospect for the proliferation of resistance.

8. Although Adbusters now claims a readership of 60,000.

9. In constructing and circulating a set of stereotypical collective labels to recycle counter-culture to a mass audience one could argue that the media created a resource base or toolkit for the dissemination of counter-culture at the same time as they exercised its demons. From Teddy-Boys to Mods n'Rockers, Punk and New Age, each period has been characterised by its own cult of celebrity from James Dean to Elvis, the Beatles, Hendrix, Joplin, the Sex Pistols, Muppet Dave and Swampy, a British road protester who had his 15 minutes of fame in 1997. Stereotypes of "counter-culture" have been embodied in comic characters like the whacky "Wolfie" Smith of the "People's Liberation Front" in the BBC comedy Citizen Smith, and Neil the dim but lovable, lentil eating, knityour-own-muesli, guitar playing, anti-hunt, protect the whales and baby seals, just hold hands, make love not war caricature in BBC's comedy programme The Young Ones.

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10. For those interested in pursuing this further then Ien Ang (1996) agrees with Morris, pointing out that for the purposes of cultural critique, validating audience experience alone is not enough. She suggests that much "reception" and "uses and gratifications" research is bounded by the communications transmissions model which foregrounds that spatial/temporal moment of direct contact between media and audience members. Ang argues that simply showing how audiences are active meaning producers or imaginative pleasure seekers can become a banal form of political critique if the popular itself is not seen in a thoroughly social and political context; furthermore, it is unwise to equate an "active" audience with a "powerful" one. She calls for a more thoroughly cultural approach to reception, which would address differentiated meanings and the significance of specific reception patterns in articulating more general cultural negotiations and contestations.

11. Used herein the sense often employed by Foucault in taking the term to envelop both language and practice.

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