Till Kadritzke

New Hollywood and Countercultural Whiteness

American Frictions

Volume 9

Till Kadritzke

New Hollywood and Countercultural Whiteness

Affective Affinities and the Politics of Male Expressivity

DE GRUYTER

Die Publikation wurde ermöglicht durch eine Ko-Finanzierung für Open-Access-Monografien und -Sammelbände der Freien Universität Berlin.

ISBN 978-3-11-142568-9
e-ISBN (PDF) 978-3-11-143666-1
e-ISBN (EPUB) 978-3-11-143668-5
ISSN 2698-5349
DOI https://doi.org/10.1515/9783111436661

Library of Congress Control Number: 2024943401

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek
The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available on the Internet at http://dnb.dnb.de.

Printing and binding: CPI books GmbH, Leck ((tbc))

www.degruyter.com

Acknowledgments

This book has been a long time in the making, and many people deserve credit for its publication. I extend my gratitude to the *American Frictions* editors Carsten Junker, Julia Roth, and Darieck Scott for accepting the manuscript into this distinguished series. Julie Miess accompanied and supported the publication process at De Gruyter, and I am very grateful for her expert advice while finishing and handing in the manuscript.

Nine years ago, this book was merely a vague idea about a project on the emotional politics of the New Hollywood. Without the continuous encouragement from Olaf Stieglitz at the University of Cologne during this initial phase, it might have remained so. I am grateful for the opportunity to keep him on my advisory board as an external supervisor even in later stages, when I constantly tried to reassess what increasingly became a cultural studies project through his meticulous historian gaze.

I am deeply grateful to my first supervisor Frank Kelleter at the Graduate School of North American Studies in Berlin, who always believed in this project and advised me on all the different transformations it had to undergo. Not only his support as a supervisor but also his own thinking, in texts and seminars, helped me to keep seeking a political punch rather than an academic couch. His extensive and meticulous report on the final dissertation was an invaluable source when turning the text into a monograph. My second supervisor Martin Lüthe also played a crucial role, particularly his feedback on my yearly progress reports significantly influenced this book.

As the trajectory of this project started at the University of Cologne, I would like to thank the whole U.S. History department, especially Massimo Perinelli, whose spectacular class on the 1960s set me on many right paths, and Nina Mirza, for long conversations about New Hollywood films and so much more. I thank all my Kölsche Jungs and Mädsche for making my Cologne years such a special time in my life, especially Marie Ludwig for both emotional and professional support, Nathalie Grychtol for hosting me whenever I felt like visiting, and Florine Beyer, Verena Böhnisch, Moritz Heumer and Bettina Jahn for incredibly steadfast friendships despite distances and breaks.

At the Graduate School of North American Studies in Berlin, I thank the wonderful coordinators David Bosold and Gabi Bodmeier, and the members of the Magnificent Cohort of 2016, especially Daniel Gutiérrez, Jenna Krumminga, Chiara Migliori, Lasse Thiele and Jeremy Williams for days of support and nights of distraction. I also thank the whole Culture Department of the John F. Kennedy In-

stitute for lively and stimulating colloquium discussions, as well as the wonderful students of the “Affective Affinities” seminar I had the pleasure of teaching.

I appreciate the opportunities provided by the organizers of the 2017 Film & History and MAPACA conferences in Milwaukee and Philadelphia, respectively, to gain my first experiences as a conference speaker. In Los Angeles, I thank the staff of the Margaret Herrick Library, where I collected invaluable research material, and the School of Cinematic Arts at the University of Southern California for inviting me to their “Emergency and Emergence” conference in 2018. My thanks also go to the editorial team and anonymous peer-reviewers of Current Objectives in Post-Graduate American Studies (COPAS) for the chance to publish a paper based on my research and their important critical feedback.

I thank my good friend Benjamin Haas for companionship not only but also during an early writing retreat in Leiden, and my uncle Niels for offering me to stay in his beautiful house in Greece to finish a first draft.

Back in Berlin, I thank Samira Spatzek for a special friendship that survived our stressful dissertation years as it will anything else, and Julia Dück for essential coffee-lunch routines at the library. For further important companionship during the PhD and beyond I thank Agnes Eilers, Lea Gossen, Michel Jungwirth, Gesine Leithäuser, Doro Übach and Nora Vollmond.

When I submitted my dissertation, my father, Ulf, was still alive and well. Although I am deeply sad that he will never hold this book in his hands, a printed copy of the text was on his desk during his last year, decorated with his characteristic margin notes – remarks he insisted were suggestions, not corrections. I thank him and my wonderful mother, Karin, for their continuous and unconditional support in every imaginable way.

It was 2015 when I first outlined this dissertation. Almost nine years later, some of the threads I started to follow back then have become strikingly relevant, resonating within the practices and discourses of the radical right. While I have revised and updated this text since handing it in as a dissertation in 2020, I largely refrained from making these connections explicit. I hope that readers will discern some of the repercussions and consequences of this narrative about New Hollywood and the counterculturalization of white masculinity in our current political conjuncture. Contrary to the belief that ‘we are living in a different world now,’ I am convinced we live in one that has been, like this book, a long time in the making.

Contents

Introduction

Scene one: Three journalists meet for lunch. Two of them wrote the screenplay for a film their colleague enjoyed so much that she wants to know more about it. Several years earlier, the two screenwriters had announced the birth of a new cultural era in a magazine article they later described as a "set of ideas in search of a movie." The movie they eventually found is still struggling at the box office when the two writers meet their fellow journalist, a film critic. In a raving review written after the lunch, this critic argues that the film expresses things in cinematic form that people have been thinking and feeling for years, and that its primary value is to *make the audience feel something without telling them what to feel.* Some will later say that without Pauline Kael's review in the *New Yorker,* Arthur Penn's 1967 film *Bonnie and Clyde* would have vanished from the screens without much attention.

Scene two: A TV news anchorman has had enough. During a live broadcast, he gets up from his table and starts ranting about the "bad state of things," about an economic crisis, about "punks going wild in the street." Ultimately, he calls on his audience to get mad, to go to the window and shout out: "I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to take it anymore!" Soon, these shouts can be heard in cities all over America, and the mad-as-hell slogan becomes popular across political divides. On campuses, students produce leaflets to call for Mad-as-Hell nights. Some years later, conservative businessman Howard Jarvis uses the slogan to mobilize for an anti-tax campaign in California. And Howard Beale, the "mad prophet of the airwaves," as he is called in Sidney Lumet's 1976 film *Network*, still lives an afterlife as a popular reaction GIF.

In this book, I study films and their cultural and political environments between 1967 and 1976, a period often referred to as the New Hollywood, or the Hollywood Renaissance, famously praised by Peter Biskind as the "last creative period in American filmmaking" (17). As the two scenes described above illustrate, films are not closed entities that can only be analyzed strictly on their own terms; culture feeds into film and emanates from it. *Bonnie and Clyde* might often be hailed as the Big Bang of the New Hollywood, but the idea of radical newness this image evokes ignores the extent to which those qualities attributed to the film's newness had already been charged with meaning in the preceding decades. At the same time, Kael's take on the film that it makes us feel something rather than telling us how to feel – that films works through affect rather than language and statements – became a key idea within film studies around the year 2000. *Network,* in turn, might have been a media satire, and its infamous scene of a news anchorman with cultural resentment becoming a popular hero might not have been part

 https://doi.org/10.1515/9783111436661-002

of director Lumet's intentions. Still, Howard Beale was a character who made a difference in the world outside his movie, becoming a historical agent in his own right.

These two scenes form particularly thick nodes within the historical network I seek to unravel in this book. The films of the New Hollywood and the discourse around them constitute the main thread I am tracing through this network. However, historicizing and contextualizing films of the New Hollywood era from a fresh perspective is not my only aim. First and foremost, I use the New Hollywood as a fruitful entry point into a cultural history of the postwar era, with a special focus on two interrelated themes: the changing intersections of whiteness and affect between the 1950s and the 1970s; and the hidden affinities between the two political camps often cast as opposing sides in a historical narrative of polarization since the 1960s. More precisely, this book uses the New Hollywood as a case study to examine the transformation of white masculinity and its affective performances – what I call countercultural whiteness and its politics of male expressivity – and to discuss the political polyvalence of this transformation.

As I will argue throughout this book, this transformation of white masculinity and its affective mode can be partly understood as a response to a perceived *affective deficit* within American culture, diagnosed primarily through a racialized and gendered discourse that Timothy Melley called "agency panic" (12). Identifying this discourse as an important precondition for the emergence of the New Hollywood, I will analyze the cinematic output between 1967 and 1976 and its production and reception environment within a historical context that saw the cultural authority of a normative white, male positionality threatened and ultimately reaffirmed. Situated in a period often associated with radical breaks and ruptures, the New Hollywood, I will argue, negotiated and engendered the transition between the agency panic of the 1950s and what might be described as a panic over new agencies in the 1970s – a transition deeply intertwined with a discursive shift in the construction of white masculinity and the emergence of new affective performances of white masculinity.

As I hinted at by cutting between my two initial scenes – from *Bonnie and Clyde*, where Faye Dunaway plays Depression-era bank robber Bonnie Parker, instantly becoming a fashion icon for an emergent radical left, to *Network*, where the same actress plays a narcissistic and emotionally constipated career woman, a cliché of conservative, anti-feminist backlash discourse – the cultural ideas and politics I trace throughout this period cannot be neatly identified with a specific ideology. Hence, the term affective affinities. I might have qualified these affinities as anti-liberal, existentialist, or libertarian, depending on their specific configurations, as I will discuss them throughout this book. For the purpose of my overarching argument, however, I prefer to use the term *countercultural,* extending it be-

yond its reference to a subcultural movement and its protagonists to emphasize its more literal meaning: an emphatic rejection of existing institutions and a passionate gesture of *countering a dominant culture*, resisting social and cultural influences of any kind. In the first chapter, I will explicate this notion more clearly and carve out its default of whiteness, tied to the countercultural idea of identity-as-choice. I will attach to this emergence of what I consequently call countercultural whiteness[1] the simultaneous development of an affective politics of male expressivity: an investment in expressive performances rooted in the shifting meanings of emotion in the postwar era and articulated in the popular idea that to express something authentically and unmediated is tantamount to expressing a/the truth.

In hindsight, and in public memory, the counterculture is sometimes remembered as a coherent whole that followed a trajectory from cultural experiments and yippie-style political activism to depoliticized New Age practices and the narcissism of the 1970s. Dissociating the term from this image allows insights into how a countercultural ethos and its accompanying fantasies survived the 1960s, not only in co-opted, marketable or streamlined forms but as a political imaginary and a reservoir of cultural practices that are not necessarily radical or progressive. As I will argue over the course of this book, countercultural politics depend on constructing a dominant culture that then can be countered. This dominant culture was portrayed in quite different ways over the last decades. While a countercultural discourse in its phase of emergence depicted the dominant culture of the late 1960s as a square, liberal, all-too-white culture to be countered by a new generation of radicals, the historical environment had shifted by 1976, presenting a different dominant culture: one where a political establishment increasingly aligned itself with minority subjects who had fought for their political and cultural visibility over the preceding decade. Film characters such as Travis Bickle, Howard Beale, or Rocky Balboa – the protagonists of 1976 films I will discuss at the end of this book – were white men countering a culture they perceived as dominant, a culture that looked quite different from the one countered by *Bonnie and Clyde* or two bikers in *Easy Rider*.

At the heart of this book, then, is an argument about the political promiscuity of cultural practices and discourses. As Lawrence Grossberg observed, there was, in the 1950s and 1960s, not only an activation but a new affect-ization of politics

1 Stephen Knadler uses the term "countercultural whiteness" in his discussion of James Baldwin's 1962 essay on Norman Mailer "The Black Boy Looks at the White Boy" (xxiii). While my own usage is not entirely different from Knadler's, I employ a broader use of the term that does not exhaust itself with the actual counterculture of the 1960s. Rather, I suggest that the term Knadler used might help to trace systematically how an emergent model of subjectivity both reproduced and concealed its white default position.

and political imaginations ("Pessimism" 876). While this change was primarily associated with the New Left, the counterculture, and various liberation movements, we can now see how it also contributed to a right-wing turn and a new affective politics of conservatism. Keeping this development in mind, it becomes clear how the cinema of the New Hollywood might be a useful entry point into a cultural history sensitive to affective affinities. The films of the New Hollywood, charged with meaning through their passionate and enthusiastic reception by film scholars and journalists alike, propagated the arrival of a new cinematic aesthetic and a new cultural imaginary while tackling political subject matter with much more confidence than before. Discussing films such as *Easy Rider*, *The French Connection*, and *Five Easy Pieces*, I will examine how the New Hollywood's aura of radical newness, its obsession with untamed motion and emotional truth, and its investment in a romance of madness, infused political subject matter with new affective authority while also being shaped by and helping to reconfigure existing racial and gender regimes.

Although I use the term *affective* here, I will not systematically employ affect theory or theories of cinematic affect in this book. As I noted with Pauline Kael's distinction between films telling an audience how to feel and those actually making them feel something, I argue that the New Hollywood itself was part of the story that helped theories of cinematic affect to emerge in the first place. The idea of film as an affective force is thus part of New Hollywood's self-description.[2] Therefore, using theories to analyze New Hollywood films would largely mean finding what one already knows. While an *attention to affect,* taking seriously the affective dimensions of human experience as an integral and still understudied part of the reproduction of the social, is a key premise of this book, a *discourse on affect* is also what I am studying within the historical narrative I trace. Hence, rather than understanding affect as an autonomous force, I insist that affect is always already entangled with social configurations and embedded within racialized and gendered imaginaries, rather than constituting an autonomous realm beyond the social.

Consequently, this project is guided by the hypothesis that the a(ffe)ctivation of political imaginations during the postwar period and the "affirmative reaction" (Carroll) of white masculinity to feminist and Black liberation challenges created

2 I am indebted to Frank Kelleter and the work of the Popular Seriality Research Unit at Freie Universität Berlin for this line of thinking about media. Rather than constructing hard lines between a cultural text and its environment, in this book I "reconstruct how shifting positions of commercial 'production' and 'reception' are created, maintained, and complicated through historically specific […] practices of pop-cultural self-description and self-performance" (Kelleter, "Five Ways" 26).

ideologically flexible subject positions, engendering an "affective politics, which is operating on all sides of the political spectrum" (Grossberg, "Pessimism" 876). This is why these discourses and practices do not easily coalesce with the narrative of polarization that has become, as Thomas Zimmer puts it, "the closest thing to a master narrative for recent American history" (403). Sharing Zimmer's critique of this narrative's main tenets – its false equivalence between two "increasingly extreme positions," its "teleological connotations" and its "narrative of [...] decline" (405–407) – I propose a less visible history of affective affinities that actors attached to quite different ideological positions within this narrative of polarization had in common.

Studying affective affinities not only questions the narrative of polarization but also destabilizes labels such as radical, progressive, reactionary, left, and right – without equating them or endorsing a horseshoe theory. If, as Matthew Lassiter laments, interpretations of political history "have tracked too closely to the red-blue binaries of journalism and punditry" (760), then addressing the affective or aesthetic dimension of politics might serve as a promising epistemological remedy. It also reveals an often-concealed politics of whiteness. As Joseph Darda argues, such a politics "can be difficult to see because other divisions— Republican and Democrat, conservative and liberal, rich and poor, rural and urban—would seem to, and often do, set white people against one another." Therefore, whiteness "doesn't look, on the surface, like a 'politics'" (34). Understanding it as such, as I intend to do with *New Hollywood and Countercultural Whiteness*, might contribute to a more nuanced understanding of polarization.

In the remainder of this introduction, I will first discuss the entrenched image of exceptionality still attributed to the New Hollywood and situate my own approach within older and more recent studies of the period. I will then specify what I call the matters of concern of this book: my interest in the transformation of white masculinity from the 1950s to the 1970s and the function of New Hollywood films within this transition. Finally, I will end with some notes on my approach to film analysis and lay out the chapter structure of the book.

Beyond Exceptionalism and Disillusionment: Framing the New Hollywood

There is no universal agreement on what constitutes the New Hollywood. Geoff King points out that the term has been "attached to what seems a bewildering and contradictory range of features of Hollywood cinema in recent decades," and "its meaning has depended on the particular object of attention at any one time" (1). While the term often refers to a general shift in movie production during the 1970s and the rise of the blockbuster model, its more common usage is associ-

ated with what is also called the Hollywood Renaissance: a canon of American films released between 1967 and 1976, characterized by similar production histories, aesthetics, genres, and themes.[3] In his monograph on the New Hollywood and the idea of auteurism, Nicholas Godfrey notes that, much like film noir, "New Hollywood is an historically specific industrial phenomenon transformed into an ahistorical critical category" (5).

This ahistorical critical category is often analyzed with vocabularies that, from a historian's perspective, seem to praise rather than examine these films, embracing the self-image of these films as unique works of art emerging from the vision of an auteur. Two main rhetorical frameworks have been particularly effective in making sense of the New Hollywood. Firstly, New Hollywood scholarship has been influenced by a rhetoric of cinematic exceptionalism, the idea that, in contrast to both the earlier studio system and the blockbuster model that took hold of the film industry later, the New Hollywood era produced unique and visionary films, representing a golden age of creativity and productivity that, in hindsight, looks like a lost Eden. The titles of some of the books about the era alone underscore the enduring appeal of this notion of cinematic exceptionalism: *Hollywood's Last Golden Age, The Last Great American Picture Show, When the Movies Mattered, The Hollywood Renaissance* (Kirshner, *Hollywood's*; Horwath et al.; Kirshner and Lewis, *Movies*; Tzioumakis and Krämer).

In his notorious account of the emergence of the New Hollywood, *Easy Riders, Raging Bulls* (1998), Peter Biskind epitomizes this exceptionalist perspective:

> It was the last time Hollywood produced a body of risky, high-quality work – as opposed to the errant masterpiece – work that was character-, rather than plot-driven, that defied traditional narrative conventions, that challenged the tyranny of technical correctness, that broke the taboos of language and behavior, that dared to end unhappily. (17)

While scholars may disagree about what exactly defines the New Hollywood and which films belong to its canon, many accounts of the period corroborate this depiction of distinctiveness, identifying the New Hollywood with a collection of timeless and provocative masterpieces, sometimes nostalgically contrasted with a current cinema landscape described as "unrelievedly awful" (Biskind 17).[4]

---

3 Derek Nystrom uses the terms "New Hollywood I" and "New Hollywood II" to distinguish between the Hollywood Renaissance usage and the Blockbuster Model usage, noting that most commentators agree that "New Hollywood II is largely responsible for killing off New Hollywood I" ("New Hollywood" 410).

4 A recent example is the volume *When the Movies Mattered.* While the book aims to scrutinize the films of the New Hollywood critically, it remains within the framework of cinematic exception-

This exceptionalism is linked to the idea of radical newness, a motif that, as Derek Nystrom notes, is "particularly seductive [...] for marking out a privileged period of filmmaking" ("New Hollywood" 410). Exceptionalist descriptions of the New Hollywood almost unanimously hinge on the idea that this period was "characterized by a cohort of films that were noticeably different, especially from their predecessors, and can be understood as a distinct and identifiable era, and one that came and went, like a window opening and closing" (Kirshner, *Hollywood's* 2). For Todd Berliner, the era's uniqueness lay in the films' "unusual manner of storytelling and the gripping, unconventional experiences they offer spectators" (5). For Hauke Lehmann, the New Hollywood meant an "entirely new way of conceiving of and utilizing cinematic movement" as well as a "radical re-definition of the affective relationship between film and spectator" (1). Other scholars, meanwhile, emphasize the New Hollywood's "seriousness," as "films of the early seventies went deeper and became more complex and found an audience" (Stempel 88). Nicolas Godfrey summarizes this view, stating that the "entire notion of the New Hollywood is predicated upon the assumption that things were beginning to happen differently in Hollywood between the years 1967 and 1977" (6).[5]

If Robert Kolker's *A Cinema of Loneliness* (1980) arguably inaugurated this exceptionalist tendency – telling the story of how "a small group of filmmakers [...] were able to take brief advantage of the transition state of the studios, using their talents in critical, self-conscious ways, examining the assumptions and forms of commercial narrative cinema" (6) – later studies, such as Robin Wood's *Hollywood from Vietnam to Reagan* (1986) or David Cook's *Lost Illusions* (2002), adopted a more distanced and critical stance, bringing New Hollywood films into dialogue with the political reverberations of their time. Both Wood's and Cook's studies illustrate of a second frequently used framework in discussions of the New Hollywood: a rhetoric of disillusionment, resting on the notion of "ideological crises," in the case of Wood, or on the image of "lost illusions," in the case of Cook. While their works and their assessments of New Hollywood's legacy rest on an ideological critique of the films themselves, or a narrative arc of triumph and defeat, respectively, both suggest that these films expressed a profound disillusionment with American society and the traditional narrative and cinematic conven-

---

alism, as the nostalgic ending of its introduction reveals: "The decade of terrific filmmaking attended to here was, alas, too good to last" (Kirshner and Lewis, "Introduction" 16–17).

5 This history already started in December 1967, when *Time* titled its cover story about *Bonnie and Clyde* and other recent American films "The Shock of Freedom in Films" (Kanfer, "Shock"). The impact of this cover story, Mark Harris notes, can "scarcely be overstated," as it "marked the public birth of the idea of a New Hollywood – and to believe in it was, by definition, to view the rest of the movie business as an archaic and doomed enterprise" (Harris 369).

tions of classic Hollywood. This idea traces back to one of the earliest attempts to evaluate the New Hollywood, Thomas Elsaesser's 1975 essay "The Pathos of Failure", where he identified a unique celebration of refusal in the cinema since the late 1960s. Most starkly, Elsaesser found, these films centered around the figure of the "unmotivated hero," reflecting "a radical scepticism about American virtues of ambition, vision, drive" ("Pathos" 282).[6]

Taken together, the frameworks of exceptionalism and disillusionment paint a picture of the New Hollywood as both a self-conscious artistic movement and a semi-conscious reflection of its turbulent times: a moment in film history when visionary filmmakers deconstructed aesthetic conventions and embraced unprecedented artistic freedom, while heroes lost their motivations and narratives became incoherent – so that cinema could not help but mirror a broader societal breakdown of certainties.[7] The version of New Hollywood scholarship that was shaped by this narrative undoubtedly created invaluable insights for this book. After all, there is something distinctive about films of the period, and their tendency to revolve around broken characters in broken environments is part of this distinctiveness. However, scholarly narratives starting from these vantage points risk not only to find what they knew would be there to begin with, they also fall short of interrogating the sources and effects of the qualities they attribute to the New Hollywood.

---

6 In his contribution to the edited volume *The Last Great American Picture Show* (2004), Elsaesser looks back at his essay from the mid-1970s, complicating his description of the New Hollywood but ultimately reproducing a rhetoric of disillusion, arguing that the central "paradox" of the New Hollywood was the fact that "the loss of confidence of the nation [...] did little to stifle the energies of several groups of young filmmakers" who in turn put "aimless, depressive or (self-)destructive characters on the screen" ("American" 37–38). In a text published in the same volume, Alexander Horwath posited that the New Hollywood cinema "allegorically staged the defeats and set-backs of this ‚time of renewal'" ("Impure" 12), while Christian Keathley described the "overwhelming feelings of disaffection, alienation, and demoralisation that permeate these films" (296). Accounts such as these may not only have been influenced by Elsaesser's "Pathos of Failure" hypothesis but also by Gilles Deleuze's description of the New Hollywood in terms of a "crisis of the action-image" (162).

7 This image parallels a broader tendency within the historiography of the 1960s and 1970s: situating the events of these two decades within a narrative arc of revolution and disillusion, of upheaval and crisis. Dominic Sandbrook introduces his book on the period with the observation that by the end of Richard Nixon's first presidential term, "the passions of the 1960s seemed to have given way to the cold, hard realities of retreat abroad and retrenchment at home" (xi–xii). This rhetoric is reflected in a range of other books about the 1970s, painting the decade as a period of "nightmares," an age of "crisis," permeated by the feeling of a "nervous breakdown" (Jenkins; Sandbrook; Killen).

Two recent studies adopt new and to some extent more intriguing approaches to discussing the New Hollywood. In his book *The Limits of Auteurism,* Nicholas Godfrey complicates the dominant narrative of the New Hollywood by examining its constructed nature. Godfrey challenges New Hollywood origin stories center on "the figure of the untried director, turned loose with studio backing and newfound creative freedom, emboldened by the collapse of the Motion Picture Production Code in the late 1960s" (1). Instead, he strives for an "integrated formal/historical account of the films of the period," combining "formal analysis of a sample of key films" with "secondary materials associated with distribution and exhibition," to demonstrate the "tightly bound links between industrial production and critical and audience reception" (2). His book informs my own emphasis on New Hollywood discourse as an integral part of the emergence of the New Hollywood canon, even though I contextualize this discourse differently.

Hauke Lehmann's study *Affect Politics of the New Hollywood,* in turn, foregrounds questions of affect. Contrary to my approach, however, Lehmann focuses on a phenomenology of the New Hollywood, emphatically separating notions of affect and feeling from the historical context of the New Hollywood itself. He posits that the New Hollywood created something "genuinely new," something that "cannot be reduced to the sum of its influences and forerunners" (Lehmann 10). While Lehmann's analysis of New Hollywood's "affect poetics" is a valuable contribution to film studies, my own perspective as a cultural historian is predicated on the idea that the New Hollywood is indeed the "sum of its influences," although I argue that this extends rather than reduces the films' cultural agency.

This book, then, while not contesting the New Hollywood's unique position within American film history, aims to contextualize and historicize this position, embedding the New Hollywood within the broader historical context of the postwar period. This context is not solely defined by aesthetic and economic developments in the arts and film industry or by major historical events happening during its heyday.[8] Although specific historical events have indeed shaped the New Hollywood – and some will be part of my analysis – a historiographical outlook that

8 New Hollywood scholarship often stress how these films were, as Jonathan Kirshner puts it, "shaped by, and in dialogue with, the political, social, personal, and philosophical issues of their times" (*Hollywood's* 2), and numerous studies seek to locate "the work of filmmakers [...] in the context of changes in the film industry, in its audiences and, more broadly, in American society in the 1960s and 1970s" (P. Krämer 3–4). When specifying this historical context, however, many fall back on enumerating events and phenomena, in Kirshner's case "the civil rights movement, the domestic consequences of the Vietnam War, the sexual revolution, women's liberation, the end of the long postwar economic boom, and the traumatic Shakespearean saga of the Nixon presidency" (*Hollywood's* 4).

merely references the counterculture, the Vietnam War or the Watergate affair suffers from what Bruno Latour critiques as a false understanding of "context": as "something that renders the interaction possible by bringing on the scene most of its necessary ingredients," while remaining "at once *present behind* and *much too abstract* to do anything" (68, original emphases). In other words, the specific connections between New Hollywood films and broader historical developments are often taken at face value and rarely scrutinized in detail.

Therefore, in this book I follow Lawrence Grossberg's notion of "radical contextuality," which is based on the simple premise that "the identity, significance, and effects of any practice or event (including cultural practices and events) are defined only by the complex set of relations that surround, interpenetrate, and shape it, and make it what it is" (*Cultural Studies* 20). Radical contextuality is not about reducing cultural artifacts or historical phenomena to a broadly outlined context but about continuously attaching them to as many factors as possible. Hence, rather than uncovering a fixed cultural meaning through close readings or purely aesthetic analyses, I understand the films at hand as cultural agents and trace their interactions with other agencies. This necessitates decomposing films, viewing them less as coherent wholes and more as precarious constructions made from a variety of materials. As Frank Kelleter argues, "to study culture means to investigate specific (historical) processes of assembling, not just the results of certain assemblages" (*Serial Agencies* 4). The films I examine in this book, then, are "not actors in [a] rugged, individualist sense, not lonely rebels against an implacable status quo," but are rather "enmeshed in a motley array of attachments and associations" (Felski, *Limits* 170). This is especially true for the New Hollywood, often described itself as an act of heroic rebellion against an industrial status quo.

The historical context I seek to unravel in this book, then, is not a black box that contains the New Hollywood; it is a network of forces of which the films themselves are a part. To radically contextualize the New Hollywood means examine the wide array of agencies – affective or discursive, human or non-human, institutional or individual – that coalesced in the formation of the New Hollywood and its sense of radical newness and exceptionality. This includes its fantasies of untamed motion and emotional truth and its investment in the romance of madness, the dimensions of the New Hollywood that structure this book. To radically contextualize the New Hollywood means, for instance, understanding New Hollywood tropes like the "unmotivated hero" as integral to a cultural formation in which "goals and purposes were replaced by feeling and experience" (Binkley 208) across various cultural fields. It also involves examining how these agencies translate onto the cinema screen and back to the real world, considering not only the films but also their production and reception environments. Finally, it means scrutinizing the specific

function of these agencies within different historical conjunctures by attaching them to specific matters of concern.

Matters of Concern

These matters of concern are not just a collection of random points of interest or the sum of all topics relevant to the New Hollywood; they are the result of a specific research design: "Out of the buzzing undifferentiated mass of historical existents, an orderly context is shaped by the questions we ask about the past" (Wickberg 312). My questions about the past focus on the political history of postwar America and the relationship between race and emerging discourses on emotions and affect. This interest in part emerged from studying significant works of cultural history, which, though they may appear dated, still offer valuable insights and propose historical outlines that have yet to be followed more closely. Works like Grace Elizabeth Hale's *A Nation of Outsiders,* Sally Robinson's *Marked Men,* and Hamilton Carroll's *Affirmative Reaction: New Formations of White Masculinity* make important arguments about the transformation of white masculinity in the latter half of the twentieth century, addressing the elusive realm of affects and feelings. While these works often emphasize the (self-)victimization of white masculinity, I focus on the countercultural transformation of this subject position, highlighting its affective and productive dimensions over its rhetorical strategies or its appropriation of the vocabulary of identity politics.

In studies of the New Hollywood, questions of race and gender are often reduced, if mentioned at all, to the observation that the "typical New Hollywood canon privileges a limited brand of white, male, heterosexual orthodoxy" (Godfrey 8). The editors of the recent collection *The Hollywood Renaissance: Revisiting American Cinema's Most Celebrated Era* discuss the "rather extreme white male bias" of the New Hollywood canon and its critics (Tzioumakis and Krämer xix), but these mentions rarely lead to systematic engagement with the respective power dynamics. While the exclusion of Black directors and actors from the canonized New Hollywood is a historical fact, I suggest it is also integral to the New Hollywood as an aesthetic project. To support this argument, I relate the emergence of the New Hollywood to a shift in what Paul Gormley calls the "white cultural imagination," adapting Toni Morrison's notion of the "white literary imagination" (Morrison). According to Gormley, Morrison's concept describes a "space where ideology [...] and affectivity combine and interact to enunciate and reveal a historically and so-

cially located white American cultural identity" (30).[9] Seen as part of the white cultural imagination, the New Hollywood offers a potential entry point for studying the intersection between whiteness and affect, during a historical period marked by significant shifts in the meaning of both.[10]

In connecting Hollywood films to shifts within the white cultural imagination, my project aligns with Justin Gomer's *White Balance,* which examines Hollywood's role in the emergence of an ideology of colorblindness in the 1970s.[11] More as a prequel than a corrective to Gomer's narrative, I emphasize two historical conjunctures that frame the period under scrutiny here. The first relates to Timothy Melley's notion of "agency panic," the widespread "intense anxiety about an apparent loss of autonomy or self-control" (12) that permeated midcentury public discourse.[12] Summarizing the diagnosis of widespread conformity in American society by postwar intellectuals like David Riesman and William Whyte, Melley argues that "this genre reasserts the value of liberal individualism by announcing its decline" (54). Building on Melley's argument, I emphasize the crucial role race and affect played in this reassertion, reframing the agency-panic discourse as a diagnosis of an affective deficit and a call to overcome this crisis through a counterculturalization of white masculinity.

The second conjuncture is marked by the crisis narratives of the early and mid-1970s, revolving around buzzwords like 'urban crime' and 'narcissism'. Link-

9 Gormley's own study examines the "particular ways in which contemporary black culture is used to produce affect" in the postmodern blockbuster and what he calls the "new-brutality film" (8).

10 Adopting this perspective risks to sideline the actual significance, force, and agency of those movements that forced white America to adapt to a changing political and cultural environment. While at times I seek to make palpable the constitutive agency of Black protest movements, this book is primarily concerned with the reactionary work Black protest incited within the white cultural imagination.

11 Gomer usefully links this ideology of colorblindness to the emergence of neoliberalism, arguing that neoliberalism in the American context "is just as much a racial project as it is an economic one," offering "free-market colorblind 'solutions' to the civil rights battles of the 1970s just as it provided economic solutions to a sluggish economy" (92). His book, then, might be usefully studied together with another political look at the New Hollywood, Jeff Menne's *Post-Fordist Cinema.*

12 I use the term "midcentury" to refer to a historical period roughly between the mid-1930s and the late 1950s, mostly in relation to a discursive formation marked by debates about totalitarianism, conformity and the problem that Erich Fromm termed "escape from freedom" in a 1941 book of the same title. By contrast, I use "postwar" to refer to a historical formation that encompasses the immediate years after the end of the Second World War as well as the 'long sixties' stretching up until the end of my research period, the year 1976. Thus, sometimes the terms serve to mark different time periods, while at other times they distinguish a more specific midcentury discourse from the broader postwar formation shaped by this discourse.

ing these crisis discourses to the broader anxiety around autonomy and agency in the 1950s, I interpret them as part of a panic over new agencies. In a cultural and political landscape where feminist and Black radical critiques challenged the default positions of American identity, normative whiteness could no longer sustain its "wishful operation at a level of universality" while leaving "basic forms of exclusion and inclusion unthought" (Greif 18). Thus, the unmarked but implicitly white male subject of the 1950s' agency panic entered more contested terrain, prompting "white masculinity's turn to the representational politics of identity" (Carroll 6), a shift explored in books like Hamilton Carroll's *Affirmative Reaction* or Joseph Darda's *How White Men Won the Culture Wars.*

My research period, then, covers a time when political actors and social movements actively challenged the function of whiteness as an *implicit norm* within a universalist discourse, inciting the *marking of whiteness* as a specific subjectivity while desperately clinging to white supremacy. My analysis of New Hollywood films and their discursive environment examines some of these strategies by which "white masculinity has transformed the universal into the particular as a means of restaging universality" (Carroll 10). Therefore, I avoid theorizing whiteness a priori as "either [...] a 'racialized' ethnic positionality or as a universal entity or norm enacted through exclusionary practices," as Steven Knadler (x) identifies the two basic approaches in the emergence of whiteness studies. Instead, the historical transition underlying these approaches is part of my narrative. As Howard Winant argues, it is not white identity per se but the "problematic of whiteness that [emerges] as the principal source of anxiety and conflict in the postwar US," a problematic that appeared "as a direct consequence of the challenge posed in the 1960s to white supremacy" (Winant).

Thus, I am interested precisely in the ways whiteness assumes different meanings in various contexts, exerts power through multiple means, and adapts to historical shifts. As Sara Ahmed argues in her essay "Declarations of Whiteness":

> Categories such as black, white, Asian, mixed-race, and so on have lives, but they do not have lives 'on their own', as it were. They become fetish objects (black is, white is) only by being cut off from histories of labour, as well as histories of circulation and exchange. Such categories are effects and they have affects: if we are seen to inhabit this or that category, it shapes what we can do, even if it does not fully determine our course of action. (Ahmed, "Declarations")

Ahmed further points out a problem with studying whiteness as a slippery signifier. Arguing that whiteness only became a visible identity between the 1950s and 1970s presupposes a perspective of whiteness itself, as it was undoubtedly visible to those threatened by it. "The declaration that we must see whiteness," Ahmed notes, "assumes that whiteness is unseen in the first place. It is hence an exercise in white seeing, which does not have 'others' in view, those who are witness to the

very forms of whiteness, daily." The invisibility of whiteness, then, is only invisible to a scholarly gaze untroubled by whiteness's material power. Ahmed calls this a "fantasy of transcendence," a white privilege "which disappears from sight when it has itself in view" (Ahmed, "Declarations"). As a white German scholar studying the whiteness of the New Hollywood, I am as invested in and motivated by this fantasy of transcendence as some of the filmmakers and characters I examine throughout this book. To be vexed by whiteness's elusiveness, certainly one of my initial interests in starting this study, is itself part of my white privilege.

Whiteness is not merely *being* invisible, or visible, then; it has been continuously *rendered* invisible, or visible, within mainstream discourse through specific discursive and affective practices. To make visible this process of becoming-(in)visible within the cultural terrain of the New Hollywood, I examine its investment in performances of expressivity. This concept refers to the culturally influential idea, gaining prominence in the 1950s, that expressing something authentically, without mediation or interference by external forces, is valuable in itself. As I will explore in more detail in the first chapter, the idea of expressivity emerged from a shared perception among cultural commentators, political activists, psychologists, and sociologists that American culture – and this meant the white, middle-class American men that first and foremost represented this culture – suffered from a lack of intensity, vitality, spontaneity, emotionality, and even irrationality. These diagnoses of an affective deficit, and the countercultural actors who sought to address this deficit, shared a judgment against what they perceived as the dominant social order. This judgment, as Grossberg puts it, was "affectively totalizing" (*We All* 115), and it generated what Grace Hale calls a "lifestyle libertarianism that in the long run proved politically promiscuous" (*Nation* 152).

Methodology and Structure of the Book

This book primarily consists of analyses of New Hollywood films and the discourses surrounding them. Films are neither passive products of social reality nor sovereign creators of their own reality; they are cultural mediators between historical discourses and moving images. They feed back into the production of social reality, they are affected by and affect the world in which they live. This is what makes them a challenging but rewarding object for an intersectional historical analysis. It is also what allows me to intertwine the history of film production and reception with a historical argument about the counterculturalization of white masculinity.

In each of my film discussions, I begin with the film's reception by established critics in mainstream magazines and newspapers. This reception discourse enables a discussion of "why certain of the film's meanings were circulated and why others

were ignored" (Nystrom, *Hard Hats* 61). I view these predominantly liberal media as both shaped by and shaping the white cultural imagination, making them particularly valuable for an analysis of shifting regimes of race and gender. The same applies to the discourse surrounding a film's production. Just as journalists, film critics and audiences make sense of films and influence their cultural output, filmmakers, screenwriters, actors and producers contribute to the selection of what appears on screen. As Frank Kelleter asserts, "production and reception – or industrial and quotidian actors – are best understood as *coevolving* forces" in the creation of culture. "Once we see them this way," he argues, "the widespread desire for an operational space outside 'the system' [...] becomes itself visible in systemic terms" ("Five Ways" 24–25).

Naturally, the films at hand are integral to this system. Films are nodes in a dense historical network, but also multi-layered and complex cultural artifacts. Their social impact cannot be attributed to a few identifiable agents like directors, actors, screenwriters, aesthetic devices, or plots. Instead, their agency is dispersed, influenced by forces that emerged long before a film's release and often remain off-screen. Rather than treating films as coherent wholes to be closely read from start to finish to carve out their truth, I scan them for the affective scenarios they create – a term I borrow from Lauren Berlant (*Cruel* 9) – and how these scenarios interact with other cultural practices and discourses, politics of race and gender, and their own theorization. Although questions of affect are crucial to my project, then, I will only tentatively attend to theories of cinematic affect as such, primarily tracing the affective intensities these films created through their reception discourse, rather than through my own affective response or by focusing on a poetics of affect. Film characters occupy particularly important space in this approach. As Grace Hale argues about Holden Caulfield in *The Catcher in the Rye*, fictional characters "shaped how real people think and feel and love" (*Nation* 33). Therefore, the focal points of my analyses will often be characters like Bonnie Parker, Popeye Doyle, Bobby Dupea, Bree Daniels, Wanda Goronski, Howard Beale, and Travis Bickle – nonhuman actors in the world rather than human actors playing characters in films.

Chapter 1 draws a first sketch of countercultural whiteness and expressivity by examining *Easy Rider* and Charles Reich's *The Greening of America*, two pivotal countercultural texts that both express and reflect on a radically new phenomenon in American history – and highlight the racial and gendered logics underlying the notion of a countercultural identity as a confident choice. After contouring countercultural whiteness by discussing scenes from *Easy Rider*, I establish the notion of an affective deficit as a constitutive discourse for countercultural whiteness and its politics of expressivity, referencing psychological and countercultural debates of the 1960s. Returning to *Easy Rider*, and particularly Jack Nicholson's performance

of lawyer George Hanson, I analyze the logic behind performances of male expressivity before discussing this logic as an example of the affective affinities between opposing political camps that this book seeks to unravel.

These next two chapters, which constitute the core of the book, explore what I call countercultural fantasies. As Jacqueline Rose contends, fantasy "is not [...] antagonistic to social reality; it is its precondition or psychic glue" (3). By identifying countercultural fantasies within the New Hollywood, I emphasize the affective function of the counterculture rather than its reality as a historical phenomenon. I discuss two of these fantasies – a fantasy of untamed motion and a fantasy of emotional truth – in chapters two and three. Both chapters enact a journey through midcentury discourse and the New Hollywood while adding layers to and differentiating configurations of countercultural whiteness and its politics of expressivity. Rather than defining these concepts beforehand and fitting my material to them, I aim to concretize these concepts through their empirical manifestations in the films. Both chapters focus on films released between 1967 and 1972, the formative period for the transitions traced in this book. Each chapter begins by considering the emergence of a countercultural fantasy, examining its racialized underpinnings, linking it to discourses and practices of the New Hollywood, before finally turning to the films themselves. In a way, these two chapters complement each other by exploring outward and inward journeys, respectively.

A countercultural fantasy of untamed motion constitutes the engine of **Chapter 2**, a fantasy prepared by psychologists and intellectuals who, in the postwar era, proposed a notion of subjectivity as an ongoing, never-ending process. The first part of this chapter identifies the combination of existentialist philosophy and the language of existential hip as a foundational configuration of countercultural whiteness, tracing this configuration through two couple-on-the-run films: *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967) and *The Getaway* (1972). These films enact their own fantasies of untamed motion, illustrating both similarities and key differences in their relation to existentialism and their politics of race and gender. The chapter's last section shifts from the wide-open spaces of America to its decaying cities, comparing the racialized reception discourses of *Across 110th Street* and *The French Connection*, using the latter to explore how a countercultural fantasy of untamed motion aligned with new practices of policing urban space amidst a crisis discourse on crime.

Chapter 3 interrogates a countercultural fantasy of emotional truth. The idea of an authentic core self permeated postwar psychological, literary, and countercultural discourses, with the search for authenticity and uniqueness promising to overcome the perceived root of all affective deficits: self-alienation. Analyzing the 1970 films *Five Easy Pieces* and *Wanda,* I examine the inherent contradictions and intersectional politics at play in the quest for authenticity and the fantasy of

emotional truth. In the final section of the chapter, I address the problem of inauthenticity, connecting *Klute* and *Carnal Knowledge* (both 1971) to gendered discourses about blocked feelings and cultural narcissism in the early 1970s, marked by an emergent movement of Men's Liberation.

Chapter 4 investigates the romance of madness that intertwined the fantasies of untamed motion and emotional truth, and examines the limits of these fantasies through films from the later period of the New Hollywood. Starting from R.D. Laing's articulation of madness as both breakdown and breakthrough, I discuss *The Exorcist* (1974) and *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1975), focusing on their treatment of irrational forces at the core self and the potentials and limits of a discourse that sees madness as a healthy response to a sick society. Finally, I consider the cinematic output of 1976 as a condensation of various lines traced throughout the book, highlighting films marked by the opposition between new configurations of countercultural whiteness and a social world populated by marginalized agencies now imagined as socially or culturally powerful.

As this final chapter demonstrates, the history of countercultural whiteness speaks to current formations of politicized white masculinity and is integral to contemporary racist and anti-feminist politics of the radical right. While I will occasionally draw explicit connections to present-day discursive strategies and cultural practices, I generally focus on the period under scrutiny. Tracing the transition of cultural motifs and a politics of whiteness from the New Left and the counterculture to a new conservatism and reactionary forces, my aim is not to blame certain political actors for becoming reactionary or being conservative in the first place. Rather, I highlight how a left politics as deeply embedded in the white cultural imagination as the countercultural politics of expressivity I examine in this book can only be open to right-wing appropriation. While an initial countercultural gesture of refusal and resistance against social institutions remains important for any politics invested in social justice, such politics must be grounded in socioeconomic and sociocultural analyses that prioritize social positions over identity, considering how these positions are attributed by racialized and gendered regimes within a capitalist society.

A second disclaimer addresses this book's limited scope: Naturally, I do not argue that countercultural whiteness and its politics of expressivity were *the* defining cultural motifs of the 1960s and 1970s, or even of the New Hollywood. This book does not provide an exhaustive history of the New Hollywood or a systematic study of political movements and their imaginaries. Instead, it draws elements from various archives, histories, theories, and cultural artifacts to reveal connections that have hitherto been hidden, or underappreciated. The trajectory this book undertakes, then, may be accompanied, crossed, and even contradicted by other trajectories one could follow through the same historical period. One could probably

construct a different argument about the gender and race politics of New Hollywood films by examining the works of Hal Ashby, Robert Altman, or John Cassavetes, directors that I do not discuss in this book. If anything, my project – a contribution to the cultural history of the twentieth century, centering whiteness and affect through a case study of the New Hollywood – is an invitation to follow similar trajectories.

Chapter 1
Easy Riders, Lost Selves: Countercultural Whiteness and the Politics of Expressivity

> Can we fill the movie-gap? And take back our invention? And surpass the Europeans? Yes, when that Individual comes to town. Remember him? The Individual? Well, then, when it's his turn. Yes, we'd better do it then. Or I'm going to die a very cranky Individual, and I won't be alone. It's time for a transition shot. – Dennis Hopper (11)

> I think it's a cop-out when people talk about the individual. – Stokely Carmichael (150)

The drugs are important. Just some nights ago, George Hanson had smoked pot for the first time in his life. Two hippies he met in a prison cell somewhere in the American South introduced the drug to the middle-aged alcoholic lawyer. As Hanson begins to ruminate on the question of individual freedom around a nightly bonfire, he is high for the second time, and the full range of meanings associated with drug use in 1969, as well as reports about drug abuse on the set of *Easy Rider*, linger over his monologue.[13] In the countercultural bestseller *The Greening of America,* published a year after the release of *Easy Rider,* law professor Charles Reich would call marijuana a "truth-serum that repeals false consciousness," describing its effect as "what happens when a person with fuzzy vision puts on glasses" (*Greening* 280–281). George had a rather fuzzy vision when he entered the film, waking up hung-over in a prison cell to meet Wyatt and Billy, the two hippie protagonists. And false consciousness is exactly what he wants to talk about.

Responding to Billy's remark that the hostile townspeople they have just met in a local restaurant feared them, George points out that these people were not scared of Billy as a person but of what he represents to them, namely "freedom." "What the hell is wrong with freedom? That's what it's all about," a baffled Billy protests. George then makes a crucial distinction:

> Talking about it and being it, that's two different things. I mean it's real hard to be free when you are bought and sold in the marketplace. Of course don't ever tell anybody that they're not free because then they are gonna get real busy killing and maimin' to prove to you that they are. Oh yeah, they are gonna talk to you and talk to you and talk to you about individual freedom, but they see a free individual, it's gonna scare 'em.

13 Peter Biskind calls intoxication "part of Hopper's artistic program" (44). Hopper himself mythologized his routine of intoxication in magazine pieces on *Easy Rider,* telling Tom Burke in an interview: "This is my 17th grass-smoking year. Sure, print it, why not? You can also say that that was real pot we smoked in *Easy Rider*" (Burke 14).

 https://doi.org/10.1515/9783111436661-003

In a move symptomatic of 1960s countercultural discourse, Hanson, after alluding to the illusion of freedom in a capitalist society, shifts his argument from the socio-economic to the cultural realm, contrasting the consciousness of those who buy into the idea of individual freedom with those who are visibly free. His monologue echoes contemporaneous philosopher Hazel Barnes' description of "immediate self-realization" in *Existentialist Ethics* (1967) as "not [...] the reflective and abstract *idea that* one is free" but the "*experience* of freedom" (17, original emphases). This distinction between idea and experience had already permeated a new vocabulary within psychology and shaped the political outlook of the New Left and the counterculture. In the introduction to the volume *The Self* (1956), psychologist Clark Moustakas recounted his realization: "I cannot know *about* the self. I can only *know* the self" (*The Self* xiv, original emphases). Describing the consciousness of his generation, countercultural icon Jerry Rubin wrote in his 1970 book *Do It: Scenarios of the Revolution:* "Instead of *talking* about communism, people were beginning to *live* communism" (56, original emphases).

In contrasting the myth of individual freedom to the free individual and arguing that "they" become scared when seeing a free individual, Hanson assumes what seemed far from clear in midcentury America. What is a "free individual"? Or, to rephrase this question for the purposes of this chapter: How was the figure of the free individual constructed in public discourse and in the New Hollywood? Who was able and expected to embody this position? In this first chapter, I will address these questions and outline the two main concepts of this book. I will establish an initial understanding of countercultural whiteness and its accompanying performances of male expressivity, link these terms to the emergence of New Hollywood cinema, and discuss their implications for the study of affective formations and the political historiography of the United States in the last decades.

Engaging with the film *Easy Rider,* Charles Reich's countercultural bestseller *The Greening of America* (1970), and other sources from the 1950s and 1960s, I will make a case for countercultural whiteness as a 'subjectifier,' borrowing a term from Bruno Latour. For Latour, the notion of a person as a realistic whole "is not an undisputed starting point but the provisional achievement of a composite assemblage," assemblages that are "*composed* [...] out of many successive *layers,* each of which is empirically distinct from the next" (207–208, original emphases). In the 1960s, countercultural whiteness becomes a particularly attractive layer for many white men, working at the construction site of various subject positions and manifesting in specific configurations, some of which I will examine throughout this book. Countercultural whiteness thus operates at the level of positionality, "the space at the intersection of structure (social position/social effects) and agency (social positioning/meaning and practice)" (Anthias 15). In the second part, I will focus on the valorization of emotion in the postwar era, arguing that countercul-

tural whiteness was intertwined with emerging ideas about the free expression of emotions, a connection that engendered, among other things, performances of male expressivity such as Jack Nicholson's portrayal of George Hanson in *Easy Rider.* Finally, I will zoom out to link these themes to a broader argument about historiographical frameworks for the 1960s and 1970s, making a case for studying affective affinities alongside ideological polarization.

1.1 "The Revolution Must Be Cultural": Identity Crisis and the Countercultural Self

In the late 1960s, Charles Reich set out to explore the question of the free individual in his book *The Greening of America.* Reich, a Yale law professor, had written several influential articles for law journals throughout the 1960s. His political beliefs were steeped in New Deal progressivism, yet he viewed the unchecked power of federal agencies as its most dangerous legacy. Reich perceived both federal power and the power of large private corporations as "structurally united," forming a system that constituted "an overwhelming threat to individual liberty and autonomy" (Citron 400). In 1966, he began teaching a course on "The Individual in America" at Yale, assigning readings by Ken Kesey and Norman Mailer. Soon thereafter, he moved to California to teach in Berkeley (Andersen 183). Reinvigorated by what he saw as a new generation of students passionately at odds with dominant values, Reich set out to write a more ambitious book – one that would serve as both a fierce indictment of American society and an enthusiastic evaluation of the new youth culture that sought to change it.

In *The Greening of America,* a text whose first draft was published in *The New Yorker* and later became a huge success as a Random House publication in 1970, Reich interprets U.S. history as a tale of economic progress and a succession of dominant political ideas, each accompanied by corresponding types of "consciousness." He frames his analysis as a response to an alleged crisis in American society, marked by material circumstances – such as "disorder," "war," "poverty," and "the destruction of environment" – but also by more abstract problems like "powerlessness," "absence of community," and a "loss of self" (*Greening* 4–8). Reich identifies the underlying dynamic of this crisis as a clash between three types of the American mind. "Consciousness I" represents the "traditional outlook of the American farmer, small businessman, and worker trying to get ahead," while "Consciousness II" embodies the "values of an organizational society." "Consciousness III," on the other hand, is the spirit of "the new generation," which Reich believed would be-

come the medium of a "Coming American Revolution" (*Greening* 16).[14] Reich sees the fundamental problem of American society as rooted in Consciousness II, which forces the self into pre-designed forms, privileging social obligations over individual freedom and supporting an artificial mass culture in which "the genuine is replaced by the simulated" (*Greening* 193).

In framing the problem in these stark terms, Reich echoed a central gesture of a prominent genre of cultural critique in postwar America. As Warren Cushman notes, a "preoccupation with 'the self,' its natural qualities, its growth, its 'potential,' abstracted out of and removed from the sociopolitical, became increasingly prominent in the post-war years" (240). This resurgent interest in the self, its potentials, and the dangerous social forces threatening it largely echoed the American Romantics and transcendentalists of the nineteenth century.[15] *The Greening of America* also inherited an intellectual lineage harking back to the midcentury discourse on totalitarianism, epitomized by Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951). Over the course of the 1950s, American intellectuals shifted this discourse from the realm of world politics and national enemies to American society itself, lamenting a widespread conformity that threatened to undermine traditional values of self-reliance and individualism. This rhetoric of American selfhood in crisis peaked with bestsellers such as David Riesman's *The Lonely Crowd* (1950) and William Whyte's *The Organization Man* (1956). As "Whether middle-class Americans knew it or not," K.A. Cuordileone summarizes the rhetoric of these studies, "they were psychologically plagued by the very prosperity that seemed to promise them freedom and security. The more sated and comfortable they grew, the more conformist and self–*less* they became; such was the price of affluence" (72).

The motif of selfhood in crisis entered American midcentury thought through Erich Fromm's influential *Escape from Freedom* (1941), as part of an intellectual engagement with the relation between mass society and the individual following the experience of Nazi Germany. While Fromm and other German emigrants like Theodor W. Adorno and Wilhelm Reich used the notion of character to complement

14 Reich identifies each of the three collective mindsets with a particular time in American history – the 19th century for Consciousness I, the progressive era and the New Deal with Consciousness II, his own current moment with Consciousness III – , contending that all three types are present in American society in 1970 and at war with each other. (*Greening* 16–19)

15 In his discussion of Consciousness I, Charles Reich quoted at length poems by Walt Whitman, commenting on the excerpts from "Salut au monde!" and "Song of Myself": "Whitman could be speaking for today's youth" (*Greening* 21–22). *Time* magazine similarly invoked Whitman in a review of *Easy Rider:* "Walt Whitman might not have recognized the bikes – but he would have understood the message" ("Review of Easy Rider" 62).

their Marxist class analysis, psychoanalyst Erik Erikson popularized the concept of identity, creating a crucial link between wartime public discourse and an emergent postwar discourse in the U.S. As Philip Gleason notes in his semantic history of the term, the notions of identity and identity crisis persisted even as "the mass-society problem receded far into the background" in the 1960s (928). For Leerom Medovoi, the birth of identity discourse was a "call to arms in the name of psycho-political freedom from a totalitarianism that had now been displaced from the second world onto the first" ("The Race War Within" 175).

In the 1960s, an emergent white student movement, owing much of its fervor and urgency to the civil rights movement but looking to white academics for intellectual inspiration, enthusiastically appropriated this call to arms. As Scott Selisker notes, the "anticonformist individualism" underlying the writings of many midcentury intellectuals was increasingly "mobilized against the U.S. establishment itself" over the course of the 1960s, signaling a "continuity between the antitotalitarian culture of the 1950s and a significant strain of the progressive culture of the 1960s" (71). This countercultural version of anti-totalitarianism built on the opposition between self and society already ingrained in midcentury thinking. Its main tenet was that the individual self was systematically stripped of its core and denied the fulfillment of its true potential by a totally administered 'system.' New Left activist Paul Potter famously called his comrades to "name that system," to "describe it, analyze it, understand it and change it" (*Naming*).

The Greening of America epitomizes this transition from 1950s cultural critique to the New Left's call to arms against the system. Like his predecessors, Reich was concerned with a spiritual crisis and an insecurity about what constitutes human subjectivity in general and the American self in particular. He merged both into a countercultural battle cry for adopting new lifestyles and awakening a new consciousness. In Reich's definition, consciousness was "not a set of opinions, information, or values, but a total configuration in any given individual, which makes up his whole perception of reality, his whole world view" (*Greening* 13). He linked consciousness to "the underlying economic and social conditions" (*Greening* 15) but framed the relationship between being and consciousness differently than Marxism, announcing: "There is no class struggle, today there is only one class. In Marx's terms, we are all the proletariat, and there is no longer any ruling class except the machine itself" (*Greening* 334). "Our theory," he concludes, "contends that in America, at least, the economic class struggle has been transcended by the interest of everyone in recapturing their humanity" (*Greening* 334).

Reich's displacement of class relations to a stark opposition between "us" and "the machine" is a particularly stark example of the culturalization of class that shaped countercultural discourse. Reflecting on his speech about attacking the 'system' in a later book, Paul Potter explained that "Capitalism was for me and my gen-

eration an inadequate description of the evils in America," as "there was something new afoot in the world [...] that made the rejection of the old terminology part of the new hope for radical change in America" (*A Name* 101). The old terminology, however, did not completely vanish. As I will show throughout the book, terms such as alienation, false consciousness, and class itself were continuously evoked, but their meaning emphasized personal choice over social coercion. Historian Grace Elizabeth Hale identifies this attempt to "[rehabilitate] American individualism by re-imagining class status as a cultural choice" as a crucial 1960s gesture (*Nation* 106). This gesture is one of the discursive threads that runs through the historical narrative I seek to unravel in this book, and, as I will argue, it is one of the crucial ingredients of countercultural whiteness.

At several moments in his book, Reich makes this privileging of cultural over economic politics explicit, turning it even into a call for arms: "The revolution must be cultural. For culture controls the economic and political machine, not vice versa" (*Greening* 329). For some contemporaries, *Easy Rider* was nothing less than such a cultural revolution. Francis Miller, Jr., reviewing the film for the widely circulated underground publication *The Great Speckled Bird,* evoked Reichian categories when he called it "the first 'commercial' [...] motion picture to embody the new youth consciousness," a film "evocative of different states of consciousness co-existing unpeacefully in this country and all over the world" (16 – 17).

Easy Rider is a telling example of a cultural understanding of class. Within the narrative of the film, George Hanson's bonfire speech about individual freedom, described above, was incited by an encounter between the protagonists and the inhabitants of a Southern small town in a restaurant. After Wyatt, Billie, and George enter the restaurant, and George points out to his new hippie friends that "we're in the establishment now," *Easy Rider* clarifies what this establishment is all about. The locals, described as "rednecks" in many reviews of the film, meet the newcomers with hostile glances and disgusted comments. The scene starkly contrasts the outcast protagonists – their outfits, style, and their loose, sluggish movements – with the tight bodies and grim faces of the locals. *Easy Rider* thus not only offered itself as the "automatic handwriting of the counterculture," as Buck Henry described the film (qtd. in Biskind 75), it also relied on the idea of class as a visible cultural marker, easily recognizable.

The restaurant scene, then, harbors an affective scenario that visualizes and verbalizes the opposition between free individuals and those who merely talk about freedom. While Margie Burns argued in an early analysis that *Easy Rider* put forward a "naturalization of social problems," linking "the evil of the southern natives [...] to the landscape, the atmosphere" (55), it is more accurate to say that the film performs a culturalization of social problems. This culminates in the idea

that certain selves are passively subjected to the influence of a dominant culture, following cultural scripts rather than their own willpower, while others choose to resist this dominant culture and become free. While the scene itself enacts a paradigmatic culture clash, Hanson's later reflection on the encounter erases the cultural specificity of the hippie protagonists, turning a difference between two 'cultures' into an opposition between people *subjected to culture* and those *countering culture.* This difference between a cultural identity-as-choice and an identity-as-coercion is one of the guiding principles of countercultural discourses and practices as I understand them throughout this book.

Easy Rider's politics are linked, firstly, with the emergence of the figure of the 'redneck.' Over the twentieth century, Patrick Huber noted, the term was "increasingly used to describe a racist, bigot, or reactionary," and by the mid-sixties "the connection between redneck and racism was firmly cemented, especially for African Americans" (148). Kate Willett cites sitcoms such as *The Beverly Hillbillies* (1966–1971) and variety shows such as *The Smothers Brothers Comedy Hour* (1967–1969), both popular during the emergence of *Easy Rider*, as cultural sites where the "working-class redneck was often turned into carnivalesque caricatures" and "mocking white southerners was always good for a laugh" (81). Secondly, the representation of the townspeople in *Easy Rider* is linked to the 1960s myth of unanimous support for the Vietnam War by working-class people. In her study on this myth, Penny Lewis analyzes a "psychological reductionism" embedded in the cultural memory of the 1960s, responsible for an image of "the organized working class as essentially integrated, inside the system, and outside social dynamics of change" (158).[16] As Lewis argues, this idea, an obvious "falsehood" that still left its mark on public memory and historiography, rests on two convictions: that "the antiwar movement was largely an upper-middle-class social movement" and that "the working class distanced itself from or despised the movement, mostly supported the war and its makers, and was growing increasingly conservative during the era" (5).

In *The Greening of America,* Charles Reich also identifies "blue-collar workers," a category he clearly understands as embodied by white men, as the "arch-opponents of the new consciousness" and asks if "they [...] [can] be induced to begin a search for self" when they "really *are* trapped, caught between the rigid disciplines of their jobs, the obligations to family, and the rising cost of everything" (*Greening* 305–306, original emphasis). Hence, both Reich and George Hanson – who re-

16 This idea influenced directly the creation of *Easy Rider.* As Terry Southern, who contributed to the screenplay, remarked retrospectively: "In my mind, the ending was to be an indictment of blue-collar America, the people I thought were responsible for the Vietnam War" (qtd. in Biskind 68).

marked in his bonfire speech that it is "hard to be free when you are bought and sold at the marketplace" – point to material conditions and socioeconomic relations only to discard them in favor of a countercultural political imagination informed by consciousness and choices, a world in which unfree subjects fear free individuals.[17]

There is a case to be made, however, that *Easy Rider* not merely taps into this culturalization of class but also critiques it. After all, the film introduces Wyatt and Billy when they are executing a financial transaction rather than choosing a lifestyle. At the very beginning of the film, the two hippies buy cocaine from a Mexican dealer to sell it to a rich buyer. Their freedom, *Easy Rider* suggests, rests on their flexibility to mediate between market actors, and the film's celebration of concrete experience is haunted by the economic action that made this experience possible in the first place. Their profit from the initial transaction is – quite literally, as Wyatt hides the money in the gas tank of his motorcycle – the engine that moves the two outcasts through the American South, the material basis for a countercultural fantasy of the open road.

This reading, however, was discarded or ignored in most contemporary reviews. The restaurant stand-off between the hippies and a hostile working-class, together with George Hanson's speech on free individuals, had a much more lasting impact on the film's legacy than the money in the engine. For Winfried Blevins of the *Los Angeles Herald Examiner,* it was the film's "vision of freedom, [...] [a] freedom to choose completely, without society's guidelines or usual store of wisdom, who you want to be," that made *Easy Rider* an instant classic ("Cruising" F1). The countercultural update of American individualism ingrained in this praise informed a wide array of discourses in the postwar era, from psychology to cultural critique, from artistic movements to political debate. In his essay "The White Negro," (1957) which I discuss in more detail in the second chapter, Norman Mailer propagated "the liberation of the self from the Super-Ego of society" ("White" 354). Humanist psychologist Abraham Maslow suggested in *Toward a Psychology of Being* (1962) that the notion of the "authentic person" implies that such a person "resists enculturation," becoming "a little more a member of his species and a little less a member of his local group" (*Toward* 11). And New Left icon Paul Potter ex-

17 Derek Nystrom has pointed to the intricate connection between this "representation of a murderously reactionary working class, mired in false consciousness" and the "New Left's belief that the working class had been incorporated into the cultural, political, and economic systems against which the counterculture was rebelling" (*Hard Hats* 22). He explains this dynamic by analyzing the class bias of the New Hollywood directors and producers themselves who were mostly members of and directed their films at the professional-managerial class (PMC) (*Hard Hats* 51). For similar interpretations of sixties culture as PMC class formation see Ehrenreich, *Fear*; Szalay.

plained in *A Name for Ourselves* (1971) that "[t]he experience of growing up is the experience of having the society plant something deep down inside of you [...] that is not your own" (*A Name* 45).

All these examples rely on a clear distinction between the *authentically singular* aspects that constitute individual personhood and the *social* forces that beleaguer this unique self from the outside and potentially 'enculturate' it. The embodiment of a free individual, then, testifies to the relative or absolute absence of social markers and cultural traces. This idea rests on the premise that selfhood is a zero-sum game between elements that are social and elements that are genuinely one's own. It is a premise that regulates what I call countercultural whiteness in this book, as it not only reduces class status to a question of choice but also relies on a separation between identity-as-choice and identity-as-coercion – and on a rhetorical rejection of normative whiteness that conceals its own white default.

1.2 Long Hair, Black Skin: White Masculinity and Countercultural Identity

As mentioned earlier, what Charles Reich conceived of as the crisis of a "loss of self" was only the latest instance in a long line of cultural critiques concerned with the condition of American society at midcentury, critiques that diagnosed dangerous transformations of the American personality, character, self, or, more globally, a crisis of "man." "Man," according to Mark Greif, "became at midcentury the figure everyone insisted must be addressed, recognized, helped, rescued, made the center, the measure, the 'root,' and released for 'what was in' him" (8). In the American context, cultural historians analyzed this anxiety over selfhood as a response to socioeconomic shifts – among them a movement from the cities to the suburbs and an increase in the share of white-collar jobs – affecting first and foremost the white middle-class and its dominant notions of masculinity.[18] According to Erik Dussere, the image of an affluent society threatened by conformity created a wide array of "attempts to understand a particular kind of man, identified as white-collar, middle-class, living in the suburbs and commuting to the city, conformist, consumerist – and disaffected" (81). What this kind of man suffered from, then, seemed very similar to the phenomenon Erik Erikson had termed "identity crisis."

18 For an overview see Horowitz, *Anxieties.* For an interpretation of 1950s commentaries on conformity as the discursive production of a "masculinity crisis" see Ehrenreich, *Hearts*; Cuordileone; Gilbert.

Originally used to describe a healthy stage in the development of the (male) adolescent, identity crisis became an attractive way to make sense of American personhood in the postwar era.[19] Not only did Erikson's concept of identity represent "a fresh strata term with no class referents and one that could be applied to normal as well as disturbed individuals" (Lunbeck 233), it also helped negotiate anxieties about gender. In a 1957 piece on the "crisis of masculinity," Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., argued that "the key to the recovery of masculinity lies [...] in the problem of identity." He asked how "masculinity, femininity, or anything else [could] survive in a homogenized society, which seeks steadily and benignly to eradicate all differences between the individuals who compose it" (Schlesinger, Jr.).[20] More than a decade later, Charles Reich disclosed a similarly gendered logic at the heart of his own rhetoric of identity crisis in *The Greening of America.* Establishing a further example of the "lost self" of America, Reich invites his readers to sit in a government cafeteria and "see the faces set in rigidity, in unawareness, in timid compliance, or bureaucratic obstinacy; the career women with all their beauty fled, the men with all their manhood drained" (*Greening* 165). While Reich seeks to liberate a universal 'self' from the social constraints erected by Consciousness II, this self comes readily gendered, bifurcating into potentially beautiful women and hopefully virile men.

A similar gendered logic enters *Easy Rider*'s restaurant scene when the three protagonists overhear the talk from the other tables. "I'd guess we put her in the women's cell," the sheriff says about Billy's long hair, and a trucker sitting next to him responds, "I'd say we put them in a cage and charge a little admission to see 'em." These comments culminate in one man's observation: "Most jails were built for humanity and that won't quite qualify." *Easy Rider* thus uses the confrontation between 'rednecks' and 'hippies' to sketch the former, in line with contemporary representations (Huber 145–148), as racist, sexist, and homophobic bigots, while the dehumanization of the hippies rests on an emasculation. However, the film never disputes the protagonists' cultural authority as heterosexual men, rather securing this authority through repeated cuts to a group of giggling female teenagers

19 From the 1960s on, the concept was appropriated to *challenge* normative ideas about selfhood, as well. In 1963, Betty Friedan made use of Erikson's work in her book *The Feminine Mystique,* arguing that the problem of identity was at the core of the 'woman question.' For her biographer Daniel Horowitz, "Friedan took [...] an analysis that blamed the problems of diminished masculine identity on life in the suburbs, jobs in large organizations, and consumer culture; she then turned this explanation into an argument for women's liberation" (*Betty Friedan* 207).

20 Schlesinger was not alone in putting forward the notion of identity crisis in gendered terms. In 1958, *Look* magazine published a whole series on "The Decline of the American Male" (Cuordileone 88).

who are very much attracted to the hippie men – and through the next episode of the film, in which Billy and Wyatt pick up two female sex workers for the Mardi Gras parade. Billy's long hair and the locals' reaction to it allow *Easy Rider*'s protagonists – and the countercultural audience to which it catered – to invest in what Steven Knadler calls a risk-free "queering of identities – a fantasy of open-ended, nonnormative performativity" (xxv).[21]

The restaurant scene then goes on to enact another common gesture of 1960s countercultural discourse: constructing a quasi-racial identity through hairdos. When one guest refers to the strangers as "white," another protests, "White? Then you're colorblind." By making the hostile townspeople exclude the hippies from their narrow conception of whiteness, *Easy Rider* simultaneously reveals and conceals its own investment in race, an investment Eduardo Bonilla-Silva analyzes as the "clinical approach" to race relations, "the careful separation of good and bad, tolerant and intolerant Americans" (15). By delegating racism to the working-class Southerners, the latter become what Greif describes as "the hateful figures of 'white people'," figures that "did a remarkable double-duty rhetorically, as an enemy for blacks *and* an enemy for young white people themselves" (272). This figure allowed statements such as Yippie icon Jerry Rubin's announcement in the first pages of *Do It!:* "I dropped out of the White Race and the American nation" (13).

Easy Rider enacts a similar move. With the "White Race" and the "American nation" safely embodied by the locals and their white supremacist ideals, the restaurant scene symbolically merges the hippie protagonists with oppressed social groups, creating a community of outsiders across color lines whose exclusion might rest on racial identity *or* a visible performance of freedom, signified by Billy's long hair.[22] *Easy Rider* director Dennis Hopper himself used that analogy, telling a journalist that what he wanted to convey with the film was: "Don't be scared, go and try to change America, but if you're gonna wear a badge, whether it's long hair or black skin, learn to protect yourselves" (Burke 17–18). However,

21 In his study of countercultural masculinity, Tim Hodgdon emphasizes that "prior to feminist assertions of gender as a political arrangement, informed opinion held that masculinity and femininity formed part of the bedrock of human nature" (xxx) and thus even hippie groups in the 1960s could rely on a stable notion of sexual difference that allowed for the performance of new types of masculinity and the "queering of identities" without threatening existing regimes of gender.

22 The function of long hair permeated countercultural politics. In a fictional dialogue in *Do It!*, Rubin reacted to his Old Left aunt's complaint about his haircut: "Aunt Sadie, *long hair is our black skin*" (94, original emphasis). In *Revolution for the Hell of It*, Abbie Hoffman wrote: "You want to get a glimpse of what it feels like to be a n***er? Let your hair grow long" (71).

long hair serves as a marker of freedom and independence in a way that blackness never can; there is a crucial difference between the willful rejection of a norm and the structural exclusion from it, between identity as performance and identity as an effect of social configurations, between the choice to wear a badge and the badge that is a body.[23] After all, had Wyatt and Billy been black, the locals would not have been afraid of their freedom but of their blackness.

This difference between identity as a choice – dropping out, wearing long hair, setting out on the open road – and identity as coercion – being racialized in a white supremacist country – marks the countercultural ethos I trace in this book as fundamentally white by design. This whiteness describes not (only) an actual exclusion of non-white subjects from a social group that would be described as the counterculture, but a structural whiteness at the heart of a subjectivity constituted by a willful choice to become an outsider, to counter the dominant culture, to liberate the self. To the extent that the New Hollywood invests in this ethos, it is part of a white cultural imagination as I have described it in the introduction.

Not only *Easy Rider* itself but also its reception exemplifies this. In his 1996 companion volume to the film, Lee Hill critiques the politics of *Easy Rider* for not integrating African American characters into the narrative, lamenting a "missed opportunity to expand the film's critique of the American Dream" (55). While I do not argue against this observation, I suggest that *Easy Rider*'s "critique of the American Dream" is less limited in its scope than in its form – a problem not solvable by integrating different characters into the narrative. The film relied on a common discursive trope in the late 1960s when the racism experienced by African Americans was metonymically stretched to encompass the system's oppression against all those who imagined themselves in opposition to it. This allowed *Easy Rider* to invest in the fantasy of a cross-racial alliance without needing to feature a single Black character in the whole film. The central issue with the racial politics of the film, then, is not the absence of Black characters but the universalization of an image of personhood, liberation, and politics that concealed and reproduced the white default at its core.

Charles Reich's *The Greening of America* further illuminates the racial configurations at work in countercultural calls for a new consciousness. As discussed above, the self that Reich saw in crisis and was eager to save was duped into role-playing by a stultifying dominant culture, struggling to see through the pre-

23 Black Americans often noted this difference, adopting a critical stance towards the hippie movement. In a *Time* article series on the hippie phenomenon, one Black interviewee explains: "The hippies really bug us [...] because we know they can come down here and play their games for a while and escape," while another just notes: "After the hippies go back to their middle class homes [...] we'll still be here" (Toch).

tenses of an overly organized society. Reich's framework, then, leaves little space for persons needing to adopt different roles to survive in the face of political machines that endanger not only their psychological integrity but their existence. "A Negro learns to gauge precisely what reaction the alien person facing him desires, and he produces it with disarming artlessness," James Baldwin wrote in 1948 (*Notes* 56). Translated into the terms used in *Greening of America*, Baldwin's "Negro" was indeed a "projectile ready to be set in motion by outside energies," moved by "something extrinsic to himself" (Reich, *Greening* 77). However, it is not organized society's Consciousness II that makes him or her open to outside manipulation, but a social organization founded on white supremacy.[24]

Thus, the rhetoric of identity crisis, which Reich's diagnosis of a "loss of self" inherits from midcentury discourse, conceals the unequal distribution of access to the resource of autonomous personhood in postwar America. The abstract image of a self beleaguered by social forces presupposes a distinction between the singular self and the social accessible primarily to those not perceived as possessing a social identity to begin with. Both *The Greening of America* and *Easy Rider* invest in a racial politics based on an emphatic self-exclusion from dominant white society, creating a countercultural positionality that enters the scene in the guise of the free individual, is white by default and acquitted in advance of reproducing white supremacy. Both perform this gesture during a historical moment when Black activists demanded from their white allies the opposite –that "[u]nderstanding their own racialization was the prerequisite to understanding the social relationships of their society" (Barber 21). As Stokely Carmichael proclaimed in a speech at Berkeley in 1966, it was time for whites to "move inside their own community and start tearing down racism *where in fact it does exist!*" (qtd. in Barber 19, original emphasis).

Charles Reich had other things in mind. In a particularly curious equation between white and black liberation, Reich predicted:

> When the white man discovers his servitude, we will see a real explosion in America. Black rage, black pride, black militancy, give us some idea what it will be like. But with whites, the self-deception has been greater, and perhaps that will make the truth all the more infuriating. (*Greening* 317)

---

24 While my focus in this section is on race, a similar dynamic bespeaks the gender dynamic inherent in the discourse of identity crisis. As Cuordileone comments on David Riesman's notion of other-directedness: "Riesman could not draw a portrait of an 'other-directed' woman; to do so would have been unthinkable, even awkwardly redundant, for the qualities which together signified 'other-direction' were those traditionally built into the definition of wife and mother" (84). In the third chapter, I discuss possible access points to the subject position of countercultural whiteness for white women.

By suggesting that the whole of American society is living in a state of unfreedom, with African Americans only the first to realize and resist this state, Reich conflates the struggle for political rights and an end to racial oppression with the countercultural politics of self-liberation. In a historical moment marked by the increasing visibility of Black protest, this countercultural discourse makes African Americans "represent 'the very principle of emancipation,' as opposed to any actual emancipation that might have threatened established relations of production" (Szalay 26). Racism as an institution and white supremacy as its base vanish behind an allegedly homogeneous system that beleaguers the self: "[W]e may be in the grip, not of capitalist exploiters, but of mindless, impersonal forces that pursue their own, non-human logic" (Reich, *Greening* 12). This system of impersonal forces, as the negative foil on which countercultural whiteness is constructed, inspired all kinds of liberation fantasies while relegating crucial differences to the sidelines. In 1966, libertarian activist Murray Rothbard had already hoped for the "real explosion" Reich envisioned, writing in an editorial of his magazine *Left and Right:* "If we are to agree to the concept of 'black power', then neither should we simply and brusquely dismiss as frenzied racist mobs those white rioters in the South Side of Chicago who have called desperately for 'white power'" ("Cry" 13).

Rothbard's statement foreshadows what Hamilton Carroll analyzes as "white masculinity's turn to the representational politics of identity" (6). At the same time, it taps into an emerging debate about disenfranchised whites. The same year *Easy Rider* celebrated an unexpected success at the box office, *Newsweek* published a "Special Report on the White Majority," which announced in October 1969 that "lower-middle-class whites feel that an unholy alliance has grown up between the liberal Establishment and Negro militants to reshape American life at their expense" ("The Troubled American" 24). As "brassy anti-Establishmentarian" activist Saul Alinsky, who was "now concentrating his efforts on white communities," explained to the reporters, this was a social group who felt "powerless to do anything about anything" (qtd. in "The Troubled American" 24).

In his 1961 Esquire piece "The Black Boy Looks at the White Boy," James Baldwin argued that "to become a Negro man" one indeed "had to make oneself up as one went along" but in the "not-at-all-metaphorical teeth of the world's determination to destroy you." White men, on the other hand, believed "the world is theirs and [...], albeit unconsciously, expect the world to help them in the achievement of their identity" ("Black Boy" 105). Baldwin's intervention suggests that the discourse around identity crisis in the 1960s, while asserting a loss of selfhood, was in fact implicated in a rescue mission. It painted an image of a national crisis abstract enough to make white men both the subjects of this crisis and the agents of its

imaginary overcoming. To overcome this crisis, however, presupposed coming to terms with feelings and emotions. A crucial element of the rhetoric of identity crisis was the diagnosis of an affective deficit.

1.3 “Flooded By Emotion”: Affective Deficits and the Turn to Feeling

Early in *The Greening of America,* Charles Reich announces that presently “Instinct, feeling, and spontaneity are repressed by overwhelming forces” (*Greening* 8), turning his call for a new consciousness into a call for an affective turn. Later in the book, Reich presents a capacious list of aspects of human experience he finds “either missing altogether from our lives or present only in feeble imitation of their real quality” (*Greening* 165). Aside from traditional values and qualities such as “morality,” “conflict” and “new ideas,” the list includes a wide array of affective terms: Reich places “new ways of thinking” and “nonrational thoughts” just above “new ideas”; he mentions “physical activity” but also, more specifically, “performing for others”; he calls for a rediscovery of “magic and mystery,” “transcendence,” and “myth making”; he hails values such as “spontaneity,” “creativity,” and “imagination”; and finally, he yearns for “sensuality” and “new feelings,” arguing for the primacy of the “inner life” (*Greening* 166–169).

For Reich, then, the recuperation of the lost self was more a matter of emotional liberation than of rational comprehension and intentional behavior. This is best summed up in his harsh judgment on Consciousness II, a mindset that, according to Reich, “believes more in the decision of an institution than in the feelings of an individual” (*Greening* 71). Mingling the opposition between the “individual” and the “institution” with a similarly binary distinction between emotion and cognition, Reich’s proposition points to a historical dynamic important for this book: the radical separation of the singular self from the social was entangled with a similarly passionate emphasis on feelings, a celebration of the elusive and affective dimensions of human experience.

Reich was not alone in diagnosing an affective deficit in postwar America and playing off the personal feelings of the individual against the rational decisions of institutions. Linked to the general discourse of conformity and identity crisis discussed earlier was the idea that Americans were stiff, uptight, and overly rational. Consequently, many commentators emphasized the need to reach beyond the confines of language and reason to come to terms with the affective dimensions of life. ‘Getting in touch with your feelings’ emerged as a central countercultural motif that would diffuse into the mainstream and become a hallmark of white mid-

dle-class culture. As Sam Binkley summarizes this development in his study on the countercultural practice of 'getting loose,'

> all the techniques of self control and cultivation that were once the mark of middle-class pride and distinction were gradually recast as repressed, colorless, and 'square,' the relaxation of self-constraint and the embrace of the everyday was described in terms of a transgression into the prohibited zones of America's marginalia. (60)

This development was driven largely by the increasing influence of self psychology[25] and the successful career of its key terms such as potential, growth and self-actualization, which co-emerged with the crisis discourses of the 1950s and 1960s. In the postwar era, self psychology went beyond Freudian determinism, with its focus on sexuality and early childhood, to emphasize the "possibilities of health rather than the limitations of sickness" (Halliwell 239). In the preface to the edited volume *The Self* (1956), which brought together essays by a wide range of psychotherapists and psychologists, Clark Moustakas looked back at the recent developments in his discipline: "Until recently the study of abnormality, deviation, and illness have dominated psychological and psychiatric investigations," while now the emphasis was on "knowing, exploring, and actualizing the self" (*The Self* xiii). According to self psychologists, to be 'normal' was not something to aspire to at all. Moustakas concluded the volume by stating:

> Realization of one's being is man's real fate and the only realization which permits the emergence of individuality and uniqueness as well as universal growth. The concept of personal growth is a positive affirmation, not the absence of symptoms nor the presence of the striving to fulfill conventional standards and norms. (*The Self* 283)

Put simply, self psychology advocated the liberation of the singular self as the only successful path to healthy personhood, rejecting the determination of specific and formalized standards of health.

---

25 While there are important differences between the psychological approaches I will quote and describe over the course of this book, I will use the term *self psychology* to assemble humanist, existentialist and other dissident voices within the disciplines of psychology and psychotherapy that were first and foremost preoccupied with 'the self.' What unites these approaches is their distance to earlier paradigms within psychotherapy, their role in what Abraham Maslow has called a "third force" to distinguish humanist psychology from both Freudian psychoanalysis and behaviorism. Hence, Humanist, existentialist and adjacent approaches such as Gestalt therapy or those voices that would influence the antipsychiatric movement, such as R.D. Laing or Thomas Szasz, are all rubricated under this term here. In a similar vein, Barbara Ehrenreich uses the term "new psychology" to connect these approaches (*Hearts* 88–98).

In their 1951 joint volume on Gestalt therapy, Fritz Perls, Paul Goodman, and Ralph Hefferline outlined a new psychology of the self based on the ideals of spontaneity and self-development. Emotions were important for attaining these ideals, the authors argued, as the emotional realm "is not mediated by thoughts and verbal judgments, but is *im*mediate" (95, original emphasis). Anticipating later differentiations between affect and emotions within cultural theory, they distinguished their concept of emotion from personal feeling: "In primitive undifferentiated form, emotion is simply excitement, the heightened metabolic activity and increased energy mobilization which is the organism's response to experiencing novel or stimulating situations" (95). In their critique against what they felt was a "whole crusade for 'control of emotions'," the Gestalt authors ultimately made a passionate case for turning more attention to the world of feelings: "[Emotions] are [...] unique deliveries of experience which have no substitute – they are the way we become aware of our concerns, and, therefore, of what we are and what the world is" (96 – 97).

The *Gestalt Therapy* book was only one of the earliest and most explicit articulations of this turn to emotion and immediacy. Concepts such as spontaneity, self-actualization and growth started to complement and replace earlier ideals of impulse control, adjustment and maturity. Increasingly, individual adjustment was seen as wrong and coercive rather than necessary. Already in 1955, Erich Fromm discarded any discussion about the problem of adjusting the individual in his book *The Sane Society*, advocating for a closer examination of the "possible unadjustment of the culture itself" (6). A year later, the authors who contributed to Moustakas' *The Self,* cultural historian Jessica Grogan argues, "couldn't conscionably advocate adjustment in the absence of a consideration of the norms and standards to which one was being asked to adjust" (15). Nine years later, James Bugental would summarize this shift and its consequences: "'Adaptation' and 'adjustment' have come to be odious words for many psychotherapists" (33).

This shift was not able to replace other approaches within the disciplines concerned with mental health. During the same period in which self psychology entered its heyday, creating concepts that would pervade discourses and practices of the white middle-class, approaches more closely linked to environmental psychology remained firmly attached to analyzing and managing individuals of poor and nonwhite communities. Just as a countercultural ethos opposed identity-as-choice to identity-as-coercion, the rhetoric of self psychology in the 1960s promoted solutions to an identity crisis linked to willful choices, while other fields targeted those groups not imagined as being able to grow, groups for which a defiant resistance to adjustment was seen not as a testament to a healthy self but as endangering society. With the concept of "sensory deprivation," for instance, this school engendered its own diagnosis of an affective deficit. Deprivation, however,

tapped into a different semantic register than a crisis of identity, becoming, in the words of historian of medicine Mical Raz, "a language and a framework for white experts to describe a variety of traits attributed to poor blacks" (172).

The turn away from adjustment towards growth and self-actualization was closely associated with the growing influence of humanist psychologist Abraham Maslow, who argued in 1962:

> As soon as we speak of 'good' or 'bad' cultures, and take them as means rather than as ends, the concept of 'adjustment' comes into question. We must ask, 'What kind of culture or subculture is the 'well adjusted' person well adjusted *to?*' Adjustment is, very definitely, *not* necessarily synonymous with psychological health. (*Toward* 197, original emphases)

Rather than envisioning a society in which individuals lived in harmony with each other, Maslow casts society itself as the prison that holds captive the self, responsible for what he terms the "psychopathology of the average" (*Toward* 15). Underlying the shift from adjustment to growth, then, was a fundamental inversion of the relation between the individual and society. By redirecting psychotherapy's gaze from the subject of adaptation to the social reality this subject was asked (or rather forced) to adapt to, self psychology posed as cultural critique.

This cultural critique repeatedly diagnosed a fundamental affective deficit in society at large. While an increasing number of intellectuals and psychologists, as well as the emergent counterculture, imagined reason and the intellect as collective agencies, shaped unnaturally by institutions and social forces, and disciplining the individual, emotions stood firmly on the side of the singular and authentic self. The threat was no longer the rational self's manipulation by emotions; the actual danger was being manipulated by social forces. The natural expression of emotions, on the other hand, seemed to lead the way towards liberation. This inversion became central to the outlook of the New Left in the 1960s. Beryl Satter summarizes that while older leftists "generally viewed emotional expression as childish and irrational," New Leftists "believed that emotional repression created irrational behavior," and that "people needed to break through social conditioning and access their 'true' emotions" (119).

As Grace Hale argued forcefully, the New Left constructed its imaginary community of outsiders through this idea about access to emotions: "Being alike on the inside, as people who shared emotions and the need for self-expression, could replace being alike on the outside, as people who shared a history of oppression and isolation" ("Romance" 68). The counterculture's appropriation and spiritualization of Marx's term of alienation created an important entry point for this politics of feeling, as modernity and capitalism were increasingly thought to be "alienating in the sense that they created a form of emotional numbness" (Illouz 1). Theodore

Roszak's clarification of his usage of the term alienation in his 1969 *The Making of a Counter Culture* is a case in point:

> Not alienation [...] in the sheerly institutional sense, in which capitalism [...] ends to alienate the worker from the means and fruits of production; but rather, alienation as the *deadening of man's sensitivity to man*, a deadening that can creep into even those revolutionary efforts that seek with every humanitarian intention to eliminate the external symptoms of alienation. (58, emphasis mine)

In the countercultural imagination, then, alienation was not a structural feature of capitalism, nor was it related to a social position within a racialized society, as Frantz Fanon famously put it in *Black Skin, White Masks* when he proclaimed that the "black man's alienation is not an individual question" but a "question of sociodiagnostics" (xv). For Roszak, alienation was a universal and spiritual problem, and part of an affective deficit. To recuperate "man's sensitivity to man" entailed a personal transformation, one that Maslow only found in those subjects he called self-actualizers, people who, among other things, "could let themselves be flooded by emotion" (*Toward* 132). This image, evoking a loss of control as an important asset for individual selfhood, is an important ingredient of what I will call a politics of expressivity throughout this book.

1.4 Losing Control: Jack Nicholson and the Politics of Expressivity

Performing emotional expressivity means enacting, or giving the impression of enacting, a *movement from an interior space marked as an authentic core toward the outside world with little or no mediation.* This presupposes the possibility of unmediated movement and the existence of an authentic core self, two interrelated notions I will interrogate in chapters 2 and 3, respectively. Expressivity follows an affective logic, heralding the primacy of the body over the mind, spontaneity over reflection, the gut-level over the intellect. A section of Maslow's *Toward a Psychology of Being* illustrates how this logic was articulated in the context of self psychology:

> [I]t is at this time best to *bring out* and encourage, or at the very least, to recognize this *inner nature*, rather than to suppress or repress it. Pure spontaneity consists of *free, uninhibited, uncontrolled, trusting, unpremeditated expression* of the self, i. e., of the psychic forces, with *minimal interference by consciousness.* Control, will, caution, self-criticism, measure, deliberateness are the *brakes* upon this expression made intrinsically necessary by the laws of the social and natural worlds outside the psychic world, and secondarily, made necessary by fear of the psyche itself. (*Toward* 184–185, emphases mine)

According to Maslow, the natural expression of one's authentic core is a positive movement that cannot be controlled lest it threatens the condition of unmediatedness on which it is based. Hunter S. Thompson, arguably a public persona very close to an ideal type of countercultural whiteness, once described his concept of Gonzo journalism as "learning to fly as you're falling" (qtd. in Cohen), which seems an adequate description for performances of expressivity, transforming an unmediated process – falling – into a creative act – flying.

I use the term *politics of expressivity* in the title and throughout this book to point to the manifold ways in which performances of expressivity, as well as the fantasies of untamed motion and emotional authenticity they rely on, create truth-effects of their own and come to be seen as potential solutions for political problems.[26] First and foremost, they responded to the widespread diagnoses of an affective deficit I have sketched out above. To the extent that the discourse of identity crisis, which harbored the talk of an affective deficit, targeted white, middle-class men – as the social group that, within the white cultural imagination, "expected the world to help them with their identity" in Baldwin's words – the politics of expressivity, which sought to overcome this crisis and reduce this deficit, carried along gendered and racial premises. This is why the affective performances I describe in this section are examples of a politics of male expressivity, and why these performances are intertwined with countercultural whiteness.

There is also a historical case to be made for differentiating what I call expressivity from other forms of emotional expression. In his vast genealogy of coolness as a style ranging from the 1930s to the 1960s, Joel Dinerstein identifies multifarious origins of cool, with African American jazz, existentialist philosophy, and film noir figuring most prominently among them. While coolness as a performance marked not an excess but an economy or a balancing of emotion, producing an "aestheticizing of detachment" (221), it was understood as proof of a singular artistic style, a style that ultimately pointed to "an individual's complex personal experience" (13). As cool's "crucial subtext," Dinerstein identifies the "valorization of the individual against larger dynamic forces" (25). This opposition between the in-

26 A particularly stark example for the way in which an unmediated expression of affect was hailed as a potential solution for political problems within countercultural discourse can be found at the Esalen Institute, headquarters of the Human Potential Movement influenced by the work of Maslow. At Esalen, a registration form for a "racial confrontation workshop" articulated the hope that the session would "allow for bloodless riots where the most dreaded thoughts and emotions may be expressed, where self-delusion that limit can be stripped away." Only though this kind of confrontation, the announcement stated, "can man expand his blackness and whiteness into creative humanness" (qtd. in Grogan 236). It was the unmediated expression of thoughts and emotions, then, that was hailed as the only possibility to overcome racial divides.

dividual self and the social forces beleaguering it is, as I have argued above, also at work at the construction sites of countercultural whiteness, and hence of performances of male expressivity. However, as countercultural icon Abbie Hoffman stated in his book *Revolution for the Hell of It,* "[p]rojecting cool images is not our goal" (80), and this statement bespeaks the particular whiteness of expressivity when contextualized within the larger history of emotional discourse in the twentieth century.

An example from the world of rock music in the 1960s illuminates the racial divide at work in these affective styles. Andrew Ross notes that "it became conventional [in the 1960s and 1970s] for white rock musicians to sweat as representational proof of their hard labor," a phenomenon in contrast with the "'cool' world of modern jazz [where] evidence of strenuous activity is supposed to be interpreted as a sign of mental and not physical labor" (85). When Janis Joplin told an interviewer in 1970 that "Black music is understated" while she herself liked to "fill it full of feeling" (Smith 2), she articulated and essentialized a distinction between Black cool and white expressivity, reflecting what Douglas Taylor calls the "affective dissonances produced by white supremacy" (95). This is to say, performances of cool by African Americans in the interwar years were not a response to a spiritual identity crisis and its affective deficit but a survival strategy. As Berg and Ramos-Zayas argue in their conceptualization of racialized affect, "there is a strategically guarded 'interiority'" for people of color that is "not biological or culturally intrinsic [but] self-protective and not necessarily 'externalized' under conditions of subordination and colonialism" (656). To lose control, to release energies, to actualize human potential, to engender self-growth – all these were potentially dangerous for subjects excluded from the normative center of American society.

This is why I understand expressivity as an affective politics primarily attached to whiteness and its cultural practices, intricately linked to the new countercultural version of whiteness emerging in the 1960s. If African American cool was, according to Dinerstein, a cultural reaction against the negation of Black individuality, white expressivity was a reaction to postwar anxiety around selfhood and its diagnosis of an affective deficit. If coolness signaled the "necessary creation of a personal sound and style in a society that rarely saw African-Americans as individuals," expressivity helped rescue and reshape the idea of individuality for white masculinity in a world threatened by middle-class conformity and mass culture, a "time of spiritual crisis in which white identity was not sufficient for survival" (Dinerstein 216). And if cool was, among other things, an adaptation to the surveillance of Black affect executed by white supremacy, expressivity was an emphatic gesture of liberation from an affective deficit that haunted normative whiteness, and a reconfiguration of white masculinity in the wake of socioeconomic changes and cultural challenges.

This gesture of liberation fueled the cinema of the New Hollywood in multifarious ways. Although released two years after *Bonnie and Clyde* and *The Graduate*, *Easy Rider* was at the forefront of the New Hollywood discourse and its articulations of expressivity. Shortly after its release, *L.A. Times* critic Charles Champlin assured his readers: "If there is an American New Wave, film historians may well one day cite 'Easy Rider' as early evidence of it" ("Low-Cost" 21). In his enthusiastic review, he praised the film less for what it explicitly articulated than for what it expressed in affect, mobilizing the truth effects of expressivity for evaluating films: "Its truths seem not so much perceived intellectually as *felt bone-and-gut-deep* and expressed not in tidy sentences but in fragments and phrases *wrenched from real experience*, the chaos of living and *intense personal feeling*" ("Low-Cost" 16, emphases mine).

Receptions such as these were crucial to the film's image as a visionary work of art, a discourse that emerged as the film industry underwent important changes and film culture itself strived for more seriousness and ambition.[27] While sometimes articulated as an aspiration to 'high art,' more often this new discourse of cinema fed on the expressivist doctrine that art could result from the capacity to let go, to be open to experience, to let things happen, to become expressive. Looking back in 1975, film journalist Axel Madsen described the "modern film," embodied in the cinema of the late 1960s, in exactly these terms, echoing the rhetoric of self psychology and the new consciousness:

> It *moves.* It isn't 'photographed theater,' as Alfred Hitchcock once said, but advances *organically.* It is storytelling *freed of discursive style* and with a forward thrust that is *less logical than obsessive*; storytelling that doesn't stress plot and character, but *emotional contradictions* and ambiguity. It is *honest* – a much-abused word, here meaning that the movie doesn't talk down to its audience, doesn't try to con or to pander. Honesty also means letting contradictions happen, letting scenes '*breathe*,' be *loose enough to let reality impose changes.* (26, emphases mine)

Just as Charles Reich urged individuals to let themselves be subjected to experience rather than dominate it, Madsen praised the new cinema's looseness, which allowed it to become subjected to "reality." And indeed, in the early phase of the New Hollywood, filmmakers and journalists reported on improvised or accidental elements during film shoots, championing a film's spontaneity and truthfulness. In an interview with *Evergreen* after the first press screening of *Easy Rider* in New York City, director Dennis Hopper pointed to Jean Cocteau's dictum that "ninety-

27 See Baumann for a detailed sociological study of this development.

eight percent of all creation is accident, one percent intellect, and one percent logic" to describe his own approach to directing: "I believe that you must keep yourself *free* for things to happen, for the accident – and then learn[ing] how to use the accident" (qtd. in Dawson 13, original emphasis).[28] This notion, similar to Hunter Thompson's evocation of "learning to fly while you're falling" mentioned above, points to a central contradiction at the heart of both the New Hollywood, and, by extension, the politics of expressivity, a contradiction that will reappear in later sections of this book. While filmmakers, producers, and reviewers increasingly put forward the notion of the director as the sole creative agent in the making of a film, they often celebrated films in a rhetoric that suggested a lack of agency: looseness, honesty, letting something happen, refraining from stylizations. New Hollywood discourse, then, had it both ways: tentatively erasing cinema's mediating function on the one hand, and insisting on authorship and mastery of the medium on the other.

A similar logic applied to acting in the era of the New Hollywood: an actor was supposed to let things happen, to listen to his body, to ignore the mediating function of his mind, and at the same time, this was what made him an artist, a conscious agent of the craft of acting. In an even more existentialist manner, director Arthur Penn once told an interviewer that in working with actors it was important "to keep them from feeling that an accident is a mistake," as the "accidents are the human behavior" (Wake and Hayden 193). If there was one actor in the New Hollywood who gave audiences and critics alike the feeling that he was all accident and no playacting, it was Jack Nicholson. Almost no review of *Easy Rider* failed to single out Nicholson's performance as George Hanson. For *Sight & Sound*, Tom Milne remarked that Nicholson's "brilliantly witty performance" stood out "like a sore thumb against the background of naturalistic mumbling" (211). Charles Champlin called the performance "one of the consummate pieces of screen acting," praising the actor for having "engendered an individual who will haunt all of us who have seen the picture" ("Low-Cost" 16). For Roger Ebert, writing for the *Chicago Sun Times,* it was only with the "brilliant character" of George, "played magnificently by Jack Nicholson, [that] the movie starts to work" (Ebert, "Easy Rider"). And in the *New Leader,* John Simon wrote: "[U]pon closer scrutiny and speculation, only one thing in the film holds up completely: Jack Nicholson's dialogue and performance as George Hanson" (116). In Nicholson's performance of Hanson, a new

28 Mike Nichols, director *The Graduate* (1967), said something similar about directing a particular shot in the film: "'My unconscious did that,' Nichols conceded. 'I learned it as it happened'" (qtd. in Pells 308).

style of expressivity seemed to merge with a new appreciation of an expressive cinema.[29]

Tellingly, the scene most often described in appraisals of Nicholson's performance was not his monologue on individual freedom analyzed earlier in this chapter but the moment when Billy and Wyatt, and by extension, the audience, realize that this fellow is worth taking on the ride. After the three have been released from the prison where they have just met, the lawyer pulls a bottle of whiskey from his pocket and announces: "Here's to the first of the day, fellas [...] and to ol' D. H. Lawrence!" Then he drinks a slug, squinches up his face as a reaction to the liquor's impact, and immediately transforms this impulse into a primal scream that turns into an imitation of a starting engine, "nic, nic, nic, nic!", before finally exclaiming: "Indians!"[30] All of this happens against the backdrop of countercultural whiteness's constitutive other: "White House Club" is written on a wall behind George, and a sign saying "Income Tax" is visible in every reaction shot to Wyatt.[31] Idiosyncrasies such as these testified to the existence of a singular authentic core and marked its expressions as unmediated, they were performances of expressivity par excellence.

Nicholson's acting thus seemed to translate a complex inner world into outward emotional expression. It not only increased the cultural value of the film in the judgment of many critics, but it also strengthened the agency of the character of George Hanson. The 'crazy' Nic-Nic-show makes Hanson look unpredictable, authentic, and resistant to standards of social behavior. While Wyatt and Billy, according to one recent analysis, were "drawn in such limited detail that it is impossible to read them as anything but archetypes" (Godfrey 30), George was perceived as a singular and unique person. In the *L.A. Times*, Kevin Thomas wrote:

---

29 This does not mean that this affective style replaced or superseded all others. After all, Peter Fonda emerged as an epitome of countercultural cool in the same film. It is noteworthy, however, that the hippies played by Fonda and Dennis Hopper were already perceived as clichés and stereotypes in many reviews, while Nicholson's George Hanson was singled out as a fundamentally new type of screen character.

30 Allegedly, this was an homage to a worker on the set who started the engines of the motorcycles that were made by the brand Indian.

31 Writing about the scene, Marjory Adams "venture[d] to prophesy," announcing that "Jack Nicholson [...] will become famous with the film-going public for one particular gesture in *Easy Rider*." She observed that it is already "the fashion in Hollywood among the 'in' group to flap their arms like an aroused pelican's wings and utter a wierd [sic] sound of 'ni-ck, ni-ck' when taking the first drink of the day, or of the occasion" (19–20). Today, the YouTube clip of the scene by far exceeds other excerpts of the film in terms of views.

> To watch this fellow appear on the screen is to discover a *truly unique individual*, a man of infinite, raffish, aristocratic charm and an acute sensibility that, stratified by status and environment, has become self-destructive. He is *ripe for liberation* by free spirits Fonda and Hopper. ("'Easy'" C1, emphases mine)

This hints at the importance of the character of George Hanson for the film's historical agency. Contrary to George Savran, who emphasizes the significance of Wyatt and Billy, arguing that the film "[reimagines] the white male subject [...] as an emasculated martyr, a longhaired freak, a simulacrum of Christ who mortifies his flesh, suffers, and dies for the sins of the world" (109), I suggest that Wyatt and Billy were more specimens of Consciousness III. In contrast, George Hanson signified America's lost self, torn between different types of consciousness. As an alcoholic lawyer failing to live up to the expectations of his father, Hanson seems the perfect victim of what Charles Reich described as Consciousness II's tremendous concern with "one another's comparative status" and "what the organization defines as standards of individual success" (*Greening* 76–77). Hanson's position, then, seems much closer to what Sally Robinson has analyzed as the "Middle American," a figure positing as "*the* American individual, [whose] fortunes parallel the fortunes of dominant conceptualizations of American identity" (15, original emphasis). And one of the dominant conceptualizations of American identity within postwar discourse was the concept of identity crisis.

George Hanson, then, embodies Reich's "individual [...] systematically stripped off his creativity, his heritage, his dreams, and his personal uniqueness" (*Greening* 7–8). He is less an ideal of an already liberated self than a target for the countercultural project of self-liberation, standing in for the white majority that Charles Reich invited to follow the example of Black Liberation. More than merely a film character, Hanson can be understood as a historical actor in his own right, an embodiment of countercultural whiteness and its aspiration to signify individual selfhood as such.

If Hanson in the film rambles about the recognizability of the 'free individual' in contrast to those who only speak about freedom – as analyzed at the beginning of this chapter – Nicholson's performance of Hanson seems the perfect example of how such an embodiment of freedom looks. His freedom is mobilized by marking his behavior as following an expressivist logic: an unmediated movement from an authentic inner core to the outside world. In this way, performances of expressivity constitute the affective dimension of countercultural whiteness: they testify to the singular resources of the individual unhinged by social forces, affectively countering a dominant culture that was marked as the site of stasis, control, and blockage.

This new logic shaped the political imaginations of a wide variety of ideological outlooks. In fact, even the New Hollywood film most starkly attached to the left

counterculture in cultural memory had strong supporters on both sides of the political divide, and young conservatives argued fiercely over the value and meaning of *Easy Rider.* For Harvey Hakuri, chair of the conservative Young Americans for Freedom (YAF) division in Stanford, the film dealt with "the quest for freedom from societal restraints, the task of finding one's self and the difficulty of being an individual in an indifferent or hostile atmosphere." On the other end of what Rebecca Klatch has identified as a divide between traditionalist and libertarian conservatives, David Brudnoy called the film "implicitly subversive of important values [...], cleverly luring the [...] uncorrupted to worship at the shrine of Our Lady of Grass" (qtd. in Klatch 152–153). This split between different groups within the young conservative organization illustrates how a subject position of countercultural whiteness, an emergent New Hollywood cinematic style, and the politics of expressivity underlying both, sometimes tended to blur lines between left and right.

1.5 A Common Ground: The New Left, the New Right, and the Libertarian Bridge

Early scholars of the post-1968 American political landscape used the metaphor of backlash to explore the relationship between radical and reactionary forces, arguing that the alliance of conservatives, often categorized under the term New Right, primarily reacted against the political and cultural victories of the counterculture and the New Left.[32] This tradition rests on the historical fact that, as Grace Elizabeth Hale notes, "[c]hronologically, conceptually, and politically, the rise of the New Right (not its origins) followed the rise of the New Left" (*Nation* 134). However, while conservatives have indeed lashed back against the emancipatory movements of the 1960s on many levels, this image, when used as an explanatory frame, tends to construct the cultural formation of the 1960s and 1970s as a tidy garden, created by revolutionary forces and then invaded by reactionary ones.[33] As the discussion among young conservatives about *Easy Rider* suggests, however, this terrain is shakier, shaped by historical agencies much more contingent and ambiguous. On this cluttered ground, the libertarian faction of Young Americans for Freedom

32 For examples of an explicit or implicit framework of backlash, often about questions of race and gender, see Edsall and Edsall; W. C. Berman; Brennan; Carter; Hartman.

33 Andrew Hartman's *A War for the Soul of America* best illustrates the endurance of the backlash framework. In his introduction, Hartman writes that the 1960s "gave birth to a new America," and that the "gulf that separate those who embraced the new America from those who viewed it ominously [...] drew the boundaries of the culture wars" (2).

found itself much closer to the New Left and the counterculture than to traditionalists within the conservative movement, as Rebecca Klatch's oral history suggests.[34]

There are further stakes involved: explaining the rise of the right *via* the successes of the left not only risks reproducing the conservative argument that the left is to blame for the cultural polarization of recent decades, but it also fails to seriously historicize the 1960s, instead grasping them as a sort of big bang for our times. As Joseph Lowndes argues about the history of race, the backlash thesis "masks what was a long-term process whereby various groups in different places and times attempted to link racism, antigovernment populism, and economic conservatism into a discourse and institutional strategy" (4). Similarly, Thomas Sugrue concludes his study on Detroit's urban crisis with the observation that the emergence of a 'silent majority' was "not the unique product of the white rejection of the Great Society" but rather "the culmination of more than two decades of simmering white discontent and extensive antiliberal political organization" (268). To adopt this long-durée-view for the case of *Easy Rider*, a reading of the film focusing on Wyatt and Billy might imagine these characters as producing a new ideal of white masculinity that was, in the violent ending of the film, literally lashed back against. By focusing on George Hanson, however, I suggest that the film reconfigured normative subjectivity as searching and in crisis, actualizing a cultural reservoir much older than the emergence of the New Left and the counterculture.

The polarization thesis also leads to historiographical problems. Apart from historical simplifications, the notion of backlash suggests that the two political agencies in question are coherent entities diametrically opposed to each other in ideology, strategies, and tools – a framing supported by the popular image of a culture war and the notion of polarization that has become a common short cut for analyses of American society in the twenty-first century.[35] As Lawrence

34 Some examples of her interviews with former YAF members must suffice here. Dana Rohrabacher remembered that the "libertarians in YAF really identified with the freedom that was being expressed by the Woodstock generation. [...] Libertarians got very deeply involved in the new culture [...] where the traditionalists I don't think ever went through that at all [laughs]. They were just back there in 1965 right where they started" (148). Louise Lacey explained that songs such as "Wooden Ships" by Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young "reinforced our feeling that we were cast adrift in an alien world and that it was up to us to make new values and create something new in the way of a future" (150). And Philipp Abbott Luce commented at the time that the "unlimited personal 'libertarianism' of the farthest out YAF cliques would create a society virtually identical to that envisioned by the New Left's dreamier anarchists" (222).

35 In a review essay, Bruce Schulman recently identified the polarization thesis as one of two dominant strands of thinking historically about post-1968 American history, alongside what he tentatively names the "neo-consensus" school. He summarizes this last school as the work of scholars

Grossberg remarks, however, society is not constituted by two camps; "it is a complex field of cultural and political positions and formations, where each position is defined by multiple issues, differences and commitments" ("Pessimism" 870). Various cultural histories, each in their own ways and focusing on different elements, have delved into this complex field, often emphasizing the degree to which conservative actors benefited from and used rhetorical and strategic tools from the progressive movements of the 1960s.[36] What these interventions sometimes either consciously or unconsciously amount to, however, is replacing the image of backlash with the notion of appropriation: the right did not react *against* the left, it absorbed the latter's most successful rhetorical and practical strategies. As important as this shift in perspective is for stressing parallels and continuities rather than strict oppositions, the language of appropriation continues to follow a clear historical narrative of cause and effect, drawing on an image of a cultural and political hegemony that shifted from left to right.

This fails to account for a figure like Murray Rothbard, who in 1965 founded a journal he called *Left and Right* and proclaimed in its inaugural issue his "conviction that the present-day categories of 'left' and 'right' have become misleading and obsolete," arguing that a "creative approach to liberty must transcend the confines of contemporary political shibboleths" ("General" 3).[37] While most articles within the journal were written by Rothbard himself and failed to attract public attention beyond limited circles, *Left and Right* was not without influence. Libertarians in the YAF spectrum as well as members of the New Left read it, and SDS activist Carl Oglesby noted that "it's hard to exaggerate how important it was to me"

---

who look for continuities and affinities, examine the underlying premises of political discourse or focus on social policies put forward by both liberal and conservative forces("Post-1968"). In constructing countercultural whiteness and expressivity, I share the neo-consensus aim to "identify forces more fundamental and enduring than the partisan and ideological conflicts that seem to dominate contemporary American politics" ("Post-1968" 480), even if my own approach targets a different dimension of the political than most of the studies Schulman mentions.

36 In his history of the 1970s Boston busing boycotts, Robert Formisano notes: "[I]n a massive irony not lost on many of the participants at the time, the antiestablishment protests of the 1960s shaped and influenced the antibusing movement. [...] By the early 1970s, a protest style that in the context of the Vietnam War and the civil rights movement had been the property primarily of southern blacks and then of middle-class white youth now became appropriated by the white working class, lower-middle-class ethnics, and middle-class respectables" (138). Other studies that emphasize how the factions of the New Right have appropriated discourses and strategies of the New Left and the counterculture include Kent; Hughes; Simon Hall, "Protest Movements in the 1970s: The Long 1960s"; Mattson; Luhr; Schäfer; Stowe; Drake.

37 Rothbard's name made a surprising appearance in current politics when it was known that Argentinean president Javier Milei named one of the four dogs he cloned after his deceased mastiff Conan after Rothbard, alongside other dogs named after Milton Friedman and Robert Lucas Jr.

(qtd. in Klatch 235). In an essay for the *New Republic*, Ronald Hamowy championed Rothbard's initiative and praised his journal, observing how the New Left has "switched its emphasis from statism to an individual-oriented anti-statism" and thus now "stands emotionally as the heir of what is left of 19th-Century liberal thought, classically the intellectual background of the American Right" (14–15). In 1968, sociologist William Domhoff called on protesting students to reach out to the New Right, whose members would "share your view of the power structure and your desire for more individuality and local autonomy" (qtd. in McCann and Szalay 442). And in a letter to the conservative *Intercollegiate Review*, Sam Kaplan asked if "the New Left's 'heavy stress on alienation' is different from the 'Goldwater Manifesto' of the early sixties" (142).[38]

Thus, a libertarian undercurrent flowed underneath an apparently fierce conflict between a progressive youth movement and its enemies. As a later editorial of *Left and Right* announced, libertarianism was founded on "a radical disagreement with, and alienation from, the status quo" (Rothbard, "Why" 5). Within a historical context in which diagnoses of identity crisis, the loss of selfhood and alienation had replaced a more straightforwardly political rhetoric and permeated much of public discourse, libertarianism appeared as an ideology broad enough to attract people supposedly standing on opposing fronts in the beginning culture wars. "By the end of the 1960s," Grace Hale concludes, "libertarianism as a political philosophy sat at the intersection of the emerging New Right, the New Left, and the counterculture," as for all of these movements "[p]olitics [...] could be a tool for easing the alienation of modern life" (*Nation* 152–153).

As these examples suggest, affinities between radicals and conservatives were not merely a matter of appropriation of the former by the latter. In fact, postwar conservatism had employed anti-establishment rhetoric long before the New Left merged with the counterculture. Former libertarian activist (and Donald Trump biographer) Jerome Tuccille credits Ayn Rand and Barry Goldwater with creating the libertarian energy the New Left thrived on, arguing that without the "one-two punch of the Rand-Goldwater assault on the American psyche, the New Left radicalism of the middle 1960s would have taken a different form entirely" (30). In a 1965 book, conservative journalist Stanton Evans wove together the bureaucratic university, the mass media, Hollywood, and the book publishing industry into the catch-all term of the "liberal establishment," a concept that functioned as an ana-

38 Within the same spirit of thought, activists organized events and conferences, such as the "Left-Right Festival of Mind Liberation" in March 1970, in which "[f]ive hundred delegates met to discuss possibilities for right-left cooperation" (Klatch 236). According to Jerome Tuccille, the event featured popular new leftists such as Paul Goodman and Carl Oglesby, "as well as spokesmen for the libertarian Right" (118).

logue to the total system or the technocracy derided by the New Left (M. S. Evans). Naming the system, as radical activist Paul Potter had called for, was thus not an exclusive endeavor of the radical left. Both sides of what is often too easily perceived as opposing poles of a political divide invented terms that rubricated a variety of social forces under the image of a powerful institution beleaguering the self: in the guise of the system, the bureaucracy, the state, or the (liberal) establishment.

This polymorphous politics of libertarianism was not restricted to young activists on American campuses; it also permeated the world of cultural critics and commentators in the media. Wondering if he actually was a "true conservative," the long-term editor of *National Review*, William Buckley Jr., in the introduction to an anthology he edited in 1970, articulated a feeling "that I qualify spiritually and philosophically; but temperamentally I am not of the breed" (xviii). Three years earlier, *Time* had issued a cover story on Buckley and his TV Show *Firing Line* titled "Conservatism Can Be Fun." "At a time when most TV performers play down to their audience," the article's verdict read, "Buckley remains Buckley, and his program is all the more engaging for it" ("William F. Buckley, Jr.: Conservatism Can Be Fun" 56). As political historian Rick Perlstein puts it, every young conservative in the 1960s "tried to talk like him, dress like him, write like him – and, of course, think like him," following his "outlaw demeanor" and his "devil-may-care grace" (*Before* 70). Buckley's success as a commentator and TV show host rested not only on his public image but also on his affective performance. Hale emphasizes how his "tendency to widen his eyes and raise his eyebrows when he believed his guest was offering up the intellectual equivalent of garbage was enough in itself to make his studio audience laugh" (*Nation* 145).

Buckley was not only wooed by the liberal media but also by left intellectuals such as Norman Mailer, who declared that "[t]here is a dialogue possible between the conservative like Mr. Buckley and the radical like myself which could prove vastly more interesting than any confrontation between liberal and conservative, or radical and liberal" (qtd. in Schultz epigraph). Mailer's admiration was not merely intellectual, it also connoted a homosocial desire for rugged masculinity: "You can't stay mad at a guy who's witty, spontaneous and likes good liquor" (qtd. in Hale, *Nation* 146). Mailer's praise of Buckley bespeaks a fascination with affective affinities despite political conflict, an attitude that also marked Mailer's relationship with Norman Podhoretz, who would become one of the key figures of neoconservatism in the 1970s. According to historian Kevin Mattson, Podhoretz had a "deep love" for Mailer, as the latter "was clearly on the Left but whose 1960s *style* would wind up offering potent conservative possibilities" (88 original emphasis). For Mailer, Mattson contends, liberalism suffered from an affective deficit of its own, lacking "feeling and excitement, having become an ideology of the well-fed

and complacent" (89). This led him to formulate his own ideology of "left conservatism" (Zirakzadeh), drawing on the same political ambiguity articulated in his most famous essay, "The White Negro" (1957), where he had noted that the figure of the hipster is "equally a candidate for the most reactionary and most radical of movements" (Mailer, "White").

Both countercultural whiteness and the politics of expressivity, I argue, were phenomena that could be mobilized for a variety of political desires. Having established these two concepts as the guiding frameworks for this book, I conclude this chapter by turning to the affective affinities mentioned in the subtitle. To speak of affective affinities is to attempt to understand the relationship between left-wing radical and right-wing reactionary forces without reproducing the imagery of a backlash of the latter against the former, or that of a simple appropriation of left-wing strategies by right-wing actors. To look for *affinities* means to focus less on the increasingly polarizing topics over which these forces clashed and more on the common cultural ground they shared. The attribute "affective" hints at the nature of this terrain, a terrain shaped more by performance, emotions, and style than by arguments, content, and ideology.

Conservative YAF member Rob Tyler remembered the political energy of the 1960s and 1970s referring to a book by a certain Charles Reich: "The greening of America, that was us" (qtd. in Klatch 155). This conservative appreciation of a countercultural classic was not a later appropriation; it already haunted the back cover of Reich's book. Via a *Time* magazine quote, the cover announced the text as a "colloidal suspension of William Buckley, William Blake and Herbert Marcuse in pure applesauce." The cinema of the New Hollywood would suspend all kinds of colloids into its own political applesauce during this period, and this is the subject of the following chapters.

Chapter 2
Countercultural Fantasies of Untamed Motion

> To some it appears that to be what one is, is to remain static. They see such a purpose or value as synonymous with being fixed or unchanging. Nothing could be further from the truth. To be what one is, is to enter fully into being a process. – Carl Rogers (176)

> Until now cinema could move only in a robotlike step, on preplanned tracks, indicated lines. Now it is beginning to move freely, by itself, according to its own wishes and whims, [...] new times, new content, new language. – Jonas Mekas (55)

> If I'm free it's cause I'm always running. – Jimi Hendrix

The opening sequence of Arthur Penn's *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967) transitions from a world of stills and frames to one of movement, juxtaposing the credit titles with sepia-toned photographs from the Depression era in which the film is set, accompanied by the sounds of a clicking camera shutter. The last set of photos shows lead actors Faye Dunaway and Warren Beatty, alongside two short biographies of the film's main characters, Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow. After this visual merging of two historical periods – the 1930s style of the photos and their late 1960s content – the credits slowly dissolve, revealing an extreme close-up of Bonnie Parker's red lips. As the camera pans toward a mirror, we catch our first glimpse of her face. Finally, a gently disorienting cut leads to a shot of her entire body dropping onto a bed. Only now does the film equip Bonnie with interiority, endowing her movements with meaning: Hitting her fist angrily against the bed frame, Bonnie seems to express an inner state of restlessness and dissatisfaction. When she moves her head towards the camera, for the first time filling the screen without the mediation of a mirror, the image evokes a feeling of restricted access, with Bonnie's distressed face framed by the symbolic prison bars of her bed frame. There is no clear cut separating this iconic close-up from the antecedent and subsequent shots; it is merely a temporary fixation of a continuous flow of images. As Richard Pells remarks in his study *Modernist America:* "These are not images audiences before 1967 would have ordinarily seen in American film" (304).

The whole sequence undertakes a journey from stasis to movement, from a framed past to a present in motion, from sepia to color, from photography to film, and from the body as a fixed unity representing a character to the body as an assemblage of intensities conveying a feeling of infinite forwardness. Bonnie is not only a bored and alienated woman waiting for an adventure but becomes a moving image herself, a restless body waiting to be affected. To stress the newness of these images, however, to describe them in terms of intensity and affect, to emphasize their primacy of movement over position, highlights one of the key

 https://doi.org/10.1515/9783111436661-004

challenges in engaging critically with the New Hollywood. As Derek Nystrom suggested, the discipline of film studies "essentially came into being in the US just as the New Hollywood emerged" ("New Hollywood" 411). Consequently, some of the concepts and terms we use to analyze film sequences, such as the language of intensities and affect, were partly given birth by these very images, and their impact on cultural theory and academic discourse became increasingly palpable after the waning of Marxist and psychoanalytical frameworks in the late 1990s and early 2000s. The opening scene of *Bonnie and Clyde* thus foreshadows Barbara Kennedy's formulation that images "do not exist in static forms in themselves, but are experienced as images-in-movement, in process, in sensation" (118). And the way Bonnie Parker is established as a character anticipates Patricia Pisters' reconfiguration of the subject in her study *The Matrix of Visual Culture: Working with Deleuze in Film Theory:*

> I think the term subject still can be used, albeit in a refigured and reconceptualized way: it is no longer necessarily tied to one identity in opposition to the other and governed by the Eye and the *Gaze of representational thinking* and psychoanalysis. The refigured subject refers to a *mobile self*, an individuated *field of energy*, a *desiring machine* that makes rhizomatic assemblages. Multiple forces, movements and rests, powers and affects constitute it. (224, emphases mine)

In distinguishing their own conceptual premises from earlier models of thinking about film, Kennedy and Pisters, only two examples of scholars using Deleuzoguattarian theories of affect to theorize film around the year 2000, are not merely choosing an element from the crammed toolbox of cultural theory; they propose an idea of the self that was already entailed in the aesthetic practices and reception discourse of the New Hollywood. Part of the movement of this chapter, then, is to make visible how the New Hollywood helped to bring into being a specific way to think about films as intensities and events, in affect, rather than to describe the films themselves with the help of this vocabulary.

In the preceding chapter, I established that the idea of the mobile self that resonates in Pisters' description decades later was intertwined with a racialized and gendered midcentury discourse around identity crisis and an affective deficit. A specific articulation of this affective deficit constitutes the core of this chapter: the idea that the American self and American society at large suffered from a lack of movement and a general sense of social stasis, a dangerous condition induced by internal and external, individual and collective blockages. This notion engendered what I call countercultural fantasies of untamed motion,[39] fantasies that

39 Depending on the context, the term *untamed* will connote meanings such as undirected, non-

fed countercultural whiteness and its politics of expressivity. At the same time, these fantasies lay at the heart of New Hollywood cinema, its aesthetics and the way it was interpreted.

In the first part of this chapter, I will trace the anxiety around stasis in postwar discourse within various cultural fields, identifying a racialized fantasy of untamed motion circling around the figure of the existentialist hipster – a first configuration of countercultural whiteness. In the second part, I will focus on New Hollywood's fantasies of untamed motion across the open road, epitomized by the widely popular motif of the couple on the run. While numerous films from the period featured a couple on the run in one form or another – from buddy couples in *Easy Rider* (1969) or *Thunderbolt and Lightfoot* (1974) to heterosexual couples in *Badlands* (1973) or *The Sugarland Express* (1974) – I will focus my analysis on *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967) and *The Getaway* (1972) to examine the political versatility of hip existentialism and the decoupling of countercultural whiteness from the specific countercultural context of the late 1960s. In the third section, I will turn from open roads to urban space, discussing *The French Connection* (1971) as a fantasy of policing the city through untamed movement. Released at a time marked by widespread alarm about rising crime rates in inner cities, I prefigure my thoughts on the film by looking at the reception of *Across 110th Street* (1972), a film that explicitly tackled urban violence and racial politics, without having become part of the critically constructed New Hollywood. Both *The Getaway* and *The French Connection*, I argue, reconfigure *Bonnie and Clyde*'s version of countercultural whiteness in different ways.

2.1 "Discovering and Inventing as One Goes Along": Movement and Expressivity from Gestalt Therapy to Location Shooting

Back in the opening scene of *Bonnie and Clyde*, Bonnie looks out of her window to spot Clyde trying to steal her mother's car. She dresses and leaves the house to meet him, already haunted by the seductive idea of *just going*, an affective attitude Norman Mailer described in the late 1950s as the moment when "one has finally had one's chance, one has amassed enough energy to meet an exciting opportunity [...] and so one is ready to go, ready to gamble" (*Advertisements* 350). There is no

linear, continuous, perpetual, and never-ending. All these meanings entail the basic idea that movement is an ideal in its own right, not mediated and not defined by a point of departure or arrival but by the process itself.

clear narrative explanation for her attraction to a criminal life on the road, except for the existential thrill and intense excitement viewers were supposed to feel rather than understand.

The countercultural fantasy of untamed motion is not an invention of the postwar period, mobility and movement have always been fundamental to American mythology; travel narratives and the image of the open road merged with the idea of automobility as shorthand for modernity from the beginning of the 20th century on, permeating public discourse and cultural canons. As Leong, Sell and Thomas put it, the myth of the road, by way of its "inherent suggestiveness, and its evocation of horizon and liberty," constitutes an "effective symbolic container for American culture's most cherished and most volatile ideas" (72). But something new was on the move in the postwar period: authors in a wide range of fields propagated the ideal of movement for movement's sake, while cars and highways became central to a historical formation eager to counterbalance conformity and middle-class complacency. In the postwar era, then, being on-the-move was increasingly heralded as an ideal of healthy selfhood. Psychologists, cultural commentators and countercultural activists constantly articulated the opposition between the singular self and those forces threatening its singularity, constructing an opposition between the self-in-motion and social blockages, between the promise of mobility and the disappointment of the stasis induced by the inflexibility of the dominant culture.

In this section, I will discuss these countercultural fantasies of untamed motion that permeated postwar cultural discourse, to contextualize the emergence of the New Hollywood within this formation. After tracing the idea of the self as an open-ended process in self psychology, I will then examine the racial underpinnings of this idea, focusing on Norman Mailer's hip existentialism. Finally, I will describe the move towards location shooting as a necessary precondition for the creation of New Hollywood's own fantasies of untamed motion.

"Human Nature Is a Potentiality": The Self as Unfinished Project

If there was one truth self psychology sought to reveal about man and his nature, it was man's apparent potential to constantly grow. The concept of *growth* was a core tenet of the 1951 volume on *Gestalt Therapy*, defined by its authors Fritz Perls, Ralph Hefferline and Paul Goodman as the process in which the "patient experiences and develops his 'self'" (xi). In contrast to any perfect state of selfhood subjects could attain once and for all, growth was neither directed at a final state nor divisible into separate parts. An important resource for this endeavor was spontaneity, a quality the authors of *Gestalt Therapy* described as neither "directive nor self-directive" but as a form of "discovering-and-inventing as one goes along" (376), a

formula that translates the countercultural fantasy of untamed motion from an external into an internal quality.

Carl Rogers, one of the founders of humanistic psychology, most starkly articulated this new idea of the self as an interminable process. In *On Becoming a Person* (1961), he declared: "[A] person is a fluid process, not a fixed and static entity; a flowing river of change, not a block of solid material; a continually changing constellation of potentialities, not a fixed quantity of traits" (122). In proposing the need for subjects to remain in constant motion, Rogers formulated the paradox that was at the heart of the ideal of the mobile self: its most crucial property could not be described other than as continuous change. Taking pains to grasp this interminability with a concept, Rogers mobilized the term "changingness," arguing that individuals "move [...] not from a fixity or homeostasis through change to a new fixity" but "from fixity to changingness, from rigid structure to flow, from stasis to process" (131).

It was Abraham Maslow, arguably the most prominent representative of humanist psychology, who created the more lasting term *self-actualization*, even if he admitted that it was another "difficult syndrome to describe accurately" ("Self-Actualizing" 178). Anticipating George Hanson's differentiation between individual freedom as an abstraction and actual free individuals in *Easy Rider*, Maslow suggested that self-actualizing individuals "live more in the 'real' world of nature than in the man-made set of concepts, expectations, beliefs, and stereotypes" ("Self-Actualizing" 182). Furthermore, he naturalized self-actualization as a "fundamental characteristic, inherent in human nature, a potentiality, given to all or most human beings at birth, which most often is lost or buried or inhibited as the person gets enculturated" (*Toward* 130). Thus, self-actualization emphasized yet again the structural opposition between the self and cultural influences that undergirds the positionality of countercultural whiteness: it was "culture" itself that was responsible for distorting a core self whose unmediated expressions, in turn, were marked as positive, truthful and healthy.

Finally, the language of human *potential* constituted an important bridge from self psychology to countercultural radical therapy, breeding the Human Potential Movement that was formed in the early 1960s. In 1967, William Schutz, a close collaborator of both Rogers and Maslow, began his book *Joy: Expanding Human Awareness* by diagnosing a constitutive lack at the heart of human subjectivity: "If there is one statement true of every living person it must be this: He hasn't achieved his full potential" (15). This link between psychotherapy and the counterculture materialized in the cultural practices of the Esalen Institute, founded in 1962 in Big Sur, California. The Institute's first brochure boldly announced that a "new conception of human nature is emerging in the field of psychology," and that this new conception, according to some "scientists and philosophers," would "bring the

greatest change in the vision of western man since Copernicus and the Renaissance" (printed in Kripal 100).

Self psychology's understanding of healthy personhood as the gradual realization of a human potential rather than the adjustment to a behavioral ideal traveled smoothly between different cultural and social fields and influenced political discourse. In the "Port Huron Statement" (1962), Student for a Democratic Society's (SDS) founding manifesto and the first rallying cry of what was to become known as the New Left, the authors proclaimed that they did not want to "deify man," they merely had "faith in his potential" (SDS). New Left spokesman Gregory Calvert declared the "contradictions between human potentiality and oppressive actuality" to be the founding insight of any revolutionary struggle in a 1967 speech. (126). And Abbie Hoffman would describe countercultural politics a year later as "an experience so intense that you actualize your full potential" (62).

To some extent, Rogers' changingness, Maslow's self-actualization and the rhetoric of potential responded to the necessity of defining freedom in an "age of totalitarianism," when clearly identifiable moral values and social conventions seemed to amplify an already vast affective deficit. Both dimensions resonate in Timothy Leary's definition of counterculture as the historical moment when "a few members of a society choose lifestyles, artistic expressions, and ways of thinking and being that wholeheartedly embrace the ancient axiom that the only true constant is change itself" ("Foreword" ix). These fantasies of untamed motion were charged with gendered and racialized assumptions about the social body and about who was to be liberated as a 'self' in the first place – about who took part in the "greatest change in the vision of Western man." As Bernard Wolfe wrote in 1946, "[t]he social fringe can become a bohemia only for those who gravitate there out of choice, surfeited with the sober life behind, never for those who are exiled there from birth because of alleged incapacities" (70).

"In the Cells of His Existence": Countercultural Whiteness as Existential Hip

The distinction between a secure but ultimately bland existence and the intensity and excitement of life was a prominent feature of the American reception of existentialist philosophy.[40] Norman Mailer was arguably the most prominent American

40 American intellectuals encountered the philosophy of existentialism primarily through the reception of translated works by French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus, supported by English-language introductions such as William Barrett's *Irrational Man* (1958). It was Camus' work, however, that influenced most strongly the political movements of the 1960s. Camus theorized individual rebellion "as ground zero of existential being, as the seminal act of identity itself"

public figure influenced by existentialism and propagating an American version of it. As historian George Cotkin argues, existentialism provided Mailer with a "new vocabulary in which to express his well-established notions about life as marked by a Manichean struggle between the forces of good and evil" (186). In his 1957 essay "The White Negro," Mailer put this new vocabulary to test. While the text begins with an acknowledgment of the social hierarchies at work in the American fabric, Mailer was less interested in exploring the racial politics of discourses on security and affluence than in essentializing them, turning social exclusion into a psychological advantage, an affective advance allegedly enjoyed by Black people.

Mailer attempted to transpose this affective advance of blackness onto a new subject ideal, the white hipster, a figure who had "absorbed the existential synapses of the Negro" ("White" 279) and was now emerging on the American cultural scene. It was his distinctly American version of existentialism that allowed Mailer to compare the specific situation of African Americans in the U.S. to the situation of mankind after two world wars – with an important distinction that further engrained the valorization of the body and the primacy of affect over rational reflection.[41] While for the 'white Negro', the existential outlook of life was a matter of conscious absorption, for the 'Negro' it was a matter of carnal knowledge:

> Knowing in the *cells of his existence* that life was war, nothing but war, the Negro [...] could rarely afford the sophisticated *inhibitions of civilization*, and so he kept for his survival the art of the primitive, he lived in the enormous *present*, he subsisted for his Saturday night kicks, relinquishing the pleasures of the mind for the more obligatory pleasures of the *body*, and in his music he gave voice to the character and quality of his existence, to his rage and the infinite variations of joy, lust, languor, growl, cramp, pinch, scream and despair of his orgasm. ("White" 279, emphases mine)

In "The White Negro," then, Mailer's own fantasy of untamed motion, summarized in his claim that "[m]ovement is always to be preferred to inaction," ("White" 286) merges with what Eric Lott has termed the "prime components of white ideologies of black manhood" (*Love* 54). Aside from reproducing the age-old stereotype of black male sexuality in his identification of blackness with "orgasm," the fetishization of movement in the 'Negro' discards movements of Black subjects while using

(Dinerstein 130). For a detailed account of the influence of Christian existentialism on the New Left in Texas see Rossinow, *Politics* 53–84.

41 Joel Dinerstein argues that a similar dynamic was at play in French existentialism's birth hour during the Nazi occupation of Paris: "[F]or the first time, white, Western intellectuals were treated as non-white peoples had always been treated by oppressors. French men were rounded up at will, silenced and sent off to convict labor, shot without trial, and forced to listen to the master-race claims of their oppressors in radio speeches" (207).

an abstraction of the Black subject as a cultural resource. Mailer explicitly speaks of a "wedding of the white and the black" that was happening in countercultural places such as Greenwich Village, a wedding in which "it was the Negro who brought the cultural dowry" ("White" 279).

Hence, Norman Mailer's fantasy of untamed motion fixated on Black subjectivity as naturally on the move, as a reservoir of vital energies and the source of an instinctively existentialist perspective on the world that whites, and for Mailer this meant white men,[42] were able and in need to adopt. In Mailer's outlook, Existentialism was a primitive instinct for black men,[43] while for white men "[t]o be a real existentialist" meant to have a "sense of the 'purpose' – whatever the purpose may be" and to live "a life committed to the notion that the substratum of existence is the search" ("White" 279). Using terms such as "war" and "pleasure" when writing about 'the Negro,' and notions such as "purpose" and "search" when writing about the white hipster, Mailer turned a survival strategy into an essential trait and a forced adjustment to social reality into a fixed image of unadjustability, freezing Black subjectivity to literally mobilize white masculinity.

The racial fantasy of Mailer's white hipster survived in the term 'hip.' As a verbal code by which hip subjects would recognize each other, and as a new style of writing epitomized by the Beat Generation, the philosophy of hip shaped countercultural practices as well as artistic and aesthetic movements, including the New Journalism of the late 1960s. Comparing the notion of 'cool' with the emergent language of hip, Cultural historian Joel Dinerstein emphasizes that 'cool' was mainly "an emotional mode projecting authenticity and integrity in a quest for spiritual balance," (231) whereas hip was "a matrix of emotional energy: it was a quest

42 Philosopher Hazel E. Barnes, who helped to introduce existentialist philosophy to an American audience in the 1950s and 1960s, discussed the gendered aspects of Mailer's existentialist discourse in her *Existentialist Ethics* (1967). Barnes identified within the discourse of Mailer and the Beats "something comparable to the magic process by which the Age of Chivalry elevated woman as symbol while imprisoning her more tightly than ever in her role as the representative of the species" (167). Barnes also carved out the racial logic within this discourse: "Their sympathies are with minority groups but always with the unsuccessful members of those groups. Why work to improve the conditions of the migrant workers or to provide better housing and jobs for unemployed Negroes if this would result in making them indistinguishable from the despised Middle Class?" (156)

43 The idea of an existentialist dimension inherent in the African American experience was not an invention of white intellectuals. Rather, for African American novelists such as Richard Wright and Ralph Ellison, existentialist philosophy was an important influence. Both Ellison and Wright advocated existentialism in America, and both argued for its rootedness in Black traditions such as blues music. As Cotkin argues, existentialism as a philosophy "offered a current vocabulary that allowed Wright especially, but also Ellison, to connect their fiction of the black experience to a wider philosophical movement" (183). For an argument on the political implications of Wright's existentialism see Gilroy, *Black Atlantic* 156–186.

for primal feeling and vitality as and against the seeming ill-logic of middle-class bourgeois complacency on the ground and the nuclear threat overhead" (230). In other words, hip signaled expressivity rather than restraint and balance.

As Mailer pointed out, in the "special language" of Hip, there "is really no way to describe someone who does not move at all" ("White" 285). In turn, the hipster's antagonist, the 'square,' combined rigidity, stasis and uptightness, carrying an affective deficit on his sleeve. In his essay collection *Advertisements for Myself*, Mailer published a list that distinguished qualities perceived as 'hip' from its 'square' equivalents. Not only allegedly neutral qualities such as "spontaneous" (as opposed to "orderly"), "perverse" (as opposed to "pious"), or "instinct" and "the body" (as opposed to "logic" and "the mind") figured in this list. Also on the hip side were "Negro" and "self", with "white" and "society" as their square equivalents (*Advertisements* 424). Even more than Mailer's infamous piece on existential hip, it is this conjuring of racial terms within the opposition between self and society that explicates the logic implicit in postwar renderings of human selfhood: the square was white by design, in need of a transformation, as the "quest for the self" was not open to those who already stood firmly on the hip side, which was semantically connected to blackness. If to become hip was a way to become a singular and constantly changing self in resistance against the immobilizing forces of a dominant culture marked by an affective deficit, then this fantasy of untamed motion was a white fantasy; it entailed becoming race-less in the process of becoming countercultural. To shed social feathers meant to shed whiteness.

More than a textbook example of racial appropriation, then, Norman Mailer's essays on existential hip exemplify a crucial intersection between whiteness and affect, pointing to the racial imaginary mobilized in attempts to reduce the affective deficit identified in American society. As Lauren Michele Jackson puts it, "[c]ultural theft is only the symptom, the readily identifiable mark of whiteness in crisis" (77). The subtext of existentialism as appropriated by American intellectuals such as Norman Mailer was whiteness-in-crisis, particularly white masculinity endangered as bland, static and conformist. Existential hip, then, forms one of the shapes in which countercultural whiteness entered the cultural scene of the 1960s, while feeding on a fantasy of vibrant, untamed movement.

Cinemobile: Location Shooting and Open Endings in the New Hollywood

On a different front, the film industry itself was forced to reintroduce movement into the filmmaking process. The big studios, threatened by financial collapse and in need of reorganizing production and reducing costs, not only relocated production to other countries, a common practice since at least the 1930s, but also increasingly relied on location shoots within the U.S. (Webb 32–35) In 1972, the *Wall Street*

Journal reported that "today 95 % of all films made by U.S. producers are shot principally on locations far from the sound stages of Hollywood, compared with only 49 % as recently as 1968." In the same article, Don Haggerty, president of the AFL-CIO Film Council, enumerated the cost advantages engendered by the new competition between cities and municipalities: "avoidance of studio overhead, avoidance of state corporate taxes on production, free or cheap city and state licensing, the ability to dodge payment on fringe benefits, cheaper extras, and loose or non-existent union regulations that allow production savings" (Gottschalk, Jr. 1). Starting in the late 1960s, then, location shooting shifted, as Lawrence Webb puts it, "from being a component of an essentially studio-based production process to become the dominant production technique in Hollywood filmmaking" (35).

Technological progress supported this development as well. In the second half of the 1960s, new lightweight cameras and lamps entered the market, film technicians invented new practices of dealing with lighting and sound problems on location, and in 1966 cinematographer Fouad Said conceived the first Cinemobile, a film studio on wheels.[44] In particular, the increased use of hand-held cameras influenced the early New Hollywood and its aesthetic sensibilities, as filmmakers not only turned to hand-held cameras to "overcome any number of spatial or topographic constraints" but also "for its suggestion of greater realism" (Ramaeker 155–156). Francis Ford Coppola proudly described shooting his first feature *The Rain People* (1969) as a journey in and of itself: "When I spied a setting that appealed to me along the way, we would stop, and I would work out a scene for the actors to play" (qtd. in Webb 41). The aesthetic vision of the New Hollywood, privileging mobility and the authenticity of 'real' places over the 'artificial' studio shooting associated with classic Hollywood, was in line with the film industry's new business structure and its turn to flexibility and cheap labor, with each mutually reinforcing the other: "Cheapness, if cast as realism, could be considered a selling point, while from an economic perspective, realism could be justified for its cheapness" (Ramaeker 147).

New Hollywood's fantasy of untamed motion was not restricted to the subject matter of the films, then, as the deterritorialization of the film set allowed filmmakers to discover and invent as they went along. In 1969, *Easy Rider*'s "production notes," directed at press agents and distributors, included a note on location shooting: "Early in the proceedings it was decided that there would be no studio shooting, all filming would take place in actual locales. The feeling being that to shoot a picture of this type in the confines of Hollywood sound stages would be to completely stifle the creativity of the personalities involved" ("Easy Rider production

44 See Casper 63–82 for a summary of technological innovations.

notes"). In a similar vein, Robert Towne, credited as a special consultant in the film's production, praised the heightened authenticity of location shooting in *Bonnie and Clyde:* "Without things like crab grass, telephone poles, pimples, poorly patched asphalt in the streets – you've got a back lot and you've already begun to lose your battle with all the artificial elements you fight against in trying to make what appears on film look real, or credible" (qtd. in Wake and Hayden 174).

The combination of economic pressures, technological progress, generational change and film discourse that was at the heart of New Hollywood's fantasies of untamed motion illustrates how something like a "New Hollywood aesthetics" not only rests in the creative vision of a new generation of rebellious filmmakers eager to overcome a stifled cinematic regime. Rather, New Hollywood aesthetics are composed by a vast network of agencies: public discourses, technological innovations, economic necessities – material and immaterial forces, carried by human and nonhuman actors. Countercultural fantasies of untamed motion, rooted in an urge to close the affective deficit that seemed to be at the heart of an American identity crisis, were an integral component of the New Hollywood machine, as much part of its historical context than the collapse of the studio system, the experience of the Vietnam War or the beginning of the culture wars. In constructing its own fantasies of untamed motion, the New Hollywood translated these fantasies into a visual language, engendering an aesthetics that foregrounded cinematic motion as such – by literally turning away from static studio sets, by creating narratives in which movement for its own sake was a crucial ingredient, and by employing open endings that seemed an apt aesthetic translation of the open-endedness that was now constitutive of personhood as such.

In fact, it would be hard to find a more constant and continuous theme within the canonized New Hollywood as endings that see characters head for the unknown or into their death. At the end of *The Graduate* (1967), Benjamin Braddock and Elaine Robinson set out onto the open road and into the future. In the same year, the story of Bonnie and Clyde ends in a spectacular ballet of death that is still hailed as the prime illustration of New Hollywood's "shock of the new," as Owen Gleiberman described the legacy of the film in 2017. (Gleiberman) Over the next years, the dying Rizzo and Joe Buck sit in a bus towards Florida at the end of *Midnight Cowboy* (1969), Wyatt and Billy are shot on the open road in *Easy Rider* (1969), Bobby Dupea leaves his girlfriend at a gas station to hitch a ride towards Alaska in *Five Easy Pieces* (1970), Maude's car falls from a cliff in *Harold and Maude* (1971), and David Sumner drives his car away from a scene of unspeakable violence at the end of *Straw Dogs* (1971), mumbling to his co-driver that he has no clue where he is going. Just as personhood was reimagined as a never-ending process, New Hollywood films refused closure and avoided safe arrivals of any kind.

They ended openly or fatally, with only movement itself surviving even a last fade to black.

One important motif aligned to cinematic fantasies of untamed motion was the couple on the run, a particularly popular phenomenon in films between 1967 and 1974. Not only the two films that share the merit for the New Hollywood's birth, but several other acclaimed examples of the Hollywood Renaissance feature a couple on the run, in either homosocial or heterosexual form. In this chapter, I discuss *Bonnie and Clyde* and *The Getaway,* two films identified with the countercultural beginning of the New Hollywood and its backlash phase, respectively, but whose affinities matter as much as their differences.

2.2 Fantasies of Untamed Motion on the Open Road

At first look, *Bonnie and Clyde* and *The Getaway* constitute a curious double feature. While *Bonnie and Clyde* has an almost mythical status as the big bang of the New Hollywood – a bang that also incited younger film critics to value affect in a film's reception and rethink the relation between images and violence while estranging older reviewers – *The Getaway,* coming five years later, was already part of a film discourse entangled with the idea of the maverick 'auteur' director following a singular creative vision – with violence on the screen being much more prevalent than in the late 1960s.

If examined more closely, though, the films reveal astonishing parallels. Both films set out on similar journeys, starting with stark images of confinement that incite a desire for freedom. Both feature a heterosexual couple that negotiate their relationship with each other while fleeing from dangerous antagonists. Both films mobilize images of common folk to legitimize the acts of the protagonists. Films end with a shooting showdown, filmed almost in the same way. On the other hand, there are important differences: While the flight from a boring middle-class life towards a life as bank robbers is part of *Bonnie and Clyde*'s affective allure, in *The Getaway* the couple is running because the way to a more static domestic life is barred.

In the following, I will discuss these two films within the framework of my own concerns. Both films, I will argue, invest in an existentialist outlook, but in different versions of it, hence they illustrate an important transformation of countercultural whiteness. If the counterculture, in *Bonnie and Clyde,* is still a force in its own right, charged with the affective intensity of the 1960s, its image has become so engrained into the cultural landscape by 1972 that within the cultural imagination of *The Getaway* it stands on the side of dominant culture, a culture to be countered. By analyzing these two films back-to-back, then, I seek to unravel

a reconfiguration of countercultural whiteness and illustrate the polyvalent character of a politics of expressivity.

2.2.1 Hip, not White: *Bonnie and Clyde* and Countercultural Agency

Bosley Crowther may have been the last victim of the Barrow gang, and one of the last film critics completely immune to the countercultural fantasies that haunted postwar culture and film discourse in the late 1960s. After seeing *Bonnie and Clyde* at the Film Festival of Montreal, the senior critic of the *New York Times* published a crushing review, blaming a "raw and unmitigated campaign of sheer press agentry" for the undeserved praise given to a film that to him was nothing more than a "cheap piece of bald-faced slapstick comedy that treats the hideous depredations of that sleezy, moronic pair as though they were as full of fun and frolic as the jazz-age cut-ups in *Thoroughly Modern Millie*" ("Arrives" 36).

Crowther's reference to a 1967 musical is telling. For those praising the film, *Bonnie and Clyde* was a highly anticipated antidote against the bland output of a stultified studio system, of which recent high-budgeted musical films – the top-grossing but critically scorned *The Sound of Music* (1966) as well as the financially disastrous *Dr. Dolittle* (1967) – were only the most obvious examples. Writing about the upcoming 1968 Academy Awards ceremony, C. Robert Jennings called *Dr. Dolittle* a "throwback to Hollywood's Pleistocene Age of smarmy self-aggrandizement, rank chauvinism and bald politicking." But Jennings also foresaw change, sensing a "polarity of some moment" between "the stylish against the gross, the young against the old, the turned-off and the turned-on" (9). The upcoming Oscar ceremony, he assumed, would stage a battle between the "talkative, rooted, grand old dragons" and the "nervous, rootless, hip young dragonflies" (14). To many, Warren Beatty, Faye Dunaway, and director Arthur Penn were the most promising among the latter group. As Beatty told Roger Ebert during the time *Bonnie and Clyde* came out, he had often been dismissed as an "irresponsible kid" by the studio establishment: "Hollywood is afraid of young blood. It's a ghost town" (Ebert, "Interview" 17). Now, finally, the young blood of the dragonflies ran through this town.

The Crowther Crusade and Affective Receptions

Jennings' contrast between rootless hipness and rooted squareness permeated debates within film journalism. If Bosley Crowther had grounded his critique of *Bonnie and Clyde* in a rhetoric of morality and factual truth, describing the "blend of farce with brutal killings [...] as pointless as it is lacking in taste, since it makes no valid commentary upon the already travestied truth," ("Arrives" 38) critics such as

Hollis Alpert found such a "call for 'moral values' in film" nothing less than "old-fashioned." As Alpert remarked sarcastically, "Only fuddy-duddies like Tolstoy and other literary giants of the past would dare this kind of assertion" ("Case" 111). Some colleagues also attacked Crowther personally. In the *Village Voice,* influential writer and film theorist Andrew Sarris reported on a "Crowther Crusade that makes the 100-Years-War look like a border incident,"[45] (Sarris, "Bonnie") and Penelope Gilliat of the *New Yorker* argued that *Bonnie and Clyde* "could look like a celebration of gangster glamour only to a man with a head full of wood shavings" ("Party" 77). These fierce reactions made Crowther look like the last defendant of an order already bound for defeat. The days of dragons and literary giants seemed over, and several months later, Crowther was replaced as chief film critic of the *New York Times,* a decision apparently informed by the reactions to his relentless attacks on *Bonnie and Clyde* (Leggett 3–4; Harris 371).

Crowther was not alone in his criticism of *Bonnie and Clyde*, however, as reviewers grappled with the film's meaning and style. Even when praising its technical execution and visual sophistication, as many of those commenting on the film did, some critiqued either what they perceived as a romanticized image of crime and violence or a lack of clarity in the evaluation of its characters. Alpert complained that the screenwriters "aren't able to make clear their own attitude toward the two criminals" and seemed unsure "whether Bonnie and Clyde are stark figures of tragedy, or merely two wayward kids, caught in a whirlwind they can't control" ("Crime Wave" 40). And John Toland, in a piece on the real story of Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow for the *New York Times Magazine*, echoed Crowther's moralism when he remarked that "our sympathy now seem[s] focused not on the victim but on those who wield gun, knife and garrote[…] The victim has become faceless – the forgotten man" (86). Audiences held similar reservations. "*Bonnie and Clyde* is a victory," one *Time* reader wrote, but only "if the battle was to rape senses, offend dignity, and threaten the thin threads of humanity some of us are still tenaciously holding on to in spite of the Mr. Beattys of this age" ("Letters" 11). For these critics and audience members, *Bonnie and Clyde* either championed the wrong values, showed a dangerous uncertainty in relation to values, or didn't have any value at all.

On the other side of the *Bonnie and Clyde* divide, the film's defenders argued that it was precisely this moral uncertainty that made the film into a piece worthy of critical attention. Pauline Kael, the most prominent voice in favor of the film

45 This blunt exaggeration was justified in so far as Crowther indeed blasted the film in seven separate reviews between August and December (Leggett 3).

and retrospectively credited with its commercial success,[46] suggested that the film's ambiguity towards its characters as well as the heretofore unseen violence were its greatest virtues. The film, Kael argued, kept its audience "in a kind of eager, nervous imbalance," so the people were "laughing, demonstrating that they're not stooges [...] when they catch the first bullet right in the face" (Kael, "Bonnie and Clyde"). The idea that an audience's uncertainty during the screening was less a problem of the film than a testament to its aesthetic value was also at the heart of a fascinating reversal of opinion. After *Newsweek* critic Joseph Morgenstern had first scorned *Bonnie and Clyde*, he went to a packed theater several days later for a second viewing, an experience that forced him to follow up his review with an important correction. After initially having remarked that the film "does not know what to make of its own violence," ("Two" 65) Morgenstern now apologized and argued that it "knows perfectly well what to make of its violence, and makes a cogent statement with it." Replacing his sober judgment with affective evidence, Morgenstern conceded that *Bonnie and Clyde* had "the power to both enthrall and appall," its audience was "enjoying itself almost to the point of rapture" ("Thin" 83).

Kael's and Morgenstern's appreciations foreshadow academic discussions in the 1990s and 2000s indebted to the long legacy of what I call the politics of expressivity. "Our experience as we watch it," Kael wrote about *Bonnie and Clyde*, "has some connection with the way we reacted to movies in childhood: with how we came to love them and to feel they were ours – not an art that we learned over the years to appreciate but simply and immediately ours" ("Bonnie and Clyde"). To complement, or even replace, the reading of a film with an account of her personal, 'innocent,' experience of watching it, was part of Kael's project; it anticipated a gesture enacted by affect theorists within film studies decades later. "We respond viscerally to visual forms," Steven Shaviro wrote in 1993, "before having the leisure to read or interpret them as symbols" (26). This gesture is at the heart of the statement I hinted at in beginning this book: "Audiences at 'Bonnie and Clyde'," Kael argued, "are not given a simple, secure basis for identification; they are made to feel but are not told how to feel" ("Bonnie and Clyde").

At stake in the reception of *Bonnie and Clyde*, then, were not only moral issues about crime and violence. What some of the film's supporters argued implicitly or explicitly was that cinema itself moves an audience not by articulating clear state-

46 Robert Towne famously said that "[w]ithout her, *Bonnie and Clyde* would have died the death of a fuckin' dog" (qtd. in Biskind 41). He refers to the initial financial failure of the film, which only became a success after a new marketing campaign had made use of appraisals such as Kael's. However, New Hollywood historian Mark Harris questions that it was only or even most importantly her raving review that turned things around (347).

ments or by transparently eliciting identifiable emotions, but rather by creating an elusive affective environment and inciting feelings that remained excitingly undetermined. The praise for *Bonnie and Clyde* as a cultural artifact that aroused rather than preached suggests that film criticism itself started to follow an affective logic in the late 1960s, moving away from evaluations based on the ascribed meaning of a film's content or the performances and technical craftsmanship of those involved toward an appreciation of cinema as an affective experience. Not language but affect, not mere existence but life itself, not understanding the content but experiencing the event; rather than for its truth effects, the advocates of *Bonnie and Clyde* praised the film for its emotional truth.

Hence, many of its contemporaries experienced *Bonnie and Clyde* as the shock of the new, but this shock had an impact precisely because it did not disrupt current discourses and ideas but expressed them. The reception of the film was firmly in line with postwar discourses about selfhood, the emotions and art as personal expression. Just as self psychologists had bid a slow farewell to neatly defined goals for the attainment of a healthy self in the 1950s and 1960s, film critics celebrated *Bonnie and Clyde* for not telling an audience how to feel, while still making them feel something. The cultural authority of feeling and the desire to be affected rather than convinced was already part and parcel of the postwar cultural formation. In the countercultural publication *LA Free Press*, Bill Kerby echoed the universalist aspirations of self psychology: "Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow will soothe you, scare the shit out of you, make you laugh and cry simultaneously, and share with you the humanity that is in ALL humans" (Kerby).

On the other hand, the film's approach to violence and the debate around its explicitness evoked the existentialist language that had already influenced public discourse over the preceding two decades. When at the Montreal Film Festival's press conference, *Bonnie and Clyde* director Arthur Penn was asked about his artistic inclination toward violence despite his own pacifism, he emphasized that he didn't think about the term violence only pejoratively but as a general "character of the modern world." Violence, in Penn's outlook, was an affective state more than a state of affairs, born out of an existential experience. "It's violent to get in an airplane and be in Montreal in an hour – it's a violent experience, it's an assault on the senses. It's an assault on the senses to get in an automobile and drive: it's an assault on the senses to do so many of the things that we do" (qtd. in Wake and Hayden 10). In broadening the meaning of the term violence from a particular social phenomenon to a whole structure of feeling, Penn contributed to an emergent understanding of cinema as an affective experience – and of violence as a privileged means to put forward this perspective. In an interview with *Cinema* magazine, he simply stated, "I like violence in the movies. I think that movies are kinetic" (qtd. in Wake and Hayden 187). Pauline Kael concurred. "'Bonnie and Clyde'

needs violence," she had written in her review, "violence is its meaning" ("Bonnie and Clyde").

Apart from championing its visceral impact and immediacy, Kael found *Bonnie and Clyde* to be a cinematic expression of a wider cultural current, bringing "into the almost frighteningly public world of movies things that people have been feeling and saying and writing about" ("Bonnie and Clyde"). The emergence of a style and milieu later to be dubbed the 'new journalism' was an important mediator for this translation from public discourse (and affect) to the screen. In the early 1960s, journalists David Newman and Robert Benton, who would write the screenplay for *Bonnie and Clyde,* worked for *Esquire,* one of the early sites for experimenting with forms of writing later identified with the new journalism (Weingarten 47–66). In 1964, detecting a new cultural trend in American culture, they published a piece titled "The New Sentimentality", a text conducted in the same spirit as other manifestos and slogans that aspired to pinpoint what was sensed as a significant cultural shift.

Just as Charles Reich contrasted dominant Consciousness II to emergent Consciousness III some years later, Newman and Benton explained that the "Old Sentimentality [...] had 'values' that everyone could see, bywords that meant the same to all: Patriotism, Love, Religion, Mom, The Girl," while the values of the "New Sentimentality" were less visible, "not out there emblazoned on banners" (25). And in line with the idea of movement as a value in its own right, they wrote that in the New Sentimentality, "all the romance is in the traveling itself. The airport is as exciting as the destination. The idea of flying across the world is better than landing any place. [...] The *idea* of going is what we like best" (28, original emphasis). The screenwriters' own fantasy of untamed motion merged with the real-life case of the infamous couple on the run and Arthur Penn's outlook of cinema as a primarily kinetic experience, constructing a film widely celebrated, at the time as well as in retrospect, as the first genuine film of the 1960s counterculture and the beginning of a Hollywood Renaissance. Thus, the cultural authority of affective elusiveness and ambiguity, widely appreciated by *Bonnie and Clyde*'s supporters as the film's most original quality, was rooted firmly in the diagnosis of an affective deficit within American society at large. For many film critics, increasingly fluent in the new language of human potential and trained to recognize the value of expressivity, *Bonnie and Clyde* was a remedy to reduce this deficit.

The Bank Robbers and the Common Folk: The Political Imagination of Bonnie and Clyde

While the affective allure of *Bonnie and Clyde,* its fast and rough editing, its mobile cinematography and its unusual musical score, made the film a 1960s classic, its

setting during the Great Depression allowed *Bonnie and Clyde* to tap into a New Left political discourse and frame the showdown between counterculture and establishment as a fight for cultural leadership over the people. For that matter, *Bonnie and Clyde* constructs an image of the 'common folk' – from the authentic 1930s photographs in the opening sequence to the realist depiction of farmers throughout the film. Both these visual strategies merge in a late scene, in which the three remaining members of the Barrow gang seek refuge at a camp set up by homeless farmers somewhere in the dust bowl. After the wrecked vehicle of the gang rolls into the scene of tents and overloaded cars, the inhabitants of the improvised town approach the criminals, whispering in awe: "That's Clyde Barrow and Bonnie Parker..." In narrative terms, this scene highlights the couple on the run's already legendary status at that point of their criminal career; but it also confronts two different forms of immobility with each other. While Clyde and Bonnie have been wounded in a violent shootout with the police, the desperate situation of the townspeople approaching them speaks not of affective intensity but of structural violence and social stasis.

As director Arthur Penn stated in an interview, the scene was "nearly stylized in its immobility," in order to highlight that "[s]ocially, the people were paralyzed by the Depression," while the film's heroes were, at least for the most part of the film, "mobile and functioning" (qtd. in Wake and Hayden 168). In the introduction to *The Greening of America,* Charles Reich noted that the "American crisis [...] seems clearly to be related to an inability to act," asking what was "the cause of this paralysis?" (*Greening* 9) Decades after the Great Depression, then, the specter of immobility and a paralysis of a different kind haunted American society, and Bonnie and Clyde, "mobile and functioning," did important cultural work beyond their status as role models for a new generation: they embodied a new countercultural subjectivity, continuously on the move, fighting the 1930s economic stasis of a paralyzed nation on one front, while helping to overcome the 1960s identity crisis and its affective deficit on another. Thus, their position of countercultural whiteness is constructed not only in relation to images of the establishment and the state but also in relation to images of the common folk, an image encompassing those excluded from the establishment not by consciously challenging this establishment's values but by being subjected to its economic regime.

In an early scene, the film explicitly addresses the common folk's victimization by this economic regime. As Bonnie and Clyde practice gun shooting in the yard of an apparently evacuated farm, the former owner appears to confront them. When the young gangsters learn of his fate, Clyde offers the man his gun to shoot at the evacuated building and the confiscation sign put up by the bank. The farmer fires a shot, before inviting his Black helper to join in the shooting, a moment that, as David Laderman notes, "emphasizes not the glaring traces of slavery still active

in the South, but the inclusion of the black minority/victim by the working-class white minority/victim into the ritual of rebellion, which Clyde oversees" (61). After handing the gun back to Clyde, the farmer introduces himself and the helper: "My name is Otis Harris. This is Davis. We worked this place." "This here is Miss Bonnie Parker, I'm Clyde Barrow", Clyde answers, then adding after a pause: "We rob banks." The almost perfectly symmetrical dialogue illustrates the political alliance at the heart of the film's political imaginary, an alliance between an all-white but gender-equal transgressive counterculture and an all-male but racially integrated common folk, dispossessed by an unjust economic system. Aesthetically, the representation of the latter's paralysis fuels the former's affective engine. "Working the place" serves as an identity defined by a social position while "robbing banks" is an affective practice that transgresses social positions of all kinds. For Jeff Menne, the scene "captures is the unacknowledged moment when the real politics of a situation, understood as a difference in access to institutional resources, is absorbed into culture" ("Post-Fordist" 97).

Two years after *Bonnie and Clyde,* in *Easy Rider,* George Hanson would link the "fear of freedom" ascribed to the townspeople to their economic fate of "being bought and sold in the marketplace" (see chapter 1). As the forebears of *Easy Rider*'s working-class Southerners, the farmers of *Bonnie and Clyde* are not cultural dupes but helpless victims of an unjust economic order. In the scenes populated by Great Depression victims, the film relies on a documentary-like aesthetic that contrasts both with the lightly humorous tone applied to the interior dynamics of the Barrow gang and the gang's violent encounters with the state, stylized for affective shocks, mobilized and accelerated through camera movement and montage. In turn, the overloaded car of the farmers forced to leave their home is a fixed image rather than a picture in motion. While Bonnie Parker voluntarily loses control over her life for the sake of excitement and adventure, the farmers have lost control through the intervention of external forces; to make the road a home is a necessity more than a choice. The farmers of *Bonnie and Clyde* represent hardship, without recourse to any affective agency of their own.

The film's beginning, then, with its stark opposition between the static photographs of the opening credits and the restless movements of Bonnie Parker, haunts its subsequent affective scenarios and anticipates its visual distribution of resources for selfhood. While folk heroes and common folk stand on the same side politically, aesthetically they have much less in common, with the bodies-as-movement of the couple on the run being the affective center of the film while the bodies-as-images of the farmers represent its setting in the Depression era. In her analysis of white investments in the folk revival of the early 1960s, Grace Elizabeth Hale argued that the notion of the folk relied on the premise that "the folk, whether black or white, must give up transformation. They must stand still. They must

be knowable, down to their emotional core" (*Nation* 107). *Bonnie and Clyde* relies on this static image of the folk, and on the separation of those who count as singular selves from those who merely represent a thematic concern.

Leong, Sell and Thomas describe as the intended effect of the encounter between outlaws and farmers "the unification of class oppression and racial oppression under the signs of a revised and decidedly 'Pop' populism" (77). There is a crucial fissure at the heart of this unification project, though, as it is steeped in the complex genealogy of countercultural whiteness and existential hip I have outlined above. In an interview published shortly after the film's release, Arthur Penn remembered "during a screening [...] one evening, five negroes present" who "completely identified with Bonnie and Clyde." The director interprets the euphoric response on the part of these Black audience members as an illustration of their affective bond with the protagonists. They "really understood," Penn presumed, "because in a certain sense the American negro has the same kind of attitude of 'I have nothing more to lose,' that was true [...] for Bonnie and Clyde" (qtd. in Wake and Hayden 173). Despite the cross-racial constitution of the common folk put forward by his film, Penn emphasizes the affinity between the outlooks of "the American negro" and Bonnie and Clyde, locating this affective bond in an existential feeling of having nothing to lose. Thus, an already well-established discourse of existential hip and its investments in racial fantasies of untamed motion allowed Penn to address racial oppression in speaking about his work without acknowledging the absence of race in the film itself.

Epiphany of Death: Square Premonitions and the Love-Death of Existential Hip

In one of the interviews conducted at the time, Arthur Penn stated that to him Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow were "relatively shallow, rather empty people as far as we know," without a "moral dilemma which would help us to understand what the characters are going through in their interior lives" (qtd. in Wake and Hayden 171). This absence of interiority forced the film to rely on negative foils to align viewers with its protagonists. The state police forces and the poor farmer victims were not the only characters who fulfilled this function of constitutive other: "[E]ven in the light of their brief lives," Benton and Newman had written to François Truffaut in the mid-1960s, hoping to arouse the star director's interest in the screenplay, "we can see they were not squares" (qtd. in Wake and Hayden 19). To make the audience see this as well, they needed actual squares.

Arguably the most prominent among the square characters of *Bonnie and Clyde* is Blanche, the wife of Clyde's brother Buck who reluctantly joins the criminals and ultimately becomes the gang's Achilles heel. With her strong Southern accent, the disgust she expresses when she sees C. W. Moss wearing only his under-

wear and her constant fear of the police and acts of violence, Blanche's squareness sharply contrasts with Bonnie Parker's proto-feminist hipness. Bonnie's movement from her Dallas home to a life on the road is a cinematic enactment of "modern feminism['s] rhetoric of leaving home," home being reimagined as "a prison, a trap, a straitjacket" (Felski, *Doing* 34). Blanche, however, asks for a share of the gang's income only as compensation for an unacceptably rough life on the road, making her much closer to the passive housewife Betty Friedan had characterized in *The Feminine Mystique* as "turn[ing] away from individual identity" and becoming "less than human" (426). Thus, *Bonnie and Clyde* adds to Norman Mailer's meticulous hip-square-table a distinction between hip and square forms of white womanhood.

The film also emphasizes the divide between hip and square society by creating an affective scenario that confronts both worlds with each other. This confrontation transpires when the Barrow gang steals the car of Eugene, a suit-wearing square clumsily cuddling with his girlfriend Velma when he suddenly looks out the window and sees the car theft. Eugene's verbal threats – "I'm going to tear them apart, those punks!" – are immediately countered by Gene Wilder's performance of the character as a coward who balances his fear of the gangsters with his eagerness to impress Velma by starting to hunt them down. When his fear ultimately wins, Eugene asks Velma to stop her car and turn around, but the Barrow Gang follows suit, inverting the chase and hunting down the squares. After having been forced to join the gang in their own vehicle, however, Eugene and Velma undergo what Sam Binkley has termed the "loosening of the self," a "controlled story of practiced release," popular in the 1960s and 1970s, that "rupture[d] the discipline imposed by the square world" (16–17). Put simply, the squares let go, and the film highlights this process by jump-cutting to a later moment in the car when Eugene and Velma laugh together with the gang, even trying to keep up with the hip folk around them by telling jokes of their own. "You're just folks, just like us," Bonnie assures them.

The emergence of authentic selves from within square shells ends, however, when Velma truthfully answers a question about her age that shocks Eugene, and when, shortly afterwards, they both inadvertently admit to already look forward to presenting their adventure to an audience: "What would Bill and Martha say?" Their obvious affinity to role-playing and other-directedness reintroduces the hip-square-divide into a short-lived moment of community, and soon thereafter Bonnie forces Eugene and Velma to leave the car. Just as the restaurant scene in *Easy Rider* did, this scene reveals a film's politics of race without featuring any nonwhite characters. Embodying the values of square society, Eugene and Velma are marked by an excess of whiteness, in this case defined by their allegiance to square America rather than to white supremacy, which in turn deemphasizes

the racial identities of the Barrow gang. Just as the rednecks' blunt racism in *Easy Rider* turns Billy and Wyatt into members of a cross-racial community of outsiders, *Bonnie and Clyde*'s square characters and their phony practices work at the construction site of countercultural whiteness. In the logic of existential hip, with whiteness itself being identified with middle-class complacency, inauthenticity and an affective deficit, the white protagonists of *Bonnie and Clyde* are first and foremost hip, not white.[47]

For George Cotkin, Norman Mailer's existential outlook consisted in the belief that "the intensity of freedom under the shadow of death [...] defines existence" (201), and it is this feeling *Bonnie and Clyde* sought to evoke. Consequently, it is Eugene's revelation that he works as an undertaker that triggers Bonnie to kick the squares out of the car. It is the first moment that foreshadows Bonnie and Clyde's fate, and the increasing allusions to death are linked to the exhaustion of the countercultural fantasy of untamed movement. "At first, when we started, I thought we were really goin' somewhere," Bonnie states at one point, "but this is it, we're just going." Their fate is sealed when they are forced to seek refuge in C.W. Moss's father's house who ultimately reveals himself to be part of square society, not of the common folk, by surrendering them to the police. His reason, however, is not his son's involvement in crime but a change in style. When he discovers C.W. Moss's tattoos, he is furious and comments how this makes his son look like trash. Employing the rhetoric of *Easy Rider*'s George Hanson, one might say that the old man suddenly sees in his son a free individual, and he is scared.

In her essay "The White Album," Joan Didion would write about The Doors' lyrics that "[they] reflect either an ambiguous paranoia or a quite unambiguous insistence upon the love-death as the ultimate high" (22), and the aestheticized conclusion of *Bonnie and Clyde* resolves the former by way of the latter. In what Cagin and Dray described as an "epiphany of death" (13), an ambush followed by an extended gun shower puts an end to the lives of Bonnie and Clyde. "Of all the film's stylistic innovations," Stephen Prince argues, "Penn's visualization of Bonnie and

47 Clyde Barrow's impotence might be the only plot element that actively challenges the hipness of the film's protagonists. "I ain't much of a lover boy," he announces when Bonnie is all over him after their first flight in the car. Alone with his brother Buck, he awkwardly answers the older brother's question "Is she as good as she looks?" with a hesitant: "She's better," revealing his own dishonesty to the audience. The long-deferred execution of the sexual act between Bonnie and Clyde just before their death is thus more than a reinstatement of hegemonic masculinity: it also closes the gap between the core self and its performance, relieving Clyde not only from his performance anxiety but also from the phoniness incited by it. For Jeff Menne, the moment of this sexual triumph is a logical conclusion of Bonnie's translation of their experience into art by writing their poem: "Clyde feels sexually potent because he has all along construed reproduction as a cultural matter, not a biological one" ("Cinema" 52).

Clyde's deaths has had the most lasting impact," overturning "decades of polite, bloodless movie violence in the American cinema" (135, 139). The scene's painfully crafted stylistic distinctiveness (the short sequence was shot over the course of several days[48]) merged New Hollywood's investment in mobilizing cinematic means with the film's political imaginary, creating a "filmic vocabulary for representing speed, violent action, and mad love" (Leong et al. 81) at the moment of the final confrontation between the Barrow gang and the police.

This final release of the film's kinetic energies via the love-death of its heroes reenacts the close affinity between existential hip and death and suggests, as Pauline Kael had argued, that violence was indeed the film's meaning. Even the conservative magazine *National Review* praised the conclusion of *Bonnie and Clyde* as a "brutal, beautiful murder sequence that combines the carnage of *Titus Andronicus* with the delicacy of *Swan Lake*" (Corliss 96). Instead of allocating the film to a left-wing or right-wing cycle, then, one could do worse than return to the Barrow gang's last victim. In a follow-up to his first crushing review, Bosley Crowther suspected that *Bonnie and Clyde* received good reviews because of its underlying political fantasy: "Society is the antagonist. The Establishment, or the breakdown of it, is responsible for all the woes – for the banks that foreclose on poor farmers, for the greedy storekeepers who don't want to be robbed, for the nasty police, for the illusions and delusions of Bonnie and Clyde." Crowther, then, in his last year as a film critic, hinted at the adaptability of this fantasy, remarking that "one could build up a theme of sympathy and sadness on the thought that the system was the enemy of a character named Lee Harvey Oswald" ("Run, Bonnie and Clyde" 10). What this representative of the old guard sensed, then, was a dynamic hard to grasp with metaphors of backlash and appropriation: the polyvalence of a politics of affect rooted in an opposition between the authentic singular self, always on the run, and nebulous social forces, trying to confine it.

2.2.2 Spiritual Freedom: *The Getaway* and Countering the Counterculture

The development Benton and Newman had taken part in at *Esquire* started to bloom in the late 1960s. The New Journalism, labeled as such by Tom Wolfe in the introductory essay for a first anthology, invested in its own fantasy of untamed

48 Not only the aesthetic effect but also the technical execution of the scene has become part of New Hollywood's origin story. It was shot with a variety of cameras on different film speeds, and the material was then treated with "Dede Allen's fast editing of the slow-motion shots [so that] some of the action is slowed down but the cutting is quick" (Buckland 31), to create, in the words of Leong, Sell and Thomas, a "paradoxical temporal intensity" (81).

motion. Writing aspired to become both novelistic, inciting a reader's imagination rather than just giving her all the facts, and affective, not only describing moods and feelings but incorporating them into the writing itself, evoking "the feeling of being inside the character's mind and experiencing the emotional reality of the scene as he experiences it" ("The New Journalism" 32). Just as the period's other philosophies and concepts reluctant of being named, the New Journalism defied the seductions of definition: "With any luck at all the new genre will never be sanctified, never be exalted, never given a theology," Wolfe wrote, "I probably shouldn't even go around talking it up the way I have in this piece" ("The New Journalism" 35).[49]

At roughly the same time Hollywood was leaving the studios to look for authentic locations, Wolfe championed new journalism pioneer Jimmy Breslin for making it "feasible for a columnist to actually leave the building, go outside and do reporting on his own, genuine legwork" ("The New Journalism" 12). He described the art and labor of the new journalists in affective, even cinematic terms: "It seemed all-important to *be there* when dramatic scenes took place, to get the dialogue, the gestures, the facial expressions, the details of the environment" (T. Wolfe, "The New Journalism" 21, original emphasis). The new journalism followed its own logic of expressivity, entertaining the idea that a text would flow naturally and with as little mediation as possible from a writer's mind to the page, undergoing a process Wolfe termed "controlled trance": the author would "review his notes, then close his eyes and try to imagine himself in the mental states of his character – a process of intellectual 'sense memory' that he felt as akin to Method acting" (Weingarten 115).

There was an even closer connection between cinema and the new journalism, though, as new journalist pieces on the film industry and New Hollywood films contributed to the emergence of a new cinematic discourse – taking seriously filmmaking as an artistic practice and supporting the idea of a film as a singular work of art emanating from the vision of its director. Grover Lewis was probably the most prolific of the new journalists writing about cinema, writing production reports of films such as *The Last Picture Show* (1971) or *Fat City* (1972) for magazines such as *Rolling Stone* or *Playboy* (all collected in Stratton and Reid). In 1971, Lewis visited the set where Sam Peckinpah, following his controversial *Straw Dogs* (1971), directed another film about a couple on the run.

49 And just as other of the period's alleged innovations, the style of the new journalism was not so new at all. Hazel Rowley argues in her biography of Richard Wright that Wright's narrative voice resembled the style of the new journalism in many ways (476).

Sam Peckinpah and the Myth of the Maverick Director

In his piece on "Sam Peckinpah in Mexico," written for *Rolling Stone* on the production of *The Getaway*, Lewis constantly refers to himself in the third person, becoming a fictional character on the hunt for a legend. This legend was director Sam Peckinpah, and Lewis' prose prepares the encounter between "the writer" and the director with anticipatory force. One actor or crew member after the other describes Peckinpah in bold larger-than-life terms. Lewis quotes actor Roy Jenson calling Peckinpah "shitty, [...] beautiful, [...] great, [...] a fuckin' wizard and [...] also a saint"; actress Sally Struthers takes pains to explain that "you have to [...] fear and love him, [...] just like little kids learn to fear and love God in Sunday school," and actor John Bryson suspects that Peckinpah "runs the whole gamut from Ying to Yang" (G. Lewis). In Lewis' piece, Peckinpah becomes a figure of mythical proportions.

In contrast to *Bonnie and Clyde* and its shock of the new, the reception of *The Getaway* was preconfigured by the cultural authority of its director. After the Western *The Wild Bunch* (1968) and *Straw Dogs* (1971), a film Pauline Kael famously called a "fascist work of art" ("Obsession" 85), Peckinpah emerged as one of the prime examples of the film director as a visionary eccentric. If his persona illustrated the new cult of the auteur in American cinema (see chapter 3.1.), his aesthetic style seemed a perfect cinematic translation of the affective logic of expressivity. As his biographer David Weddle summarized this style in 1994:

> Peckinpah made his films *not with the cool detachment of an intellectual commentator* observing events from up high, but as one of the writhing sufferers trying to clamor out of the pit. His are *not the neatly structured, politically correct movies* of Stanley Kramer, Richard Brooks, Alan Parker, or Kevin Costner, with their *prepackaged characters and neatly devised plots* and *resolutions* that leave an audience with the smug *assurance* that the social or psychological 'problem' examined has been solved or at least explained. Peckinpah's films are filled with *jagged edges*, abrupt *shifts in tone*, and embarrassing *moments of self-revelation* in which the director *lays naked* some of his most neurotic and misguided obsessions for all to see. (11, emphases mine)

In this framework, Peckinpah's was a cinema that emerged from the gut and moved uncontrollably in manifold directions, an authentic expression of a personal experience of the world. In his private life, Weddle lets his readership know early in the book, Peckinpah "was often the antithesis of a model for adjustment" (13). Later he calls him a "bizarre anomaly" within Hollywood, a "combination of Ernest Hemingway, Hunter S. Thompson, and Wild Bill Hickok who, through sheer will and gall, had taken on the Combine, the System, with both fists swinging wildly, and damn if he didn't seem to be winning!" (380) Hence, while *The Getaway*, based on a novel by Jim Thompson and adapted for the screen by Walter Hill,

wasn't praised as highly as other Peckinpah films during the time of its release, it was evaluated seriously and understood as an aesthetic statement by an important artist who was equipped with all the resources to be gained through a subject position of countercultural whiteness. Furthermore, although he often relied on classical genre tropes in his films and admired the heroes of old Hollywood, Peckinpah was part and parcel of the New Hollywood discourse. "If *The Getaway* had just rolled off the studio assembly line, the work of a competent craftsman," Jay Cocks began his review of the film for *Time,* "it could pretty easily have been passed over and forgotten. It is, however, the work of a major American film artist" ("Cold Flash" 33).

Peckinpah's films were also frequently called as witnesses in the case for cinema as an affective experience, and *The Getaway* was no exception. David Elliott summarized the film's experience for the *Chicago Daily News* in physical states: "Sam Peckinpah stirs the blood again. In his movies you don't stop and think, you just get high on adrenalin. He is a great director" ("The Getaway Press Quotes"). Jonathan Baumbach concluded his review by mocking his friends and their old-fashioned views on film: "[I]f my friends' reactions are indicative, an intellectual audience, its notions of film hopelessly and snobbishly circumscribed by literary criteria, is losing out on Peckinpah. Film pleasures being in short supply, I recommend another look" (449). And the film's producers exploited Peckinpah's reputation to market the film, legitimizing the economic advantages of location shooting (see chapter 2.1.) by pointing to a director's aesthetic decision in favor of realism. The production notes handed to the press before the release of *The Getaway* noted that "because of director Sam Peckinpah's insistence on reality and the refusal on his part to accept anything in his films that has an air of being contrived, 'The Getaway' was filmed entirely in Texas" ("The Getaway Production Notes").

"Pawn in a Corrupt System": The Returning Prisoner and Cultural Change

Five years after a restless Bonnie Parker hit her fist angrily against the prison bars of her bed frame, another film introduced audiences to its cinematic world through images of confinement in Texas. Just like *Bonnie and Clyde, The Getaway* establishes in its first sequence a world of immobility it then leaves behind, developing a plot centered on the excitement and agony of a life on the run. The film opens with a wide shot of a prison yard, the barbed wire fence extending towards the horizon while a group of deer eat peacefully on the yard. *The Getaway* then alternates between long shots of the prison that highlight its homogenizing character – a yard populated by prisoners in white uniforms – and closer shots that identify one single inmate as the rebellious force at the core of the narrative:

Doc McCoy, played by Steve McQueen, who is on his way to appear in front of a parole committee.

His appeal to parole is denied, apparently not for the first time, and the jury's repetition of the original judgment "1-to-10-year sentence for armed robbery" marks both a continuation of and a deviance from *Bonnie and Clyde.* While Clyde's confession that he had spent time in jail for "armed robbery" is precisely what excites Bonnie the most – the two words entailing the affective promise of outlaw life – these same words signify the force of the law in *The Getaway.* "Armed robbery" is not a liberating speech act conjuring an enticing future but an official act, an institution's reference to past events that legitimizes Doc's confinement. This hints at a more fundamental difference between the respective affective engines of these films. While *Bonnie and Clyde* is invested in a countercultural fantasy of acceleration and destruction, a more simplistic opposition between stasis as blockage and motion as release is at the core of *The Getaway.*[50]

The film then turns this dialectic of blockage and release into character psychology by juxtaposing Doc's habits in prison with his memories of freedom. Flashback shots of Doc in bed with his wife Carol portray the film's hero as the frustrated guardian of a vibrant inner life, a man in danger of being crippled forever by a life in confinement. In contrast to the clear and rigidly structured shots of prison routines – images of forced labor, chess playing, disciplinary measures – the sudden flashbacks identify freedom with sexuality and render sexuality affective by an almost abstract aesthetic, creating a sensual opposition to the sober prison scenes. Only fragments of Doc's and Carol's bodies fill the screen, conjuring an intimacy possible only beyond the frames of the prison. Doc used to live once, these images suggest, conjuring a familiar existentialist motif. Now, he merely exists.

The opening sequence ends with *The Getaway*'s first plot point: Doc reluctantly buys his way into freedom by bribing Benyon, a corrupt politician on his parole board: "Tell him I'm for sale, his price," he tells Carol, without knowing that Benyon will exploit his position of power by demanding sexual services from his wife. The moment when Carol succumbs to this demand is succeeded by a series of shots showing Doc making his way through various prison doors while being released. Man's freedom, from this scene on, is tied to woman's infidelity, and *The Getaway* will draw its emotional force primarily from this constellation. The gendered affective dynamic of the film's beginning thus inverts *Bonnie and Clyde*'s: instead of the male gangster inciting a female desire for freedom and excitement, it is Carol who

50 This dynamic is already at work before the plot starts. As in *Bonnie and Clyde*, the film image freezes every time a name appears on the screen during the opening credits of *The Getaway.* But here, the stills interrupt an otherwise continuous stream of images; it is not stasis to motion and back to stasis, but motion endangered by stasis.

– in effect, not in affect – saves Doc from continuing a life in prison. As a result, the subject position of countercultural whiteness is unapologetically male and reveals the universalist ambition that looms behind *The Getaway*'s re-centering of white masculinity. Celebrating the "extraordinary opening passage," in which Peckinpah "details what it is [...] to be trapped in prison," Jonathan Baumbach argued in *Partisan Review* that "*The Getaway* is about the physical and spiritual process of getting free" (447).

In the same year *The Getaway* was released, Norman Mailer published his *Existential Errands*, a collection of essays in which he explained a shift in his own terminology: "I came to use the words existential and existentialism rather than Hip. Hip, I know, would end in a box on Madison Avenue" (qtd. in Cotkin 186). *The Getaway*, I argue, undertakes a similar shift away from existential hip toward existentialism per se. While *Bonnie and Clyde* conjured its protagonists' alienation and feelings of confinement to create a countercultural subjectivity in need of distinction against a square world, *The Getaway* rests on a more abstract and spiritual notion of confinement, embodied by the white male – first victimized and imprisoned, then liberated and on the run. "The essential getaway [...] is from self-imprisonment," Baumbach wrote on Peckinpah's outlook, "External freedom follows as a matter of course" (448). And Rick Sassons observed in *Filmmakers Newsletter* how the film recorded "the effects of a continuing loss of individual freedom and singular human identity to the collective power system which has come to be known as society" (29).

This power system called society had undergone a transformation, though, and the first actions Doc undertakes in freedom is to indulge in memories while digesting this cultural change. After Doc told his wife he would like to take a walk, *The Getaway* cuts to a group of three white people in a park: two long-haired and bearded men, one of them playing a guitar, and a woman in a bikini. This single shot establishes the space which Doc then enters, walking into the park with suit and tie, but it also establishes the cultural context into which Doc returns after four years in prison, a space without suits and ties. Loosening his tie, Doc contemplates the park, watching how first two white girls in bikinis and then a Black male teenager jump onto a rope hanging over a lake. After a slow-motion flashback has revealed that Doc and Carol used to jump into the water from the same spot, Doc slowly takes off his jacket and runs towards the rope, a movement intercut by a jump to the next sequence: Doc and Carol, both dripping, return home, alive again, wild again. By creating images of sexual freedom and of practices identified with the hippie subculture, the film, after having liberated countercultural whiteness from prison, sets it apart from a new historical context marked by the counterculture.

While not taking as much pains as *Bonnie and Clyde* to speak to its historical moment, the 1960s haunt *The Getaway* in manifold ways, and its own historical diagnosis is two-fold: the times are both a-changin' and hopelessly corrupted. In fact, the scene in the park evokes a debate on cultural change that pervaded public discourse in the early 1970s, a debate mediated by the figure of the prisoner-of-war (POW). During the Vietnam War, the fate of American soldiers either missing in action or captured by the North Vietnamese became a constant source of public anxiety, leading to pressures on the government and protest mobilizations by relatives of missing soldiers. The soldiers who came back, then, "returned to a nation that the civil rights, feminist, and antiwar movements had remade in their absence, challenging the white fighting man's standing as an embodiment of the nation" (Darda 34). This discourse, particularly the reports of returning POWs and their reentry into the life they had been forced to give up, fulfilled an important cultural function as well: it provided an imaginary outside perspective from which to contemplate the cultural shifts American society had witnessed over the last years. As Andreas Killen emphasizes, the "return of the POWs became an occasion for all Americans to take stock of the changes of the preceding decade" (82). In 1972, Stefan Kanfer (who had introduced the American public to the idea of a New Hollywood and its "shock of freedom" five years earlier) suggested that the nation "would benefit from looking at itself through the 'returning POWs' fresh, hungry eyes" (qtd. in Killen 82).

Naturally, Doc does not return from war in *The Getaway*, but the four years he has spent in prison cover exactly the transition from the late 1960s to the early 1970s, the period under scrutiny in the discourse of the returning POWs. For Joseph Darda, the figure of the Vietnam veteran emerged as the quintessential means through which "white men resecured their dominant status after civil rights and feminism through a racial grievance and sense of entitlement that looked, on the surface, color blind and race neutral" (5). While I will come back to this racial dimension of the veteran in the fourth chapter, the gender dimension to the POW discourse is even more palpable in *The Getaway.* In fact, the film follows up its images of a new cultural context with a scene in which Doc seems uneasy to become intimate with his wife again, it hints at the gender dimension of this discourse. For historian Natasha Zaretsky, the figure of the POW served as a "barometer of cultural and social change vis-à-vis gender and sexual politics" (60). First, "[v]irtually all men [note] that women seemed sexier, more independent, and uninhibited", as Killen summarizes magazine and newspaper articles on POWs from the early 1970s (80). Second, one of the most controversial subjects connected to the debate about returning prisoners was the question of female loyalty, and the POW wife occupied, Zaretsky points out, a crucial position in the Vietnam war imaginary:

> If the North Vietnamese captor was assigned a unique capacity for psychological torture, then the POW wife was also assigned a singular power that could go in one of two opposing directions: she could either sustain her captured husband through her loyalty, or she could betray him, severely undermining his already diminished morale and, in the process, become an unwitting collaborator of the North Vietnamese. (48)

The figure of the POW wife thus signified and embodied both the cultural lag and the pressing question of female loyalty, and this gendered dynamic plays out in the awkward moment between Doc and Carol after their return from the park, confronted with the challenge of regaining an intimacy interrupted. When Doc asks Carol, "did you go out a lot?", she reacts defensively: "Four years and now the question comes up..." In the first half of the 1970s, Zaretsky explains, "predictions of rocky reentry and culture shock suggested that the returning POW now ran the risk of being victimized yet again by the women's liberation movement itself" (60), and it is this risk that the scene mobilizes, a risk with even higher stakes in *The Getaway*, as viewers already know what Doc has not yet learned: that Carol was indeed unfaithful, although not in the manner implied in his question. After all, the reason for Carol's disloyalty was not a sexual desire liberated by feminism but the coercive power of Benyon, an archaic Texas politician for whom Doc used to work and who now forces him to do a last bank job.

Set free only in theory, then, Doc remains at the disposal of a corrupted system. In *Bonnie and Clyde,* this system had two sides. While the common folk were victims of the banks and their policy of confiscation, the outlaw gangsters would become victims of state forces in the film's conclusion; the state's explicit violence was tied to the economic violence the farmers were subjected to, but visually and aesthetically separated from it. In *The Getaway*, political and economic power become one. The protagonist is a "pawn in a corrupt system of politics and justice," Kevin Thomas wrote in his review for the *Los Angeles Times* ("Ali" 1), and the corrupt politician Benyon embodies this system. Thus, *The Getaway* further ossifies the antagonism between individual and institution, displacing *Bonnie and Clyde*'s countercultural mockery of a stultified establishment in favor of an opposition between the existential self and social structures.

This system is visually connected to the cultural change the film reflects on and to the advances of social movements this change is identified with. When Doc is alone on a train, pursued by Benyon's men, two Black children play with water guns in the aisle, one of them stopping at Doc and asking him to "stick 'em up or I'll shoot you." The kid wears an army hat with stickers on it, and the screenplay describes him as a "SEVEN YEAR OLD BLACK PANTHER, dressed appro-

priately and holding a water pistol" ("The Getaway script").[51] While Doc authoritatively tells the kid to "get back to your mother or I'll break your little arm," containing the specter of black violence for the moment, the kid ultimately gets his revenge when he later identifies Doc in a police office. In another curious parallel to *Bonnie and Clyde,* then, the state receives help in hunting down the couple on the run, although this time not by Blanche, embodying a white square society, but by a young Black panther.

Hence, while *The Getaway* starts by constructing an image of existential confinement that blocks affective flows, the film enriches this outlook through a gendered and racialized discourse on cultural change. Long-haired men and half-naked children in parks as well as armed Black kids running around in trains populate a new cultural environment, while a corrupt system exerts its arbitrary power to confine the individual self. These images create a countercultural context separated from the countercultural fantasies I trace throughout this book, helping these fantasies to survive the historical moment of their emergence by clinging to individual selves such as Doc McCoy, someone unsuspicious of ever having belonged to the counterculture in the narrow sense of the term.

Disloyal Wives: Casting, Gender, and the Truth Effects of Violence

The ultimate confrontation between the individual hero and a corrupt system happens when Doc confronts Benyon in his office after the bank job has failed. In the exact moment Benyon tells Doc what his wife had to do to set him free, Carol enters the scene and shoots Benyon, rescuing her husband for a second time. Her action, in one viewer's words, means that she is "opting for the vitality of life with her embattled husband over a slow death on the surroundings of frigid Texan opulence" (James). However, the scene performs several other functions within the narrative and political imaginary of *The Getaway:* it evokes the specter of autonomous female agency; it motivates the couple's flight from both police and Benyon's men, the main dramatic engine that drives forward the plot of the film; it creates the male protagonist's psychological crisis, as Doc now has to balance the disappointment with his wife's disloyal act with the loyalty this act is proof of; and it paints the couple on the run as an unstable unit, not merely endangered from the outside but suffering from internal fissures.

These fissures are not only part of the narrative but were also entangled with the film's casting process and its reception discourse. While Steve McQueen had

51 Michael Staub has described how the media in the late 1960s and early 1970s repeatedly "described the Panthers as 'boy scouts' with guns, 'little kids' both 'awed and securely warmed' by the party's 'quasi military discipline'" ("Setting Up" 27).

cultivated a "noir cool" subjectivity since his role in the stylish thriller *Bullitt* in 1968 (Dinerstein 446), the former model Ali MacGraw starred in the box-office success *Love Story* (1970), a film that to many exemplified, and continues to exemplify, all that New Hollywood aspired to leave behind: a type of filmmaking said to be steeped in formula, dramatic routines and cheap tearjerking. Stephen Farber called it a "[corpse] from an earlier era of movie-making" ("Easy" 128). Via the different reputations of its actors, then, the relationship between Doc and Carol was tied to an aesthetic opposition between rugged New Hollywood cinema and its phony cultural other, and Steve McQueen himself drove home the gender dimension of this opposition when he described MacGraw's misplacement at the film set: "This tall, skinny, longlegged intellectual Eastern liberal didn't even know how to drive a car when she got here" (qtd. in Reed, "On Location" 6).

While existential hip was not restricted to masculinity in *Bonnie and Clyde* – after all, Bonnie rather than Clyde was the driving engine and the "true visionary in the film" (Laderman 61) – Carol is merely a plug-in for the existential self embodied by Doc. And while *Bonnie and Clyde* editor Dede Allen would rely on "sudden cuts to Dunaway in motion [to] underscore [her] jagged, jumpy spirit" (Harris 286), Carol remains a fixed image for the most part of the film, a beautiful face and a sexualized body rather than a subject-in-motion. A note attached to some of the dailies of the film reads: "Don't spend too much time on Carol, just the effective moments" ("The Getaway Editing Notes"). Almost every review took note of this fault line, emphasizing either MacGraw's flawed performance or the reduction of her character to a mere function. "If you could somehow weave a new leading actress into the master print of *The Getaway,*" Stanley Kauffman taunted, "you would have a first-class crime thriller" ("review of *The Getaway*"). "Her presence is entirely cipherous," Jeff Millar wrote in the *Houston Chronicle* (Millar), while Jay Cocks of *Time* summarized: "As a screen personality, MacGraw is abrasive. As a talent, she is embarrassing" ("Cold Flash" 33).[52]

The chauvinism of *The Getaway* was even more pronounced in a side plot, which the *New York Times* at the time assessed as "actually more interesting than the main plot" (Canby, "Thief" 53), and in which Rudy, a member of Benyon's gang who has survived a shoot-out with Doc, hijacks a married couple. The woman, Fran, assures the criminal to "do anything you want," out of despair at first, but every time the film cuts back to the side plot, her actions seem to follow more and more her own sexual desire, while her husband Harold, repeatedly humiliated

52 Only film scholar Molly Haskell blamed the director for this asymmetry at the time. "For all his vitality, [Peckinpah] can't inject life into Ali McGraw, the romantic heroine of *The Getaway,*" Haskell complained in her 1974 book *From Reverence to Rape* (*Reverence* 364).

by Rudy, is forced to watch his wife fall for the crook. A scene in which the three of them eat spareribs in a car seems to consciously comment on the scene with Eugene and Velma in *Bonnie and Clyde.* Whereas the Barrow gang invited their guests to have hamburgers with them, Rudy starts throwing spareribs through the car, and while *Bonnie and Clyde* mocked a square inauthenticity via Eugene's and Velma's harmless phoniness, *The Getaway* takes this diagnosis to a darker realm: Rudy's actions reveal both the woman's repressed desire and the man's inability to defend his honor. "Loosen up," Rudy tells Harold, but the one who actually looses up is Fran, shedding all her inhibitions and ultimately engaging in an animalistic food orgy in a hotel room, exchanging ribs with Rudy from mouth to mouth, while Harold, tied to a chair, is forced to witness.

It is a scene that enacts the "cuckold" scenario, which has not only become a popular porn genre but also a rhetorical strategy of the alt-right. As Tim Squirrell explains: "A shortening of 'cuckold,' an old word used to refer to men who allow their partners to sleep with other men (and often find sexual gratification in the humiliation of it), its use has become the sine qua non of alt-right group membership." In the shape of the "cuckservative," it has been used "against conservatives who are seen as being too soft and allowing their countries (primarily European) to be 'invaded' by Islam and Muslims" (Squirrell; see also Lokke). The scenes with Rudy, Harold and Fran, which for Haskell had the "dubious virtue of being an authentic gut fantasy" (*Reverence* 364), further illustrate *The Getaway*'s reconfiguration of existential hip. What the loosening of the squares reveals is not the inauthenticity of their dull lives or the conformist pressures of society as such. Rather, it lays bare an authentic primitivism usually hidden beneath social defense mechanisms, a world of visceral affects behind the masks of civilization, another infamous right-wing image. In lieu of Arthur Penn's outlook of violence as the experience of modernity, Peckinpah's cinema sees violence as the human condition, a condition revealed by putting the affective logic of expressivity to work in cinema. It was a philosophical outlook widely appreciated by many reviewers. As critic Stanley Kauffman praised the director in the *New Republic:* "'Down, Peckinpah!' cries civilization. 'Oh, yeah?' grins Sam, knowing the truth about us" ("review of *The Getaway*").

Dumped: Folk Wisdom and the Nuclear Family on the Run

While Doc himself does not engage in such primitivist practices, he is aware of their power. After all, as Win Sharples noted for *Filmmakers Newsletter,* "the mastery of [savage] impulses implies the appropriate, productive utilization of them, not the stifling of them" (32). *The Getaway* thus provides affective scenarios that allow Doc to utilize these impulses and lose his cool. After having fled the place

of Benyon's shooting, Doc stops the car at the side of the road to contemplate what he has just learned: that his wife had sex with his archenemy, the personification of a corrupted world. As Carol emphasizes the fact that she had no choice if she wanted to save him, her defiant stance makes him so angry that he slaps her in the face. In her review of the film, Pauline Kael recorded the misogynist affective response to this scene by the audience at her screening where people "had a good time hooting at her, loved it when he smacked her face – her haughty nostrils and schoolgirl smirk seemed to ask for it" (Kael, "Review of The Getaway").

The sexist descriptions with which Ali MacGraw had to deal with, the specter of emasculation in the cuckold scenario, the blunt depictions of male violence, and the audience reactions to it all make *The Getaway* a key example for an early assemblage of right-wing anti-feminist affects. They point to a transition traced by Kate Willett in her history of the figure of the 'male chauvinist pig.' It was the proud right-wing adoption and recalibration of this insult, Willett argues, that made rebranded conservatism, offering men "a sense of domesticated naughtiness that was easy to tap into even if you lacked a Kennedy mystique or counterculture cool," and promoting "a sexy swagger that defied age-old stereotypes about backwards rednecks, downplayed race, and elevated chauvinism" (97–98).

Even if *The Getaway* emphasizes the woman's betrayal as an original sin at the heart of the narrative, the film is still invested in seeing the couple of the run succeed – together. The stakes become clear when Doc explicitly raises the specter of divorce, a topic widely debated not only but particularly within the context of the POW discourse outlined above, as reports about high divorce rates in families with returning veterans surged (Zaretsky 47). Carol rejects Doc's proposal to split up and "cut up the money two," but the possibility lingers over the remainder of the film as a potential tragic conclusion, making the couple on the run vulnerable not only to the alliance of criminals and state forces in hot pursuit of them but also to an interior destructive dynamic. While in *Bonnie and Clyde,* the couple on the run primarily constituted the core unit of the Barrow gang, *The Getaway*'s married couple on the run becomes a testing ground for the future of the heterosexual couple.

This future is negotiated in the most memorable scene of the film, which follows Doc and Carol, who have hidden from the police in a dumpster, as they are transported to a large waste disposal site somewhere in the middle of nowhere. Completely at the mercy of the garbage truck's conductor, who soon spits them out onto the disposal site from high above, they have no other choice than to learn to fly as they're falling, a movement the film emphasizes by using slow-motion. After having literally become white trash, Doc and Carol navigate the disposal site, ultimately pausing to talk in front of a car that is split exactly in half. At this space of broken mobility, and with dark smoke in the background, the couple is finally able to reconcile emotionally, promising each other to "forget about Ben-

yon." In the following long shot, Doc and Carol walk away from the disposal site as the love theme of the score blends in. The existential crisis of the white male self is resolved, the couple on the run is intact, turning away from society's junkyard and ready to fight their enemies together. As Baumbach observed for the *Partisan Review:* "The McCoys' coordination as a team is in significant contrast to the deviousness and vicious self-concern of the other human transactions in the film" (448).

After this emotional climax, the actual showdown is merely a matter of execution, of complying with the film's promise of ultimate release. Again, *The Getaway* echoes *Bonnie and Clyde* by stylizing each shooting with the same blending of fast cuts and slow-motion Arthur Penn had used in the closing scene of his film. Finally, the getaway that gives the film its name succeeds when Doc and Carol hijack a truck whose driver gladly helps them, having been "in trouble with the law" himself. Apart from resolving the plot, this supporting character introduces an image of the common folk into *The Getaway*'s cinematic world just before it comes to an end. Yet again, the folks stand in opposition to the establishment and on the side of the couple on the run; however, while the farmers of *Bonnie and Clyde* marked the Barrow gang's actions as a reaction to an unjust society, the truck driver leads Doc and Carol onto firm moral ground. Approaching the border of Mexico, the driver asks them if they are married and is honestly relieved when Carol answers affirmatively. He then gives them a serious advice:

> You know, if I was you kids, what I'd do? I'd quit this running around the country. Get a little bit of money together and, hell, buy a place and settle down, raise a family. I've been married for 35 years. Same old gal. Man, she's a tough old hide. Everything I am, I owe to her.

Their last encounter with a third person thus instills in the couple on the run a nostalgic folk wisdom of moral virtue and domesticity. After this warning about the pitfalls of countercultural fantasies of untamed motion, Doc and Carol leave the car and buy the truck, and as the man walks away with his money, the married couple on the run heads towards a new life in Mexico while the closing credits start to roll. In an unpublished review sent to the director personally and titled "Peckinpah's resilient existentialist ethics," aspiring writer Jeremy James argued that this ending constituted "the final insult to a corrupt society which lives by life-denying systems of deceit, coldness and confinement," as Doc and Carol have "overcome all the perilous obstructions which blocked their progress towards self-fulfillment" (James).

To sum up this section of the chapter, couples of different shades ran from a variety of social contexts in the New Hollywood. *Bonnie and Clyde* constructed the couple-on-the-run as a countercultural agency, an assemblage that opposed state forces while simultaneously constructing a gender-neutral countercultural subjec-

tivity acting on behalf of the common folk, which in turn consisted of white and Black farmers, men and women. *The Getaway*, by contrast, establishes the couple's flight not as an alternative way of life but as a necessary endeavor for the heterosexual couple to survive in a society that endangers its well-being. If *Bonnie and Clyde* deterritorialized domesticity, *The Getaway* reterritorializes mobility, grounding its fantasy of untamed motion in both a masculinized notion of the existential self and the nuclear family. The film is also eager to emphasize the four years Doc had spent in prison, a period that encompasses not only the time between the release of the two films but also the (re-)emergence of feminism.

While *The Getaway* certainly lashed back at the 1960s while appropriating its politics of expressivity, to understand this relation simply in terms of backlash or appropriation limits the perspective on the politics of the New Hollywood and blurs the common terrain both cultural artifacts shared. In both films, the couple on the run fights an establishment, supported by a common folk victimized by this establishment. While this common folk no longer suffers from economic crisis but from an intrusive government and conflict with the "law" – not shooting at empty farms anymore but reminding a new generation of their obligation to stay married – it still embodies the authentic core of the American fabric, standing in opposition to the state and government. The important difference is in agency, though, as *The Getaway,* in contrast to *Bonnie and Clyde,* endows the folk with affective authority. While the cars of the Barrow gang were mobile spaces with no room for the victims of the Great Depression – who were relegated to still images of immobilized cars transformed into improvised homes – *The Getaway* literally puts the common man in the driver's seat, turning him from a representative image to an active spokesman of Middle America.[53]

At the heart of *The Getaway,* then, is not a historically specific subjectivity of existential hip but a timeless abstraction of the existential self and its crisis of identity. What is at work over the course of the New Hollywood, I argue, is a shift from the counterculture as a historically specific subculture, a set of singular practices and discourses, to a generalized subjectivity marked by a resistance against the dominant culture and open to appropriation by a variety of political projects. Within this shift, the counterculture in the narrow and historically specif-

53 Even if *The Getaway* takes place in Texas, it is possible to connect its imaginary to an emergent revival of white regional culture in general. In the context of the 'redneck revival' incited by the popularity of Merle Haggard in the early 1970s, the figure of the Okie loomed large as a new connection between white marginalization and folk wisdom. As James Gregory puts it, by the 1970s Okies were a "people who have known suffering, who are tough enough to rise above it, who be guilty of redneck intolerance, even as they never forget the 'essentials,' namely, that ordinary folk are the guts and sinew of American society" (qtd. in Cowie, *Stayin'* 173–174).

ic sense of the term, as well as the agents, practices and discourses attached to it, becomes the dominant culture, resisted by new social positions charged with the authority of countercultural whiteness. Thus, *Bonnie and Clyde* and *The Getaway*, together with their respective reception discourses, are related to the histories I have discussed in the preceding section. They rely on countercultural fantasies of untamed motion and obtain their affective authority from an investment in an existentialist sensibility, even if the specific content of these fantasies and the specific form of their existentialism differs. It is this common investment that allows *The Getaway* to lash back against the countercultural politics of *Bonnie and Clyde* by selectively appropriating the latter's social imagination and reconfiguring countercultural whiteness for new subjectivities.

Ultimately, *The Getaway* ends with a movement of transgression, as Doc and Carol cross the border to Mexico, leaving the nation behind for good. *The Getaway*'s fantasy of untamed motion constructs a qualitative difference between two worlds, between a doomed society in which past acts suffocate the potentials of the present on the one hand, and a utopian realm of freedom signified by Mexico on the other.[54] And so, Jonathan Baumbach concluded his review on a personal note: "[O]ne leaves *The Getaway* released and exhilarated, having escaped for the moment one's own prison, in touch [...] with one's own unexplored potentialities for sight" (449). Not only sight, though, but action, as well. For the "man stripped of aggression [...] hopelessly vulnerable to the aggressions of others, including that of his government," Rick Sassons of *Filmmakers Newsletter* saw only one hope: "The one impossible trick," he argued, "is to acknowledge this violent potential and to proudly use it against real enemies, vanquishing them in the ambiguous battlefields of taday [sic]" (32). One such ambiguous battlefield was the American city in crisis.

2.3 Fantasies of Untamed Motion in the City in Crisis

New Hollywood's reimagining of urban space has already sparked much scholarly interest, and no study fails to mention a crucial connection between the New Hol-

54 As Peckinpah explained in an extensive interview with *Playboy*, "[i]n Mexico it's all out front—the color, the life, the warmth. If a Mexican likes you, he'll touch you. It's direct. It's real" (W. Murray 192). In a review of *The Wild Bunch*, film critic Paul Schrader, who soon after would write the screenplay for *Taxi Driver* (1976), had already hinted at the director's fascination with Mexico: "[I]n the beleaguered career of Sam Peckinpah Mexico has become increasingly the place to go. It is a land perhaps more savage, simple, or desolate, but definitely more expressive" ("Sam" 19).

lywood and the American city: at about the same time city governments made use of the new trend in location shooting to attract film studios, an anxiety around the condition of inner cities, prepared by demographic developments in the postwar period and the social and cultural movements of the 1960s, peaked with urban riots in the late 1960s, the increasingly perilous fiscal situation of many big American cities and rising crime rates. Especially New York became a privileged cinematic intersection between this crisis discourse and a new realism observed in New Hollywood films. "As reflected in good movies and bad, serious ones as well as forthrightly foolish," the *New York Times* reported in 1974, "New York City has become a metaphor for what looks like the last days of American civilization" (Canby, "New York's" 1). In Brian Tochterman's apt summary, "visitors in search of Cosmopolis might encounter in its stead a chorus of voices warning of Necropolis" (8).

In this section, I will follow New Hollywood's cultural fantasies of untamed motion as they invaded not only urban space as such but also a discursive field around urban crisis, at a time of decisive policy shifts around government and policing that would leave its mark on the following decades. More as a prologue than an analysis, I will discuss the reception of *Across 110th Street* (1972). Recognized today as an important work within the Blaxploitation cycle, the film was almost unequivocally dismissed by the mainstream press after its release. I will then turn to the New Hollywood classic *The French Connection* (1971) to engage with its politics of affect, focusing primarily on the film's investment in a new cinematic realism, its deterritorialization of urban space and its appropriation of countercultural fantasies of untamed motion for new forms of policing. Finally, I will identify the film's protagonist Popeye Doyle as an embodiment of a new configuration of countercultural whiteness, one that reproduces central tenets of this subjectifier and adapts it to the changing cultural formation of the 1970s.

2.3.1 "Perhaps It's Too Real": The Curious Case against *Across 110th Street*

The Getaway was not the only 1972 film that incited discussions about violence in cinema. The violence of *Across 110th Street,* however, was different from *Bonnie and Clyde*'s violence of the modern world and from *The Getaway*'s primitive violence imagined at the heart of human nature. It was the real violence of an urban economy of drug money, mob structures and police corruption. And, as the title of the *New York Times* review suggested, printed on the same page as a review of *The Getaway,* it was also "racial violence" that was at the heart of this particular film (Greenspun, "Racial" 53).

Across 110th Street, an adaptation of Wally Ferris's novel of the same name, tells the story of a burglary gone bloody and a cross-racial alliance of detectives hunting for the perpetrators. The film features Italian mobsters who rule Harlem's drug trade in cooperation with Black gangsters and corrupt police forces, while members of the Black underclass desperately try to break out of a cycle of poverty, drugs and a lack of job opportunities. Two cops hold the center of the film's narrative: an aging and slightly racist Italian American, Captain Mattelli, played by Anthony Quinn, and Lt. Pope, an incorruptible Black detective in charge of the investigation, played by Yaphet Kotto.

Although written and directed by white filmmakers, *Across 110th Street* is often counted as part of the Blaxploitation cycle, films with small budgets specifically catered to Black audiences in American cities. Back at the time, as well as in most academic studies since, Blaxploitation films have been mostly discussed in terms of subject matter, their politics of representation, production and distribution processes, or the aesthetic subversion of Hollywood's racial stereotypes. As Eithne Quinn argues, not only are the "racial dimensions of the [Hollywood renaissance] story seldom considered" in film studies, Black filmmaking is always "treated separately" (60). Rarely, then, have films of what Quinn prefers to call the "black box office trend" been put in relation to the New Hollywood films, or the idea of cinema as an art form for that matter. This difference in framing is also evident in the reception of *Across 110th Street,* a film almost unequivocally blasted by critics in the large newspapers and magazines.

Kevin Thomas of the *Los Angeles Times* noted that the film "self-destructs by consistently seeking out to stomach-churning displays of unrelieved violence" ("'110th Street'" 25), and *Washington Post* critic Gary Arnold was so appalled he felt "tempted to swear out a warrant for the arrest of the filmmakers" ("'Across 110th Street'" 4). In the *New York Times,* Roger Greenspun questioned director Barry Shear's aesthetic decisions, accusing him of "observ[ing] life as if through a distorting lens or in extreme close-ups that reduce faces to nervous twitches, tense lips, and the like" ("Racial" 53). Not one review suggested that "violence was its meaning," as Pauline Kael had written about *Bonnie and Clyde,* or that the observation of life through a "distorting lens" might have been a conscious aesthetic decision rather than proof for a lack of cinematic quality.[55] In other words, *Across 110th Street* was taken at face value, excluded from the emergent discourse

55 Katie Mills has made an analogous case about the gendered logic underlying the reception of *Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore* (1974), Martin Scorsese's female-centered follow-up to his breakthrough with *Mean Streets:* "*Variety* also criticized Scorsese's now-signature moving camerawork in *Alice* […], even though this is more of the same quirky camera work that was hailed in *Mean Streets* (1973) as evidence of Scorsese's skill" (152).

of film as art, judged in terms of morals and values, criteria New Hollywood films were rarely subjected to.

After years of praise for the films of Sam Peckinpah with their uncompromising view of human violence, film critics were by and large not amused about *Across 110th Street*'s uncompromising view of urban violence. Furthermore, their reviews largely ignored or pushed to the sidelines the film's critique of structural racism. In a long scene in the middle of *Across 110th Street*, Jim Harris, one member of the group of petty criminals who had shot five mobsters during a drug deal and is now on the run, defends the original plan to intercept the deal disguised as cops against accusations by his girlfriend. The alternative, he explains in distress, would have been either prison or "some assholed job like a janitor or porter, you know, cleaning up after some goddamn white man." When his girlfriend remarks that he would have gotten a better job sooner or later, Harris, who is suffering from epilepsy, aggressively dares her to look at him, before engaging in a sudden eruption of emotion:

> You're looking at a 42-year-old ex-con n***er, with no schooling, no trade, and a medical problem. Who would want me for anything but washing cars or swinging a pick? You've gotta get your mind out of that white woman's dream.

In comparison to *Easy Rider*'s rather general allusion to economic forces (see chapter 1.1.), *Across 110th Street* articulates a much more nuanced understanding of the relation between poverty, race and class. While not being devoid of stereotypical depictions of Harlemites, the film portrays a Black underclass lacking social and economic opportunities except for criminal activity while giving the characters a voice to reflect on their condition.

Reviewer Kevin Thomas is one of the few to mention this scene, although he was quick to add that it is "vitiated by unspeakable displays of brutality" ("110th Street" 25). Most other reviewers ignored the film's indictment of racial injustice, a thematic concern not restricted to the film's narrative but integral to its production history. Before its release, the *L.A. Times* reported on an apprentice program *Across 110th Street* was part of, which aspired to bring more Black Americans into jobs behind the camera. Director Barry Shear called the program the "most important thing that has happened in the movie industry in the last 15 years," while Anthony Quinn, who not only acted in but also produced *Across 110th Street*, asserted that there "should be more blacks behind the camera, not just in front of it" (qtd. in Wolf, "On Location in Harlem" X24). While these statements might not have done much more than pay lip service to an ideal of equal opportunity, the article addressed a structural inequality that was all but ignored in the discourse around a new generation of visionary white filmmakers revolutionizing a stultified studio

system by their creative energy. Disregarding this production history as well as the film's allusion to the relation between race, unemployment and urban violence, the *New York Times* called the racial politics of the film "insulting to anyone who feels that race relations might consist of something better than improvised genocide" (Greenspun, "Racial" 53).

Apart from the violence, various critics took issues with two other aspects of *Across 110th Street.* One was an alleged lack of innovation. In the *Chicago Tribune,* Gene Siskel noted that the "film breaks no new ground" and mentioned its allegiance to the "familiar elements from 'In the Heat of the Night' (modern black cop vs. traditional white cop)" (5). What went unnoticed was the film's conscious reconfiguration of this motif. While *In the Heat of the Night,* winner of the academy award for best film in 1967, beating both *Bonnie and Clyde* and *The Graduate,* famously ends with a handshake between the white Southern cop and the Northern Black cop – an example for the film's involvement with "white liberalism in racial retreat" (Quinn 41) –, *Across 110th Street* lets this handshake slip away in its final image. After Mattelli is shot by a Black mobster in the showdown of the film, he sinks to the ground reaching for Pope's hand, who can only hold it for a short moment before having to let it go. The film emphasizes this moment in a close-up of hands, then catches the slipping away with a stop-motion technique, before the image finally freezes, hands out of touch, and the closing credits start to roll.[56]

A final accusation made against the film broached the issue of the film's moral compass. *Variety* noted that there was "not even a glamorous or romantic type character or angle for audiences to fantasy-empathize with" ("Across" 6), as if romantic Hollywood fantasies were not dismissed as old-fashioned in countless reviews of New Hollywood films. Greenspun even jokingly suggested that the machine gun itself "serves as the nearest substitute for an identifiable hero" ("Racial" 53), a comment clearly meant to indict the film, not to appreciate its cinematic depiction of violence as vital to an urban economy of crime. Thus, while the

56 Without privileging one specific reading of these last moments of the film, the image of a white and a black hand out of touch with each other at least suggest a pessimistic reconfiguration of the ending of *In the Heat of the Night.* It also allegorizes the closure of a window of opportunity for an alliance between white ethnic Harlemites and Black inhabitants of the city. As Maria Lizzi has shown, relations between Italian Americans, white society and African Americans were fiercely debated in the context of Mario Procaccino's run for mayor in 1969. During a rally in Harlem, Procaccino had famously announced, "My heart is as black as yours" to an audience of African Americans, a statement that would ultimately alienate Black voters. On the other hand, Lizzi argues, his candidacy revealed the "gulf between 'white ethnics' and 'white' society that still existed," making Procaccino "both unable and unwilling to claim either the whiteness of [mayor] Lindsay or the nonwhiteness of New York's minority groups (44, 71).

press tended to celebrate New Hollywood films for their unmitigated depiction of raw violence as an integral part of human experience in general and American culture in particular, reviewers did not consider the violence in *Across 110th Street* as part of the film's aesthetic or political outlook. As James Baldwin wrote in "The Fire Next Time": "In the United States, violence and heroism have been made synonymous except when it comes to blacks" (*Fire* 55). And while New Hollywood films were hailed for their moral ambiguity, which often meant not giving audiences clear clues about who the good and the bad guys were, *Across 110th Street* was reproached for the absence of any good character to identify with. For most reviewers, neither the desperate criminal trying to escape a life without opportunities nor the incorruptible cop facing racism within the police seemed able to occupy this position.

In other words, reviewers reproached exactly those aspects that were praised in appreciative reviews of many other films of the period, aspects still fundamental to New Hollywood exceptionalism.[57] The difference in the perception of expressive cinematic techniques, the experience of cinematic violence and the moral evaluation of characters hints at the social expectations that govern reception discourses, often related to a film's subject matter. In her text "The Negro Writer and His Roots," held as a speech in 1959 and published only in 1981, Lorraine Hansberry commented on this fissure in the reception of art. The "most fundamental illusion of all," Hansberry argued, is the "notion put forth that art is not, and should not and, when it is at its best, CANNOT possibly be 'social.' Social statement' is excluded from the realm of pure art, and true art is not social" (4). *Across 110th Street* was understood to be a social work of cinema, then, commenting on socio-economic issues, with quite a bleak outlook. It was, in other words, a film passionately disinvesting in the notion of identity crisis or questions about selfhood, and thus it was not considered art.

As I have argued, the idea of art in cinema discourse around 1970 was tied to the specific components that worked at the construction site of the New Hollywood. What critics might have found lacking in *Across 110th Street,* then, was an expressive energy rooted in the core self, a countercultural fantasy of movement escaping the constant flow of drugs and money. What they might have found lacking was a character embodying this fantasy, a character not implicated in the econ-

57 "First and foremost was the emphasis on moral ambiguity," Jonathan Kirshner starts his collection of attributes that made New Hollywood films distinct, "and it was this that represented [...] the emergence of a true 'adult' film––characters faced with morally complex choices, not necessarily between right and wrong, but made by imperfect people trying to find the best alternative from the menu of compromised choices that circumstances have made available to them" (*Hollywood's* 21).

omy of violence but standing above it, offering an existential overview instead of a myopic cynicism, an agency consciously and passionately at odds with the social forces portrayed in the film. Instead, everyone's enculturated in *Across 110th Street,* as the film pushes its characters into a network of economic and political relations and offers none of them a place from which to oversee this network; it invests not in a fantasy of untamed motion but provides a perspective on the circular confinement of a socio-economic regime. And the only character who rejects this network's underlying engine, the incorruptible Pope, lacks what a New Hollywood (anti-)hero requires: the affective authority of countercultural whiteness.

"Perhaps it's too real," *Variety* suggested when alluding to the film's use of authentic locations: "Those portions of it which aren't bloody violent are filled in by the squalid location sites in New York's Harlem or equally unappealing ghetto areas leaving no relief from depression and oppression" ("Across" 6). This was the image of the American city in crisis, an image engrained in public consciousness by the early 1970s and made even more vivid by New Hollywood's tendency to rely on location shooting and an aesthetics of gritty realism. *Across 110th Street*'s use of real locations and its uncompromising view of urban crime, however, seemed morally suspicious to reviewers, failing to produce the affective intensities they craved for – intensities they had already found in the New Hollywood urban thriller.

2.3.2 Racial Realism and Affective Policing: *The French Connection* and the Counterculturalization of the Crime Thriller

As the urban crisis discourse intensified precisely when cities all around the U.S. sought to attract the film industry and benefit from its recent move towards location shooting, cinematic imagery and public debates on inner cities supported each other in manifold ways. Like no other film, William Friedkin's *The French Connection* invited commentators to discuss the relation between cinema and the city in crisis. Arthur Knight began his review for the *Saturday Review* by pointing out that "[a]lthough our cities are rapidly becoming impossible to live in, they are, as our movies keep reminding us, great places for dying" ("SR November 6, 1971" 70). And Pauline Kael introduced her assessment of *The French Connection* by alluding to the irony of politicians eager for representations of their city at the precise moment these cities were purportedly falling apart and a new generation of filmmakers aspired to replace Old Hollywood fantasies by New Hollywood realism: "When Mayor Lindsay began his efforts to attract the movie-production business, it probably didn't occur to him or his associates that they were ushering in a new movie age of nightmare realism" ("French" 113).

After its release, *The French Connection* was widely praised for this nightmare realism. Comparing the reception discourses of *The French Connection* and *Dirty Harry*, Nicholas Godfrey argues that while the former film collected all the hallmarks of New Hollywood discourse and was thus received as a genuine artistic statement by a visionary director, reviewers and scholars tended to relegate the latter to the "out-of-favor mode of Hollywood past," its "Classic Hollywood directorial style [leaving] its problematic political content in clear sight" (161). In contrast to *Dirty Harry*, then, *The French Connection* was seen as a "willfully ambiguous film," marked by an aesthetics that director William Friedkin described as the attempt "to achieve as much spontaneity as possible." It is a difference in style and, consequently, in viewer expectations, Godfrey argues, that has biased contemporary readings of the film at the time as well as academic analyses to this day (153).

This difference in style is entangled with the emergence of an affective politics of expressivity and a countercultural fantasy of untamed motion, as reviewers hailed *The French Connection* as a prime example for a new aesthetics of cinematic movement. The setting of the film, however, transformed this fantasy. If the wide-open spaces of the American landscape entailed fantasies of escape and transgression for the couple on the run, the urban thriller's engagement with motion and stasis works on a different level. As French philosophers and activists Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari argue – who started their collaborative work roughly at the time of the emergence of the New Hollywood – the city is a "striated space par excellence" (*Thousand* 481). They oppose this concept of the "striated space," where "lines or trajectories tend to be subordinated to points: one goes from one point to another" to "smooth space," where "the points are subordinated to the trajectory" (*Thousand* 478). What they termed smooth space, then, was "a space of affects, more than one of properties" (*Thousand* 479). Their political philosophy, in a way, expressed in more abstract terms the privileging of movement-as-such over a logic of space dominated by points through which one could move but that were themselves static.[58] Put in their vocabulary, New Hollywood's countercultural fantasy of untamed motion could be reconfigured as an aesthetic project of smoothing space. And as Stanley Corkin observes, early 1970s films such as *The French Connection*, *Serpico* (1973) or *Dog Day Afternoon* (1975) were indeed eager to "significantly expand the horizontal domain of the city while picturing it as

58 As should become clear over the course of this section, I mobilize Deleuze's and Guattari's concepts of striated and smooth space not as a privileged interpretative framework but as another example of historical affinities between cultural theory and cultural context. Instead of theorizing the film through a particular strand of cultural theory, I emphasize "the productive involvement of [...] academic modes of explanation in the reproduction of popular culture itself" (Kelleter, "Five Ways" 23).

less vertically imposing" (107). To police this horizontal space effectively, the old ways would not do. If the city had become a rhizome, it needed to be policed affectively.

From Icons to Affects: On Location in Europe and Brooklyn

While filmmakers and their crews had set out towards authentic locations in the vast countryside of America to shoot *Bonnie and Clyde* and *Easy Rider,* to a world of highways, small towns and endless horizons, the American city was the next frontier to be conquered by New Hollywood's desire for authentic realism and a new sense of space. Urban films in the 1970s were no longer set "in a mythical Big Town, U.S.A." (Canby, "New York's" 1), they fed on the authenticity of their specific locations. Just like the open roads, the New Hollywood mobilized urban spaces as settings for cinematic fantasies of untamed motion as much as for iconographic reasons. The crime film was particularly well suited to the new practice of urban location shooting, and New York City became central to this New Hollywood genre.

As noted above, cities increasingly tried to attract the film industry after the late 1960s, and New York was at the forefront of this strategy. In 1966, Mayor Lindsay had created the Mayor's Office of Motion Pictures and Television to facilitate location shooting in the city. From then on, the city government no longer interfered in the content of the films shot in New York, allowing Hollywood studios to exploit the emergent discourse of urban crisis. This constellation incited a promising mixture of provocative and timely subject matter and the attraction values of real New York locations, accompanied by a New Hollywood aesthetics praised as culturally superior to earlier forms of filmmaking. As Simon notes, New York's "reputation for cultural experimentation," supported by the image of a "breakdown of traditional civic authority, [appealed] to filmmakers who were tempted to break cinematic rules" (475). *The French Connection* is a prime example of this combination of social and aesthetic developments.

The plot of the film revolves around a French heroin syndicate that smuggles drugs into New York while detective Popeye Doyle and his partner Buddy Russo, both white, try to get hold of them. Most reviewers found this plot a rather standard cops-and-robber narrative; what excited them more than the narrative, however, was the film's realist depiction of the city. In the *Los Angeles Times,* Charles Champlin praised the film for its "celebration of real places and actual things," arguing that because "[n]o studio setups were used [...] 'The French Connection' has the gritty authenticity of a first-rate documentary" ("High Adventure" F1). "You can taste the pollution in the air his characters breathe," Richard Schickel marveled in *Life,* "smell the garbage that seems always to be overflowing its containers" ("Real Look" 13). In the *New York Times*, Stephen Farber, convinced that these "images of

the city in decay stay etched in memory," lauded Friedkin for having "managed to find real New York locations that look almost preternaturally eerie, sinister, and fantastic" ("A Cops" 15). And even Pauline Kael, who was critical of the film in general, called *The French Connection* "the most 'New York' of all the recent New York movies" ("French" 114).

Shot with hand-held cameras in scenes without dialogue, often making use of long lenses, *The French Connection* urbanized New Hollywood's desire for immediacy, eager to convey the "sense of a documentaristic lack of premeditation in the profilmic realm" (Ramaeker 154–155). Cinematographer Owen Roizman did not employ any lights outside to avoid artificiality, even intentionally underexposed the film to get more graininess and grey into the image (Mask 66). Thus, the film became a prime example of what Lawrence Webb calls the "docufiction impulse of the New York crime film" (111), an impulse inseparable from the discourse on urban crime and its own docufiction of the city-in-crisis.[59] The gritty realism of *The French Connection,* however, was not only a question of production techniques and their aesthetic affect, it was also actively created by a constant opposition of different forms of cinematic movement in the image itself.

Like *Bonnie and Clyde* and *The Getaway, The French Connection* starts with a transition from stasis to movement, but rather than historical periods or abstract spaces of freedom and confinement, the film contrasts two different places with each other. The opening credits, rendered onto a black canvas, end with the text block "MARSEILLES," which is then placed, via an old-fashioned visual effect, in the middle of the frame, only to shrink and disappear into an establishing shot of the city of Marseilles and its port. In the subsequent shots, *The French Connection* enacts a small narrative without any dialogue: a man follows another man through the streets of the old town, before he is shot to death by a third man in the entrance of an apartment building. This last part of the sequence is edited in a style reminiscent of classic film noir: the bewildered man looking at his attacker, a close-up of a gun, a medium shot of the man falling to the ground.

After this prologue, the film cuts to "BROOKLYN", the white letters now relegated to the margin of the frame instead of vanishing into the picture. The street-level image establishes the scene not from long-shot distance but from right within, with the two detectives, Popeye Doyle and his partner Russo, already present in

59 After all, the appraisal of the film's realism echoed the way in which realism was employed as a metaphor in the crisis discourses of the 1970s. Irving Kristol famously described a neoconservative, as which he identified, as a "liberal mugged by reality" (qtd. in D. Murray 34). Realism described a new aesthetic outlook of genre film, but also a more serious attention to crime, a sort of backlash against the romanticized view of the couple on the run epitomized by *Bonnie and Clyde*, and against liberal attitudes that were too 'soft on crime.'

this first frame, apparently on an undercover mission. As Webb examines in his study *The Cinema of Urban Crisis*, "the city as setting and subject became central to many New Hollywood filmmakers and their rejection of classical tropes, iconography and ideology" (30), that is, the city itself was no longer a trope in itself, exploited for iconographic reasons. And indeed, if an establishing shot characterizes a location, presenting "the unchallenged assumptions necessary to allow the scene to unfold" (Nadel 143), the first Brooklyn images of *The French Connection* create the motif of a city-in-crisis rather than New York as a city-icon.

Russo then enters a bar where loud music plays for an all-Black clientele, apparently looking for criminal activity. While searching through one of the customers without much success, a Black man speeds over the counter towards the outside, inciting a long chase sequence through Brooklyn locations, which appear increasingly run-down and bleak. The fast-paced scene with Doyle and Russo running behind the fugitive stands in direct contrast to the slow and careful observational routines in the France prologue; the cinematic rendering of the world of the European drug traffickers corresponds much more to classical Hollywood continuity editing, while the Brooklyn scenes come closer to a New Hollywood aesthetics of discontinuity, a documentary realism and an emphasis on authentic locations at the expense of iconic settings. Thus, a succession of shots the viewer is invited to make sense of gives way to a nervous and hectic chase sequence she is invited to experience – *The French Connection*'s transition from stasis to motion carries along a distinction between old and New Hollywood.

If *The French Connection* thus withholds the possibility of a bird's eye view on New York and abstains from exploiting its iconography, creating only 'the streets' as an affective space to be experienced at eye-level, then this procedure of smoothing the "striated space par excellence" spawns a different type of crime film, a different outlook on police work. "In a city that is literally moving and extending beyond control," Corkin argues in an analysis of the film, "it becomes even more necessary for agents of law to police its borders to control those variable elements always entering this space" (116). To control the variables in a smooth space, however, a "space of contact, of small tactile or manual actions of contact" (Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand* 371), requires mastering the art of losing control.

Losing Control to Control the City: Notes on a Car Chase

Losing control is what Popeye Doyle does in the film's most famous scene, a car-train chase sequence appreciated in every review of the film, analyzed in every academic analysis of it. During the time of its release, even those critical of *The French Connection* praised this scene's technical execution and its thrilling effect of pure movement. "The film has all the depth of a mud puddle," *Time* reviewer

Jay Cocks wrote, "but Director William Friedkin [...] sets such a frantic pace that there is hardly a chance to notice, much less care" ("Chasing" 54). In a more negative assessment of this dynamic, Pauline Kael formulated a left-handed compliment, commenting that there's "nothing in the movie that you enjoy thinking over afterward" as "[e]very [...] effect in the movie [...] is achieved by noise, speed, and brutality" ("French" 115). As I will argue in the following, *The French Connection*'s famous chase sequence is also an affective scenario that epitomizes New Hollywood's fantasy of untamed motion, its theory of cinematic affect and its radical contextuality.

Nicholas Godfrey describes the five-minute sequence as expressing an obsession "with a perpetual sense of cinematic motion, [the] constantly moving, often hand-held shots cut together at a rapid pace, emphasizing montage over long takes or spatial coherence" (160). This rapid pace seems to confound even the film's protagonist in the beginning of the sequence as Doyle loses track of the gangster he is following in one of the subway streetcars that run above the Brooklyn streets. He ultimately decides to follow the elevated subway by hijacking a car, kick-starting a rampant racing duel between the train and the car underneath the tracks. The scene nervously jumps back and forth from shots of Doyle in the car to scenes from the inside of the train, while exterior shots from a street-level perspective underscore the risk involved in Doyle's endeavor, as he is often barely able to avoid crushing into other cars. As Ramaeker describes the realist aesthetics of the scene, the hand-held-camerawork in the shots of Doyle "magnifies physical motion to effect a stronger emotional response to the scene as a whole, blurring the contrasting stylistic treatment of the actions on the street and on the train to create an impression of constant, frantic movement" (158).

By juxtaposing images of the gangster on the stable terrain of the streetcar and Doyle's frantic movements in the car, *The French Connection* further distinguishes between different types of motion and speed, reenacting the opposition between old and New Hollywood, between smooth and striated space, that is connected to the antagonists of the plot. Long shots from above as well as from the side contrast the linear movement of the vehicle on rails, unable to leave its trajectory, with the loose and non-linear movements of the car underneath, forced to discover and invent as it speeds along. Moreover, while the images of Doyle in his car convey nothing else than the affective challenge of keeping up, there is a narrative going on in the train: the gangster forces the conductor to skip stations and keep moving forward, but ultimately the train is doomed to inevitably arrive at an end point, the final station, while Doyle in his car is not confined by any point of arrival, completely in charge of the streets.

In the following, I want to suggest three different ways to make this scene productive for the aims of this book. First, the chase sequence exemplifies how films

themselves constantly engendered their own theories of cinematic affect. The scene constructs New Hollywood realism as an expressive aesthetic practice, engendering a cinematic movement that literally leaves the tracks to create affective intensities. Only one of the two antagonists of the chase is in the driver's seat: while Doyle is creating the car's movements, the French gangster is dependent on the movement of the train; while the former embodies the countercultural fantasy of untamed motion, the latter is literally trapped in a medium. The scene thus offers itself as an allegory for young New Hollywood directors subverting the strict conventions of the studio system by carving out new roads underneath the rigid railways of the old Hollywood, which were only ever leading from one station to the next, bound to the same old tracks, doomed for disaster.[60]

Second, the sequence illustrates the increasing significance of an emergent reception discourse, taking seriously the films' theories of affect by creating an understanding of cinema as an affective experience. Just as reviewers defended *Bonnie and Clyde* for the film's capacity to incite emotions without manipulating them, both skeptical and enthusiastic reviewers of *The French Connection* praised the chase scene in terms of its affective value and its impact on audiences. Charles Champlin found the scene more exciting than a similarly long sequence in *Bullitt*, because "we seem to be participants, not spectators" ("High Adventure" 1). For the same reasons, Michael Shedlin qualified the scene as a most dangerous one: "It is during the car chase that we are manipulated into an excited state where we will be susceptible to influences which would ordinarily be subject to scrutiny," he wrote in *Film Quarterly* (4). Both comments, while coming to contrary conclusions concerning the film's quality, evaluate the scene through its capacity to affect, either applauding or fearing a type of cinema that has the capacity to disrupt a viewer's cognitive apparatus by engendering affective intensities.

Finally, the sequence reconfigures New Hollywood's origin film, inverting the logic of a scene in *Bonnie and Clyde* in which the police cars pursuing the gangsters turn around at the state border between Texas and Oklahoma. While in 1967 the Barrow gang transgressed borders to get rid of state forces restricted by legal limits, it is detective Doyle who transgresses rules and stretches limits to combat crime in *The French Connection.* For Art Simon, the pleasure of the scene derives exactly from this "liberation from the rules of the road," and Doyle's chase becomes "the ultimate expression of the need to break the law in order to enforce it" (484). *The French Connection*, the chase sequence illustrates this more than

60 As Jonas Mekas had already written in his *Movie Journal* in 1962: "Until now cinema could move only in a robotlike step, on preplanned tracks, indicated lines. Now it is beginning to move freely, by itself, according to its own wishes and whims" (55).

any other in the film, mobilizes the countercultural fantasy of untamed motion for a form of affective policing.

When the train reaches its final destination, Doyle is able to get hold of the gangster on the stairs of a subway station. As it is not an option to let him escape, he shoots him in the back. In the documentary feature "Anatomy of a Chase" on the Blu-Ray edition of *The French Connection,* director William Friedkin remembers the shooting of the scene together with producer Philip D'Antoni. D'Antoni recalls making a case for changing the ending to the scene because Doyle shooting the gangster in the back was "tantamount to committing murder." Friedkin, however, was convinced that "it would work." In the video, D'Antoni recalls:

> Fast forward, we're in the premiere watching the movie, and we come to that particular scene, and there were 1200 people in the audience, and when that scene played, I held my breath, 1200 people stood up and applauded. Billy ran up to me in the theater and said, "It worked for me, it works for them, and you know what, Randy, it is also going to be the poster shot." ("Anatomy")

The video actualizes the idea of the film as an affective experience and imagines the chase sequence to be at the heart of this experience; it evokes a right-wing fantasy of cheering for vigilantism; and it further positions the figure of the maverick cop at the film's center, endowing him with an affective agency that allows him to get away with everything.

Affective Rewards: Policing Black Spaces during the War on Crime

The connection between race, urban space and cinema is not an invention of the New Hollywood. In his assessment of the 1970s city thriller's aesthetic innovations, Paul Ramaeker emphasizes continuity rather than radical breaks, pointing, among other things, to the importance of the tradition of film noir for the New York crime film of the New Hollywood period. "The salience of *noir* innovations for the revisionist *policier* is not only a matter of style, but even more so one of character and representation, as the *noir* admitted a degree of moral ambiguity into the depiction of the police as a social body, previously seen to be above reproach" (150). What Joel Dinerstein wrote about Dashiell Hammett's detective Sam Spade, then, rings true for Popeye Doyle as well: "he was a cynical, modern, decommissioned urban knight, the tough romantic protector of situational truth and kinetic individuality" (237).

Actualizing the legacy of the film noir city, however, means to carry along its racial imaginary, described by Eric Lott as a setting in which "left-liberal perceptions of decline harmonized with center-right ones in imagining white selves cast into a nightmarish world of otherness and racial aliens" (*Black* 116). Particularly in

New York, this racial imaginary came to the forefront during the demographic transformations the city underwent in the 1960s and 1970s, when the "collapse of the postwar social compact in New York happened at the very moment when it was losing its white middle-class population, when more and more of those using city services were low-income minorities" (Phillips-Fein 8). In a way, *The French Connection* allegorizes Richard Nixon's strategy in declaring a war on drugs in the year of the film's release. Nixon used the international character of the drug trade to claim authority over a political field he then used to police inner cities; and although it is a European drug trafficking ring that invades the world of *The French Connection* from the outside, at the center of this world is the white American cop constantly moving through spaces marked as black.

When Russo enters the bar in the first Brooklyn scene, the film cuts from his glance over the location to an image of Black visitors hanging out at the bar and dancing. The demographic development of inner cities in the postwar period – marked by an actual white flight rather than merely a fantasy of movement – as well as the social and cultural change incited by the civil rights and Black Liberation movements could not help but effect the genre dynamics and visual economy of the resurgent urban thriller. From the moment of its inception, *The French Connection* was steeped in a racialized imaginary of the city. These images, to use Sara Ahmed's word, "stuck," as emotional attitudes that were already racialized in themselves.[61] To interpret the white man glancing over a bar filled with Blacks as a situation in which a cop overlooks a potentially criminal milieu does not presuppose any knowledge about the characters of the film; as Lisa Cacho argues, the racialization of crime rests not merely on the representation of stereotypes; instead, "the black body is *necessary* for an audience to *recognize* criminal activity" (2, original emphases).

In the postwar period, a thinking on racial inequality as an overwhelming force that produced a distinct "culture" accompanied an increasingly visible statistical discourse on black crime. In his 1944 study *An American Dilemma,* Gunnar Myrdal famously argued that "American Negro culture is not something independent of general American culture" but rather a "distorted development, or a pathological condition, of the general American culture" (qtd. in R. H. King 126).[62] While

61 In *The Cultural Politics of Emotion,* Sara Ahmed develops a framework and vocabulary around emotions that "track[s] how emotions circulate between bodies, examining how they 'stick' as well as move" (*Cultural Politics* 4).

62 In her study *White Philanthropy,* historian Maribel Morey examines the history of Myrdal's report and the involvement of the Carnegie Corporation in its development, ultimately describing it as "part of a longer-term effort [...] to finance cooperative studies in the social sciences in order to

intellectuals and policymakers, then, turned to theories of racial oppression, acknowledging the legacy of slavery and Jim Crow, they essentialized the effects of this oppression as a self-reproducing social and cultural pathology – a logic that resembled Norman Mailer's argument in the "White Negro," who acknowledged the influence of oppression in shaping the characteristics of his instinctively existentialist "Negro" only to then fetishize these qualities. Both the discourse of existential hip and debates around race and crime isolated 'Black culture' – either to celebrate it as a heroic form of intuitive existentialism or to problematize it as a cultural pathology.

The problem with liberal discourse about race in the 1960s, then, was not its ignorance of oppression but, in Elizabeth Hinton's words, its belief "that cultural pathologies had taken on a life of their own, independent of structural forces, an interpretation that limited the range of possibilities in the solutions they proposed" (39). This belief rested in a racial distinction that goes to the heart of entanglements between notions of selfhood, affect, and race. As Naomi Murakawa argues:

> In the logic of postwar racial liberalism, [...] racism was a psychological defect, but its symptoms manifested differently on the white-black binary. For white people, racism was an irrationality, a pollutant to the real self. For black people, racism was an injury, a disfigurement of the psychological development and therefore constitutive of the real self. (13)

This thinking, reinforced in the 1960s by Daniel Patrick Moynihan's governmental report on the "Negro family" with its notorious diagnosis of a "tangle of pathology" pervading the modern black family, paved the way for a new focus on urban crime and policing, as policymakers increasingly convinced themselves "that poverty was the root cause of crime and that community behavior was the root cause of poverty" (Hinton 93). By the 1970s, these ideas were firmly in place while urban riots in 1965 and 1967 and rising crime rates led policymakers in the Johnson administration to conclude that "the success of the crime war largely depended on the surveillance and control of low-income urban youth" (Hinton 115).[63]

---

help white policymakers in the Anglo-American world maintain domination over Black people" (6 – 7).

63 Jonathan Simon notes how the discourse on high crime rates actually followed the decision of policymakers to focus on crime: "Politicians began to turn to crime as a vehicle for constructing a new political order before the crime boom was recognized," Simon argues, citing both white southern politicians––finding in crime a "convenient line of retreat from explicit support for legal racial segregation"––and liberals like Bobby Kennedy––"looking for social problems against which to form innovative government strategies"––as examples of this strategy (25).

In one of the first Brooklyn shots of *The French Connection,* even before Russo enters the bar, a close-up of Popeye Doyle in a Santa Claus dress is succeeded by an image of four Black kids enjoying his performance; a shot-reverse-shot that even in its fleeting presence carries along two recurrent themes within debates about inner cities and crime control in the 1960s: a discussion on how to improve relations between police officers and the communities they worked in, and the N.Y.P.D.'s increasing reliance on foot patrols in low-income neighborhoods. While the Kerner Commission, established by President Johnson to investigate the 1967 urban riots, recommended to appreciate "the work of officers who improve relations with alienated members of the community and by so doing minimize the potential for disorder," Hinton comments that in fact these officers "rarely received the kind of recognition as did their counterparts who successfully apprehended suspects during high-speed chases or shoot-outs" (130). This affective benefit finds its way into the first scenes of *The French Connection,* as the cop-as-community-entertainer quickly transforms into the movement-action-cop, always ready to chase down a suspect when the opportunity presents itself.

In fact, the character of Popeye Doyle had been molded after N.Y.P.D. detective Eddie Egan who, at the time of the film's release, had already seen his day as an undercover cop and apparently suffered from an affective deficit of his own.[64] "These past few years I've felt so confined," Egan told *Life* in the year of the film's release, "typing up nine copies of this, fifteen copies of that," when what he really wanted was to "get out there and knock their brains and put them in the can and make it safe for the guy who walks to work at six in the morning" (Kluge 88). In earlier days, Egan had been infamous both for his arrest quota and for managing a wide variety of camouflages in working undercover. A *New York Times* article that reported on his retirement stated that he had "impersonated Santa Claus, a hot-dog vender, a deaf-mute, a priest and a theatrical agent in order to raise his total of 'collars,' which finally amounted, he maintained, to more than 8,000 arrests in 16 years" (Lelyveld 33).

Although the article presents Egan as an eccentric cop, more an exception to the rule than a prime example of the NYPD, the description of his practices is much in line with political developments in the early 1970s. Along with new punitive policies including mandatory minimum sentences for second armed offenses and the reduction of judicial discretion, the Nixon administration introduced programs set out to change the practice of surveillance in low-income neighborhoods by emphasizing the necessity of foot patrol. One such foot patrol experiment took

64 Egan was eager to accompany the production of *The French Connection* as an advisor for Gene Hackman, and he even played a small part as Doyle's supervisor.

place in New York in the fall of 1970, only months before *The French Connection* started shooting, initiating a new era of foot patrol in plainclothes and disguise.[65] Law officials soon attributed a reduction of street crime to this program, feeling "it gave a new sense of purpose to frustrated officers" (Hinton 191). A sense of purpose, recognition through high-speed chases, dress-up-games: more than only a new type of detective or a typical New Hollywood anti-hero, Popeye Doyle embodied a new punitive policy that rewarded increasing arrest quotas and the effective surveillance of inner cities.

While enacted locally, these new strategies were in fact enforcements of federal crime policies created under the Nixon administration. This fact aligns Popeye Doyle with an emergent carceral state, but New Hollywood's investment in countercultural whiteness and its anti-institutional ethos ensured that *The French Connection* tended toward anti-statism. Throughout the film, Doyle must face criticism for his unusual methods and intuitive style, especially by FBI agent Bill Muldering, who provokes him into a fist fight at one point. Hence, even if Doyle, as Mia Mask notes, is "[p]olitically aligned with the establishment" (63), aesthetically, he is set in opposition to it. What SDS leader Tom Hayden in 1966 described as an "insurgency within American institutions" (87), *The French Connection* and other 1970s crime films translated into an insurgency within the police force: cops on the ground warding off interventions by higher levels of government, battling against superiors and colleagues that were sticking to the rules – because all they ever wanted was, as Egan reported in *Life*, "[s]taying with a case, dogging to and not following regulations too close, which I don't do when I know I'm right" (Kluge 88).

In sum, *The French Connection* is embedded in a particular history of policing in urban inner-cities and an emergent discourse of a war on crime on a national level. The intricate relation between a new realism in film and the discourse of a city in crisis was as much a matter of historical co-emergence as of conscious aspirations to realism on the part of the filmmakers. Friedkin, according to Godfrey, "was obsessed with instilling in his performers the reality of police work and the narcotics trace," reckoning that "their immersion in the daily activities of police procedure would lend authenticity to their performances" (153). Hence, this relation influenced not only the bigger picture but also specific details within the films themselves, as new policies on crime and the urban realism of New Holly-

65 The "plainclothes strategy was bent on catching criminals," with officers "dressed as rabbis, elderly women, cab drivers, bums, drunks, and tennis players," and with "wigs, wheelchairs, and other props on hand to assist in that process" (Hinton 190). The idea was that officers "walking the streets of high crime neighborhoods […] would act as a much stronger deterrent to crime than would simply continuing to increase motorized patrol and stockpiling equipment, as crime war programs during the 1960s had encouraged" (Hinton 187).

wood invested in the affective appeal of policing the rhizome of the city. Eddie Egan was not an exception to the rule but the prototype of a new kind of New York cop, increasingly encouraged to raise his arrest quota and invent creative ways to do so. The New Hollywood, with characters such as Popeye Doyle, charged this new cop with its affective investment in countercultural fantasies of untamed motion and its obsession with moral ambiguity.

The Man on the Streets: Countercultural Cops and the Realism of Racism

For Ramaeker, the figure of the "maverick cop," standing "exactly at the intersection of the establishment and the citizenry," is a "natural subject for the kind of social commentary associated with [genre] revisionism" (150). And Eddy Egan seemed a natural template for an affective politics of expressivity and its fantasies of transgression. In an interview shortly after the film's release, William Friedkin remembered how Eddy Egan had told him the first time they met: "No matter how long you stay with me or how well you get to know me, you'll find that there's only three things about me that you need to know: I drink beer, I fuck broads, and I break heads" (Shedlin 7). Playing Egan, then, offered Gene Hackman a rare opportunity to embody a new ideal of selfhood, an opportunity he used for a "wholesale transformation into his interpretation of Egan: nervy, compulsive, all impulsive hunch" (Godfrey 156). Endowed with expressivity, Popeye Doyle is not only an intermediary between establishment and citizenry, though. He also links an earlier model of countercultural whiteness to an emergent cultural motif of working-class resentment against minorities and elites.

For Friedkin, Doyle's character was the clue to the whole film. In a *New York Times* report on his new project *The Exorcist* (see chapter 4.2.), Friedkin recounted how in *The French Connection* he had wanted to "put a cop up there like they've never seen before, whatever complexities are there in the original guy I gotta be able to find and hold onto. This cop who's good and evil, as much victim as victimizer, you don't see that in 'Naked City'" (Chase D9). Commentators on the film concurred, as almost every review praised both the character of Popeye Doyle and Gene Hackman's performance, much in the same vein they had singled out Jack Nicholson's performance as George Hanson in *Easy Rider* two years earlier. Arthur Knight lauded Hackman because, as "the overwrought, overworked, overzealous narco squad detective, [he] packs a drive and intensity that make one at once grateful and troubled that he is on our side of the law" ("SR November 6, 1971" 70). And *Life*'s Richard Schickel summarized Doyle as follows: "He is a New York cop, and as played by Gene Hackman in *The French Connection* he seems to me to come closer to the real thing [...] than any other movie detective I've ever seen" ("Real Look" 13).

Realness, moral ambiguity, intensity were qualities cherished in postwar discourses on selfhood, and *The French Connection* articulated these qualities in conjunction with an emphasis on class and white masculinity. In one scene, Charnier and one of his men enter a French restaurant to eat mussels while the film repeatedly cuts to a freezing Doyle waiting for them to finish on the other side of the street. The French gangsters select a fancy dessert in the foreground before the camera zooms in on the window of the restaurant and spots Popeye in the background, finishing his slice of pizza and, with a disgusted gesture, pours his coffee onto the streets. Friedkin explained how in these scenes he was "obviously trying to make the audiences identify with Charnier," that the gangster was supposed to be seen "as a businessman, a man with charm and taste," while at the same time Doyle lacks these qualities: "Charnier embodies almost all the qualities that people are brought up to think are virtuous. The intention was to mix up these elements. It's not about black and white" (Shedlin 7).

Reading the scene in this way, however, not only ignores the extent to which *The French Connection* is embedded in a discourse lacking complexity – Richard Nixon called street-level drug dealers and their clients "the very vermin of humanity" (Hinton 204) – but also the class dimension of the sequence at hand, an element not lost on reviewers. Rather than being the man "who has no taste, no charm", Doyle is, quite literally, the *man on the streets*, watching from the outside as rich people dine in expensive restaurants. His portrayal as a hard-working man with rough edges was in line with a whole tradition of cop narratives that presented police work "as the labor of a dedicated, hard-bitten knight of the city, an everyday man-in-shirtsleeves servant of the mostly white working class" (Wilson 16). Stephen Farber alluded to this discourse when discussing the scene, arguing that the "underpaid cop is really one of the deprived members of contemporary society, even though he is defending 'law and order' for the privileged and the complacent." This dynamic, for Farber, shows the film's superior wits in comparison to those "[g]lib anti-Establishment films which cast the cop as American Fascist" ("A Cops" 15).

What Farber finds to be an introduction of complexity is also, I argue, a further reconfiguration of countercultural whiteness, endowing this subject position with new social markers while maintaining its antagonism to confining social forces as such. In the same year *The French Connection* was released, cop-turned-novelist Joseph Wambaugh published his first novel *The Centurions,* pulling "out of LAPD ideology [...] a decidedly blue-collar [thread] [...] to mythologize an essence of frontline policing" (Wilson 117). Descriptions such as "overworked and underpaid" suggest an economic element within the character of Doyle, but the actual cinematic images restrict themselves to the affective value of hard street work, ignoring to the material hardship it is based on. This aesthetic strategy was

in line with what Jefferson Cowie has analyzed as President Nixon's political strategy of the same period: to "recast the definition of 'working class' from economics to culture" ("Nixon's" 282). *The French Connection* merged this blue-collar ethic and this new cultural function of the white working-class with New Hollywood's investment in countercultural whiteness and the affective politics of expressivity.

Like *Easy Rider*'s George Hanson, then, Doyle's countercultural whiteness occupies a middle position: his class background, created by a cultural rather than economic perspective on class, distinguishes him from both the rich drug traffickers and a non-working black urban population that primarily signifies criminal activity in the film, and draws a more authentic picture of inner-city space. In *The French Connection,* the affective logic of expressivity attaches itself to something Christopher Wilson calls "cop populism," a specific politics "often embedded in the world of what are commonly called white ethnics, working-class and predominantly Catholic Americans of European extraction" (16).

In a 1969 article on the "revolt of the white lower-middle class", Pete Hamill quoted Brooklyn democrat Hugh Carey as saying that the "average working stiff [...] thinks society has failed him and in a way, if he is white, he is often more alienated than the black man" (16).[66] Countercultural whiteness, in the transition of New Hollywood discourse from *Bonnie and Clyde* to *The French Connection,* replaced its critique of middle-class squareness with a working-class version of an anti-institutional ethos, inverting the image of the working-class as hostile soldiers of the establishment painted by *Easy Rider.* Besides *The Getaway*'s reconfiguration of existential hip into the existential (male, white) self, this was a second course countercultural whiteness was set on, one that would ultimately prove more lasting than Peckinpah's existentialism (see chapter 4.3.). It was a course not merely steeped in a racialized imagery but employing an open racial politics, as for several of those championing the film, Doyle's problematic character traits were proof of the character's vital ambiguity, and thus part of *The French Connection*'s most important virtue.

In his *New York Times* appraisal of the film, Stephen Farber contrasted Popeye Doyle to Steve McQueen's Bullitt and Sidney Poitier's Virgil Tibbs [from *In the Heat of the Night*], who "were still superheroes, cops with a code." Doyle, on the other hand, was "a cop of a different order – brutal, racist, foulmouthed, petty, compulsive, lecherous. But even at his most appalling, he is recognizably human, something more than the one-dimensional 'pig' of current liberal folklore" ("A Cops" 15). Likewise, Charles Champlin applauded the film for taking for granted "that de-

66 Jefferson Cowie argues that Hamill's article, like no other text, influenced Richard Nixon's political strategy with respect to a Northern white working-class ("Nixon's" 261).

tectives are human beings with the usual quota of frailties but also (if we are lucky) a compensating, compulsive drive to catch criminals" ("High Adventure" F1). Years later, in a review of the third installment of the *Dirty Harry* series, *The Enforcer* (1976), Jean Hoelscher of the *Hollywood Reporter* critiqued the film via a comparison with *The French Connection* and its protagonist: "[T]his is no 'French Connection,' and Dirty Harry is no Popeye Doyle with his engaging eccentricities and cunning style" (3).

Hence, just as one reviewer of *Bonnie and Clyde* had emphasized the affective value of a film that made you "laugh and cry simultaneously, and share with you the humanity that is in ALL humans," (see chapter 1.3.) Popeye Doyle's emotional complexity turned him into a stand-in for humanity as such: his "engaging eccentricities" make him "recognizably human," his expressivity counters a stultified culture of rigid representations and "liberal folklore." As Godfrey notes, this framing of the film worked not by actively obscuring the film's problematic content but by "shifting the context of critical reception so that Popeye's racism [...] may be regarded as unflinching realism rather than underlying bigotry" (162).

The reception discourse of *The French Connection,* then, not only illuminates New Hollywood discourse and its entanglement with political developments, but also raises important questions about cinematic affect, ethics, and criticism in general. Todd Berliner has argued that commentators attacking the film, in reproaching the politics of its protagonist, made the mistake to "not trust that other spectators saw in the movie what they did," rendering Popeye Doyle as problematic while denying the general audience the capacity to come to the same conclusions. Invoking the ending of the film, in which Doyle accidentally shoots an F.B.I. agent while the drug trafficker disappears, Berliner argues that the film is "a police detective film that ends by discrediting the detective" (112).

While it would certainly be possible to acquit the film by reading it closely enough to gather the needed evidence, I am less interested in making political judgments about films as coherent texts than in examining the affective scenarios that govern a film's reception discourse, endowing them with cultural agency in the first place. Just as a racist character in a film alone does not engender racism within its audience, to find affective ambiguity in the rendering of a character as a film scholar does not mean that this character incited ambiguous affective responses. As Paul Gormley remarks in a discussion of *Reservoir Dogs,* affective responses can be "experienced as immediate and bodily, but actually caused by racially organized systems of visual perception" (13). In the year after *The French Connection*'s initial release, the *New York Times*' Garrett Epps recounted: "I saw the film in a Southern city, and the white audience responded enthusiastically to the scenes of Doyle roughing up Black people and taunting them with his peculiar question: 'You pick your feet in Poughkeepsie, boy?'" (D15) And in the music mag-

azine *Crawdaddy*, the reviewer characterized Popeye as the "victim of a mummified status quo except this victim isn't a visionary hippie or a romanticized rebel, he's a grubby, beer-guzzling, pizza-eating reactionary" ("review of 'The Getaway'"), a statement illustrating how subject positions were easily able to cross political lines within a political imaginary permeated by the opposition between the singular self and social forces.

Representative of a dominant interpretation of Popeye Doyle as human-qua-ambiguity, the *Crawdaddy* review also leads back to the issues many reviewers had with *Across 110th Street*. The Black criminals in that film not only committed murder, but they were also unable to occupy the position of "victim of a mummified status quo," a description echoing midcentury discourses of conformity and identity crisis, connoting abstract diagnoses of stasis rather than social critiques of oppression. While *Across 110th Street* was devoid of any characters contemporary reviewers were willing to identify with, Doyle was the perfect vehicle for a new understanding of authentic subjecthood as expressively singular, morally ambivalent and at odds with the mummified status quo.

The idiosyncrasies of New Hollywood actors, in turn, charged characters such as Doyle with affective appeal while at the same time opening these idiosyncrasies to be politicized in various ways. As Mia Mask forcefully argued, it was the "gritty racial element of New Hollywood aesthetics [that] made sexism and bigotry the hallmark of unapologetic white male disobedience, machismo, and don't-fuck-with-me-cool" (66). In the emphatically ambivalent cinema of the New Hollywood, Popeye's blunt racism and male chauvinism did not spoil his potential as a character to identify with for white audiences; rather, it enabled him to become an exemplary of the New Hollywood anti-hero charged with countercultural whiteness and legitimized culturally through performances of male expressivity.

Chapter 3
Countercultural Fantasies of Emotional Truth

> We, the therapists, are in a world in which the inner is already split from the outer, and before the inner can become outer, and the outer become inner, we have to re-discover our 'inner' world. – R.D. Laing (qtd. in Staub, *Madness* 57–58)

> Boy, if I could write a song like that, a song about the way I feel now, it would be a hit. – Kit in *Badlands*

> No matter how fast I run, I can never seem to get away from me. – Jackson Browne

In times of urban crisis, an escape from the city seemed to be a natural reaction. In 1970, James Dickey wrote the novel *Deliverance*, about a group of men fleeing the city for a weekend in the wilderness. He soon adapted it into a screenplay to be directed by British director John Boorman. The narrative of *Deliverance,* a film released in 1972, follows four men with white-collar jobs who plan to canoe down a wild river in Georgia. Lewis, the group's leader and initiator of the trip, is an adventurous free spirit who, in the film's opening sequence, philosophizes about the human nature and society's crisis-ridden state, proclaiming the river to be the "last wild, untamed, unfuckedup river in the south."

Dickey himself was a writer who emphasized male emotional expressivity. John Hall Wheelock, who edited the 1960 collection *Poets of Today,* described Dickey by using a familiar existentialist rhetoric, portraying him as a "poet concerned primarily with the direct impact of experience, the complex of sensations, feelings and responses involved when we are living something rather than thinking about it" (22–23). Indeed, both novel and film enacted a journey from mere existence to an embrace of life as an affective experience. *Deliverance*'s transition from stasis to motion in the opening sequence culminates when the actual narrative of the film begins: the four men arrive at the riverbank and take off, trading the car for a boat, the paved road for a floating river – a literal deterritorialization. In *Life,* Richard Schickel noted that the film's "subject is obviously man's need [...] to try himself by placing his life on the line" ("White Water" 8).

There is something more at play here than just another fantasy of untamed motion. Instead of aspiring to become movement itself, *Deliverance* maintains its calm even during action sequences. In narrative terms, the canoe trip is not an interminable process but an event with a beginning and an end, with the men expected to return to their jobs after the weekend. Hence, the actual journey this event incites has a different quality: it is not directed toward the uncharted territory of America, the rhizomatic city, or a Mexican utopia, but inwards. Its aim is not to enter fully into 'being a process' and move unpredictably in any direction,

 https://doi.org/10.1515/9783111436661-005

but to accumulate experiences and develop an authentic self. *Deliverance* invests in a desire for personal development through what Abraham Maslow called peak-experiences – a temporary state in which the subject feels himself "to be at the peak of his powers, using all his capacities at the best and fullest" (*Toward* 99), becoming "like a river without dams" (*Toward* 100).

Deliverance translates this idea into cinematic images. After the four men leave the shore, they soon enter a section of fast rivers, inciting a wild canoeing sequence that becomes a poetic vignette of revitalization – smooth movements and flows that tie the exterior movement of the canoes to an interior process of loosening, opening up, releasing energies. As Lewis calls out to his friends to keep paddling, the suburbanites lose their fear while floating downstream, avoiding rocks and other obstacles, letting out screams of excitement and laughter. In this first scene, the peak-experience and the release of blockages to make way for the free flow of energies is identified with the logic of male orgasm, as one of the men confesses jokingly: "That's the best[...] the second-best sensation I've felt." The film thus literalizes the psychological idea of natural forces flowing through life, whose blockage threatens a subject's health and integrity. The canoe, then, is not only a flexible vehicle capable of mastering the wild river's smooth space but also symbolizes a natural, balanced, authentic way of living.

Hence, the film's countercultural fantasy is not one of movement as such but of developing an authentic self: getting to the core rather than getting away. As Timothy Leary wrote in the 1960s: "External migration as a way of finding a place where you can drop out and turn on and then tune in to the environment is no longer possible. The only place to go is in" (*Turn* 136). Consequently, the affective deficit imagined within this fantasy is not social stasis per se but the obstacles and impediments to individual freedom inside the subject – even if these obstacles and impediments are often cast as consequences of social rather than individual forces, as effects of enculturation or institutional power.

In this chapter, then, I approach the affective politics of expressivity from a different perspective, exchanging targets for origins and becoming for being, turning from the act of unmediated expression to the quality of what these movements were supposed to express: a core entity at the heart of the self. As this self was not only opposed to social forces but also increasingly imagined in emotional terms in the postwar period (see chapter 1), I describe the subject of the chapter as countercultural fantasies of emotional truth. The emergence of these fantasies is inseparable from the genealogy of the concept of authenticity, which complemented and to some extent replaced earlier moral values and conventions in many differ-

ent fields in postwar America.[67] Throughout this chapter, I focus on authenticity as an asset of selfhood, and on the striving for authenticity as another component of the project of liberating the self from alienation – a project incited by midcentury discourses of identity crisis and diagnoses of affective deficits. In this form, authenticity connotes sincerity and honesty but also, and most importantly, uniqueness: a person's level of authenticity was measured by the extent to which she gave the impression of expressing a singular and distinctive core self rather than merely exemplifying a type.

In this first part, I will trace the conflicting meanings of authenticity and emotional truth within postwar discourse, examining how these ideas intersect with the politics of gender and race, and focusing on debates within self psychology, a racialized music discourse and the emergence of auteurism as a New Hollywood ideology. In a second part, I will discuss the film *Five Easy Pieces* (1970) and its intersectional politics as a film that feeds on class and gender to negotiate authenticity within the white cultural imagination. I will also argue that Barbara Loden's film *Wanda* (1970), often overlooked in film histories of the period, provides a critique of a politics rooted in the opposition between authenticity and alienation, illustrating the gendered and racialized divisions constructed by New Hollywood through its reliance on countercultural whiteness and its commitment to an affective politics of expressivity. In a third section, I will discuss two other films that foreground the complex gendered politics at stake in the countercultural fantasy of emotional truth. While *Klute* (1971) presents an early portrayal of the narcissistic woman that would become key to 1970s discourse on gender, culture and psychology, while at the same time illustrating a gendered difference in the emotional practice of losing control, *Carnal Knowledge* (1971) reflects anxieties around white masculinity stirred by an emergent feminist discourse that raised questions about male authenticity.

3.1 "Digging into the Self": Authenticity and Expressivity from Holden Caulfield to Auteur Theory

"In your heart you know he's right," proclaimed Barry Goldwater's campaign slogan in 1964. The deep connection between knowledge and feeling dominated cultural discourse in the postwar period when self psychologists sought to discover

67 I subsume the term authenticity under the notion of emotional truth here, not least to distinguish my focus from the function of authenticity in art and literature, a topic debated at the time, for instance in Lionel Trilling's 1970 lectures on "Sincerity and Authenticity" at Harvard (Trilling).

a whole new world within the self, while countercultural fantasies of emotional truth spread into various fields. As Mailer stated in "The White Negro," one must find knowledge and imagination "by digging into the self, [...] for if you do not dig you lose your superiority over the Square, and so you are less likely to be cool" (Mailer, "White"). Psychologists made a case for "[looking] for the sources of [man's] action in his own deeper nature" (Maslow, *Toward* 152), and it was a question of doing less rather than more, of releasing, losing control, rejecting interventions, avoiding blockages. Elizabeth Lunbeck summarizes this shift, stating that "the self was [no longer] something to be created or achieved [...], the self was now an essence to be discovered by throwing off repressive social restraints" (238). Consequently, identity became intertwined with authenticity, and claiming authenticity meant addressing the affective deficit identified by cultural critics. Midcentury crisis discourse found rigidity and stasis everywhere – engendering fantasies of untamed motion – but phony façades and empty surfaces were never too far away, inciting their own countercultural fantasies of emotional truth.

"To a young person," Charles Reich wrote in *The Greening of America,* "the Corporate State beckoned with a skeleton grin: 'Step right in, you'll love it – it's just like living'" (*Greening* 203). An allegedly omnipresent atmosphere of the just-like, the presence of something merely posing as but not being life itself, spurred a quest for the real and the authentic, a hunt for the genuine and non-artificial. "It seems extremely important to be *real*," wrote Carl Rogers in *On Becoming a Person* (33, original emphasis); and a year later SDS leader Tom Hayden published a report in which he "intended to make the facts *real*." (qtd. in Hale, "Romance" 33, original emphasis). In his bestseller *The Making of a Counter Culture*, Theodore Roszak argued that realness had become more important than moral standards:

> Even before our world view guides us to discriminate between good and evil, it disposes us to discriminate between real and unreal, true and false, meaningful and meaningless. Before we act in the world, we must conceive of a world; it must be *there* before us, a sensible pattern to which we adapt our conduct. (80)

This distinction between real and unreal governed a wide array of subjects and objects in postwar discourse. Much like the notion of identity, Lunbeck argues, "realness [...] was suddenly everywhere, an apparently unexceptionable attribute of personhood" (238). As such, it was tied to the language of authenticity and alienation. Grace Elizabeth Hale summarizes this transformation of what she calls the "semantics of real" toward an affective framework:

> On a broad continuum and with a great deal of overlap, people experienced and helped create a shift away from mimetic, external, strongly visual, and seemingly objective definitions of

> the real and toward experiential and emotional, internal, strongly aural, and seemingly subjective definitions of the real. ("Romance" 66)

In this first subchapter, I discuss three components of postwar fantasies of emotional truth and the notion of authenticity. I will begin by surveying notions of realness and authenticity within self psychology, focusing on the idea of a core self and the increasing importance of uniqueness and singularity as measures for normative selfhood. Next, I will explore the racialized politics ingrained in 1960s debates on authenticity and alienation by examining the terrain of rock discourse. Like existential hip and its vital mobility, authenticity was seen as a resource allegedly residing in racial others while simultaneously offering itself as a possible cure for society's affective deficit. Finally, I will turn my attention to how notions of authenticity and uniqueness influenced New Hollywood discourse through the emergence of auteur theory and its conception of film as a serious art form.

"Distortions of Being": The Search for the Unique Self

Psychological discourse in the postwar period was not only invested in ideals and fantasies of constant motion and in the notion of the self as a never-ending process. It also grappled with questions of origins and being. For self psychologists, the ideal of "discovering-and-inventing as one goes along" was dependent on an interior agency with the authority to steer and assess the movements and processes inspired by countercultural fantasies of untamed motion and its passionate rejections of stasis and immobility. Simply put, undirected, non-linear movement could be a cultural asset only when grounded in an authentic core self. Consequently, distinguishing the real from the unreal, the genuine from the artificial, and the true from the fake became an important cultural practice, often linked to the idea of authenticity. The term authenticity decorated the titles of many books in the 1950s and 1960s, among them *The Search for Authenticity* (1965) by humanist-existentialist theorist and therapist James Bugental. Rather than positing it as a final destination, Bugental emphasized authenticity's procedural nature: "[A]uthenticity is not a perfect state to be achieved but a quantitative dimension along which we can move" (45). As a dimension rather than a fixed ideal, authenticity became a way of measuring individual behavior and cultural value, emerging, as Doug Rossinow puts it, as "the new morality" (*Politics* 66).

"Throughout the whole of this thesis," Bugental announced in the introduction to *The Search for Authenticity*, "the fundamental concern is with authenticity of being. The distortions of being that give rise to the need for psychotherapy are inauthenticities" (15). Within self psychology, these distortions of being could have various sources and names, but the notion of *role-playing* most widely diffused

into cultural discourse.[68] In *The Greening of America*, Charles Reich's invoked role-playing to express his fear that an individual's "'true' self [...] must watch helplessly while the role-self lives, enjoys, and relates to others" (*Greening* 152). While role-playing still had a cognitive dimension, indicating a person's at least semi-conscious subjugation to dominant values and beliefs, the term *uptightness* targeted the interior, emotional dimension of the self. Reich saw the term as implying a "critique of the American personality," measuring "how much of society a person carries around within himself" (*Greening* 158). In this assertion, the zero-sum game between the singular self and social forces central to countercultural whiteness becomes a corporeal metaphor for a distortion of being and a personal affective deficit.

Authentic personalities, free from uptight bodies and role-playing minds, exemplified a looser, more natural, and thus more truthful way of being. But how was this truth to be accessed and understood amid the allegedly prevalent social pressures in postwar culture? "It seems to me," Carl Rogers argued, "that at bottom each person is asking, 'Who am I, *really?* How can I get in touch with this real self, underlying all my surface behavior? How can I become myself?" (108, original emphasis) Self psychologists believed the "real self" was present, just beneath the surface, and needed to be developed. If the authentic person resisted enculturation, then 'culture' belonged to the realm of inauthenticity, potentially obstructing the development of a core self. How, then, could one determine which aspects of a person's identity or behavior were cultural effects rather than authentic expressions of a core self? At the bottom of invocations of authenticity lay what Abigail Cheever describes as a "profound anxiety about motive – about whether one's actions stem from authentic impulses, or whether they are the product of external influences" (36).

This question was famously posed by Holden Caulfield, the protagonist of J.D. Salinger's 1957 *The Catcher in the Rye,* a novel credited with popularizing the term *phoniness.* Charles Reich viewed Holden as a "fictional version of the first young precursors of Consciousness III" because "Holden sees through the established world: they are 'phonies' and he is merciless in his honesty" (*Greening* 238). Even Holden, however, lacked a definitive measure for honesty and phoniness. "Even if you did go around saving guys' lives and all," he articulated the fundamen-

68 The term *role* and the concept of social roles were far more complex and contested. For sociologist Erving Goffman, the adoption of different roles and the quasi-theatrical performances of everyday life was a fundamental precondition for any kind of social interaction (Goffman). Some years later, feminists would call for an emancipation from the sex role that society forced onto women, a framework that would be adopted by men as well. (see chapter 3.3.) For more on differences between meanings and functions of the role concept see Halliwell 240.

tal paradox of postwar notions of authenticity, "how would you know if you did it because you really *wanted* to save guys' lives, or you did it because what you *really* wanted to do was be a terrific lawyer. [...] How would you know you weren't being a phony?" (Salinger 179, original emphases)

Self psychologists sought to address this issue by therapeutic means. The "existentialist's study of the authentic person and of authentic living," Abraham Maslow boldly proclaimed, "helps to throw this general phoniness, this living by illusions and by fear, into a harsh, clear light which reveals it clearly as sickness, even tho [sic] widely shared" (*Toward* 15). And Carl Rogers put forward a notion of psychotherapy as a practice where a client "learns how much of his behavior, even how much of the feeling he experiences, is not real, is not something which flows from the genuine reactions of his organism, but is a façade, a front, behind which he has been hiding" (109–110). Like other emerging ideals of subjectivity in the postwar era, the pursuit of authenticity and the rejection of phoniness framed selfhood as a project of self-liberation: an inward excavation to uncover and express one's true essence outwardly.

This inner treasure to be unearthed was also a source of profound anxieties. As Abigail Cheever argues, the midcentury discourse about social conformity reflected less a fear of *con*formity than of *uni*formity, of "the possibility that everyone is, at bottom, fundamentally the same." Consequently, Cheever suggests, the figure of the phony could even appear reassuring. In fact, it was easier to "imagine that similarities among persons were the product of deliberate misrepresentation" than to confront the possibility "that the idea of the unique American individual was not just hiding beneath a phony mask, but rather no longer existed at all" (5–6). The core self, even if it was to be stripped bare rather than developed, had to appear differently in different individuals. Therefore, as Warren Cushman has emphasized, a key tenet of the new psychotherapies after the Second World War was not only the "importance of a cohesive, core self" but the "building of that self by [...] liberating the unique 'trueness' of each individual" (214).

Just as Mailer saw the existential hipster as a hopeful figure for solving American identity crises by fostering new vitality, Charles Reich argued that expressing one's uniqueness would benefit society at large. "The more unique each person is," he wrote in *The Greening of America,* "the more he contributes to the wisdom of others. Such a community makes possible and fosters that ultimate quest for wisdom – the search for self" (*Greening* 417). This connection between personal authenticity and a renewed sense of community had already been at the core of Student for a Democratic Society's 1962 founding manifesto, the rallying cry of the emergent New Left. In the Port Huron Statement, the authors announced that the "goal of man and society should be human independence," and human inde-

pendence amounted to a "concern not with an image of popularity but with finding a meaning in life that is personally authentic" (SDS).

For many psychologists, intellectuals, activists and commentators, then, government, systems and institutions exemplified what Bugental had called distortions of being. As Doug Rossinow summarizes, the "yearning to be a 'real individual,' the desire for unmediated access to 'real life,' the attraction to the spontaneous and the seemingly natural, could all be found [...] across the political spectrum" ("Revolution" 121). Within the conservative tradition, Barry Goldwater's 1964 presidential campaign particularly capitalized on these fantasies of realness and authenticity. Historian Kevin Mattson argues that Goldwater's performance of "straight talk," his "[lashing] out at the phony and flabby feel of America's consumer culture" crafted a "message to the true believers that the candidate was an authentic rebel willing to give it to the man by bucking the complacency of the age and his own party" (70 – 71). In his acceptance speech for the presidential nomination, Goldwater proclaimed: "Equality, rightly understood, [...] leads to liberty and to the emancipation of creative differences. Wrongly understood, as it has been so tragically in our time, it leads first to conformity and then to despotism". Just as the Port Huron Statement had described the search for a "meaning in life that is personally authentic" as a genuinely political goal, Goldwater spoke of "the emancipation of creative differences." (Goldwater)

Discussing the discursive shift from the New Left of the early 1960s to the emergence of the Women's Liberation movement in the late 1960s, Rossinow hints again at the fundamental paradox of the notion of authenticity as uniqueness by emphasizing a slippage from 'human nature' to 'true self':

> In the new left view, people were unhappy because they were alienated from their true human nature. To women's liberationists, people were unhappy because they were alienated from some part of their own true selves, straitjacketed into a sex role that sealed off some part of their full spectrum of feelings and experiences. (*Politics* 319)

If feminists were right and femininity was not solely a biological but a social category, then distinguishing between "what might be uniquely one's own rather than a consequence of social influence" (Cheever 3) was even more challenging. And if everyone possessed a unique inner world, this world still had to relate to and be measured by the social world this individual inhabited. "As a woman," Leni Wildflower wrote in her foreword to Paul Potter's *A Name for Ourselves* (1971), "I have come to find the deepest roots – the roots of an oppressed *human being.*" (Potter, *A Name* xvii, original emphasis) This suggested that the journey toward an inner core might ultimately uncover not a radically singular essence but a complex web of social relations. Given the increasing recognition, in the wake of the social move-

ments of the 1960s, that humanity was divided not only by class but also by race and gender, the urgent call to become authentic and build a politics around this project of self-liberation seemed to generate more problems than solutions.

"Soul Has No Color": Countercultural Whiteness as Radical Singularity

"It is a crime to be alienated from oneself, to be a divided or schizophrenic being, to defer meaning to the future," Charles Reich wrote in *The Greening of America* (*Greening* 242). As discussed already in the first chapter, the term *alienation* transcended its Marxist origins under the influence of existentialism and other discourses, delving into realms beyond mere class relations within a New Left discourse. While terms like phoniness, uptightness, and role-playing hinted at various forms of inauthenticity, alienation suggested a more existential relation to authenticity. As a multifaceted "problem [with] many sources" (Hale, "Romance" 77), alienation, just as authenticity, could be tethered to specific referents or function as an abstract human condition: a subject could be alienated *from* something or alienated *as such.* This newfound polyvalence seemed able to magically bridge social differences by reconciling socioeconomic, racial and a countercultural rhetoric of political change.

At times, Black activists and intellectuals mobilized the term to address racial oppression head-on. "We share a hatred for the alienation forced upon us by Europeans during the process of colonization and empire," Ralph Ellison declared in a 1958 interview (293). However, other articulations of alienation in the context of racial oppression bespoke a more universalist paradigm. An advertisement for a black-white encounter group at the Esalen Institute proclaimed that "Racial segregation exists among people with divided selves. A person who is alien to some part of himself is invariably separated from anyone who represents that alien part" (qtd. in Grogan 218). This notion relied on the broader understanding of alienation as a spiritual affliction inherent to "Man" as such or simply "the self." As William Barrett had noted in in his 1961 introduction to existentialist philosophy, the "worst and final form of alienation is man's alienation from his own self" (31).

This understanding of alienation resonated with voices from the New Left, who frequently asserted "that their peers were alienated within themselves, cut off from certain parts of their potential as human beings and from their better, truer, more complete selves" (Rossinow, "Revolution" 110). What gave the "new radicalism [...] its life and vitality," according to student leader Gregory Calvert, "has been the conviction that the gut-level alienation from America-the-Obscene-and-the-Dehumanized was a sincere and realistic basis for challenging America" (128). Alienation signaled an affective deficit but also served as a catalyst for the

desire for political change – it was "simultaneously the polar opposite of authenticity and the sign of authentic political agency" (Rossinow, *Politics* 196).

Detached from any analysis of social configurations, alienation, and the search for authenticity it instigated, promised to close the affective deficit diagnosed in the cultural formation of postwar America. As the opposition between the self and the social became enmeshed in a discourse favoring the affective over the cognitive dimensions of human experience (see chapter 1.2.), psychologists, activists and intellectuals articulated the meaning of authenticity to the emotional spectrum. This "new emphasis on feelings," Grace Elizabeth Hale explains, "helped transform authenticity into an internal rather than an external quality" ("Romance" 68), laying the groundwork for what she identifies as the romance of the outsider – a fantasy that "enables white middle-class Americans to experience at the imaginary level the social and historical connections that contemporary life erodes at the material level" (*Nation* 307). This fantasy rested on the "intersection of two ideas about reality – that the real and authentic existed inside the self and that blackness marked the richest sites of realism and authenticity" (*Nation* 235). A detour into the discourse and historiography of race and music in the 1960s – encompassing the folk revival of the early 1960s, the emergence of rock in the middle of the decade and debates on the term *soul* towards the end of the 1960s – illustrates the interplay between this affective dissonance and a politics of expressivity.

The folk revival at the beginning of the 1960s, characterized by the renewed popularity of 1930s and 1940s folk music and institutionalized by the founding of the Newport Folk Festival in 1959, played a crucial role in shaping authenticity's affective turn. The revival's conception of the folk was tied to both blackness and a notion of what I have termed the 'common folk' in the context of *Bonnie and Clyde* and *The Getaway* in chapter 2. It fostered a burgeoning politics of authenticity, with revivalists forming their coalition on a newly defined authenticity marked by "emotions, raw, real, and shared" (Hale, *Nation* 106). For folk revivalists, authenticity was rooted in the 'authentic' working-class practices of the 1930s as well as in Black musical traditions such as the blues, which originated from social positions far removed from the white middle-class subjectivity that dominated the revival's base. However, while white revivalists may not have been able to authentically perform Black music, the folk revival, as Jack Hamilton argues, "offered a powerful entry into a worldview in which proximity to black culture was linked to political progress, which was in turn linked to self-fulfillment and personal authenticity" (67).[69]

---

69 Indeed, the folk revival informed early white civil rights activism. In his memoirs, SDS veteran Tom Hayden remembered an early meeting with Black members of SNCC who, Hayden found,

Consequently, authentically Black or working-class cultural practices became assets for performances of personal uniqueness, aiding in the creation and maintenance of the cultural authority of countercultural whiteness. Hamilton interprets the rhetoric of folk icon Pete Seeger to suggest that "self-invention (or self-reinvention) could become its own authenticity, illustrating one's commitment to an identity that one has chosen, rather than what one has simply been born into" (63). This notion of authenticity as the conscious adoption of a singular identity, "rooted in the personal and political rather than the social or historical" (Hamilton 63), persisted beyond the 1960s and permeated various social registers. Probably no historical figure embodied this idea more fully than Bob Dylan, who articulated his own countercultural fantasy of emotional truth in 1964:

> I don't want to write for people anymore. You know—be a spokesman. [...] From now on, I want to write *from inside me*, and to do that I'm going to have to get back to writing like I used to when I was ten—having everything *come out naturally*. (qtd. in Hentoff, emphases mine)

According to Grace Hale, Dylan "fused the seeming contradictions of the folk revival's obsession with authenticity with the playacting of minstrelsy," creating a "paradoxical melding of invention and authenticity, of freedom and grounding [that] helped generate the seductive power of mid-sixties rock and roll" (*Nation* 124). As both an inheritor of revived folk authenticity and a leading figure in an emergent rock expressivity, Dylan kept looking inward while charging his outward performances with expressive power.[70] His persona embodied a new rock authenticity, a phenomenon described by Philip Auslander as an "*ideological* concept and [...] a discursive effect," which is "essentialist [...] in the sense that rock fans treat au-

---

"lived on a fuller level of feeling than any people I've seen, partly because they were making history in a very personal way, and partly because by risking death they came to know the value of living each moment to the fullest" (qtd. in Hale, *Nation* 73). In Hayden's version of existential hip, then, authenticity was not only the basis for activism but carried along the idea of oppression as a source of authenticity (see Chapter 2.1.). Just as Mailer fixated on Black masculinity as an embodiment of movement as such in "The White Negro," the SNCC members, with their "fuller level of feeling," had to remain static for being able to provide an example for whites to emulate for overcoming the affective deficit of white subjectivity.

70 Elijah Wald wrote an entire book on Dylan's performance at the 1965 Newport folk festival, in which he shocked part of his audience by exchanging his acoustic for an electric guitar. For Wald, this moment epitomized the transition from the early to the late 1960s: "In the first half [of the 1960s], folk music was associated with the civil rights movement, with singing together in the spirit of integration, not only of black and white but of old and young and the present with the past, the old Left, the labor movement, the working class. [...] In the second half, rock was the soundtrack of the counterculture, the New Left, the youth movement, expanding our consciousness, 'Fuck the System!,' 'Turn on, tune in, drop out,' 'Free your mind and your ass will follow'" (7)

thenticity as an essence that is either present or absent in the music itself" (82, original emphasis). In the 1960s, rock authenticity, as Hamilton notes, not only appropriated elements from the folk revival – namely "its anxieties over commerce, its notion of authenticity through self expression, its blurry obsession with originalism" (81) – but also carried a racial imagination that placed "black music [...] on a mystified pedestal, viewing it as raw, powerful, and important but at the same time denying it as presently viable" (83).

This racial imagination of musical authenticity also haunted Charles Reich's *The Greening of America.* Reich viewed music as integral to the new Consciousness III, suggesting that the "dominant means of communication in our society – words – has been so abused, distorted and preempted that at present it does not seem adequate for people of the new consciousness." Music, on the other hand, "says all that things they want to say or feel" (*Greening* 261). Reich, varying George Hanson's distinction between the abstract ideal of individual freedom and free individuals, asserted that music "expresses freedom, not the *technical state of freedom* that we all possess by virtue of the law, but the *living of freedom.*" He described the "discovery of soul by whites – a depth of feeling long denied to most Americans" as the moment when self-alienation was overcome by a new generation (*Greening* 262, emphases mine). To Reich, soul conjured "raunchy, sweaty sex" and constituted a "a repository of fantastic energy" (Reich, *Greening* 261–262, emphases mine), thus another remedy for curing white America's affective deficit.

In April 1968, *Esquire* ran a double page on the topic of soul, describing it as a person's specific approach to life in which "the only rule is [to] be at harmony with himself and that everything he does must be an honest form of self-expression" (Brown 89). Author Claude Brown suggested that to "many soul brothers there is just no such creature as a genuinely hip white person," but the article ultimately claimed that "[a]s a life-style, soul has no color" (88–89). Similar to folk, then, soul was abstracted from its specific musical origins and repurposed within a white cultural imagination as a tool for attaining an authentic self. Engaging with nonwhite cultures as sites of authenticity, and to a lesser extent with white working-class and 'folk' cultures, became a means to create a radically singular and deracialized subjectivity. This is the idea Hamilton finds at the heart of the ideology of rock authenticity: "black music is the product of a race while white music is the product of individuals" (84).

This notion, driven again by both fetishizing and sidelining blackness, highlights the varied meanings of authenticity in the postwar formation. Authentic blackness was linked to specific artistic practices, musical forms magically conjuring a hidden world of intensity. At the same time, the idea of authenticity as the expression of uniqueness underpinned countercultural fantasies of emotional truth and became an asset for white subjectivity, a whiteness that did not speak

its name. After all, as Hamilton concludes, "casting off the shackles of one's whiteness through musical performance was central to musical and personal authenticity. But in order to cast off the shackles of whiteness, one must be white to begin with" (85). Thus, like existential hip, the notion of authenticity as the performance of uniqueness posed as a universal ideal while being tied to countercultural whiteness and the project of self-liberation.

Declarations of Independence: Authentic Characters and Visionary Auteurs in the New Hollywood

Bob Dylan not only embodied the link between folk authenticity and rock expressivity. To *Esquire* writer Jacob Brackman, he also exemplified a new type of actor. In his review of *Easy Rider*, Brackman reminisced about watching Dylan in Pennebaker's *Don't Look Back:* "Suddenly, we had the sense of a person upon there on the screen before us. [...] Can you recall a movie hero who projected comparable complexity?" ("Films, September 1969" 16, 18) This sentiment was echoed by Stephen Farber in *Film Quarterly*, where he described the character of Billie in *Easy Rider* with terms such as "boorish, suspicious, hysterical, hostile, lecherous, dependent, stupid, but [...] lively and rather waggish, too," ultimately conceding that Billie "isn't easy to sum up, because he seems to be an *individual* – contradictory, irritating as well as likable – and never merely a specimen of Freedom" (Farber, "End" 8, original emphasis). Farber's differentiation between individual and specimen highlights how New Hollywood films and their reception aspired to create this inner density for both films and their protagonists.

At around the time Robert Benton and David Newman were writing *Bonnie and Clyde*, striving to depict gangsters as complex characters, old-guard director Stanley Kramer was conceiving his "racial drama" *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner*. Kramer's political intentions in making a film about a white girl and her Black boyfriend visiting her parents did not allow for complex characters. Kramer wanted the Black boyfriend "to be a person so suitable that if anyone objected to him, it could only be due to racial prejudice" (qtd. in Harris 188). This strategy confined the film's Black protagonist to embody a social rather than a singular position while entertaining fantasies of racial reconciliation, a strategy Sharon Willis calls the Poitier effect, "a dream of achieving racial reconciliation and equality without any substantive change to the 'white' world or to 'white' culture, and, especially, to white privilege" (5).

Thus, the destiny of Sidney Poitier exemplifies the racial politics of authenticity and uniqueness within a Hollywood setting. As the only Black Hollywood star in the 1960s, Poitier was cast in nearly every African American leading role that studio productions had to offer, making his blackness the defining feature of each of

his characters and turning him into what Lewis Gordon calls a "racial representative." As Gordon explains the function of this figure, "We can stand as a society without responsibility for the blackness we exclude by way of the blackness we include, which identify as blackness *in toto*" (75).[71] To be sure, Black actors were tied to narrow and clichéd roles from the beginning of the film industry.[72] However, star actors often possessed a particular persona in the old Hollywood, hence racist stereotypes were primarily a question of narratives and subject matter. In the New Hollywood, in turn, Sidney Poitier was stuck with his image, an image that became "the iconic cinematic embodiment of wishful fictions of race relations that emphasized the individual agency of enlightened white people" (Willis 11–12), while a new generation of white actors actively rejected larger-than-life stardom in favor of expressing their individuality and uniqueness. "Poitier's blackness," Joel Dinerstein argues in a discussion of early method acting, "made it impossible to correlate his artistic rebellion along the Brando-Dean-Elvis axis and he has little purchase in the dominant public memory of '50s rebellion" (Dinerstein 396).[73]

Thus, as blackness overdetermined the traits of Black characters in Hollywood, the authority of authentic individuality remained firmly attached to whiteness. This quality ascribed to the most fascinating of the new screen characters and their actors also applied to New Hollywood films themselves: their uniqueness, rather than their engagement with a specific tradition, was praised as their most important virtue. Stefan Kanfer, in his *Time* cover story on the "shock of freedom" in new movies, announced: "Comedy and tragedy are no longer separate masks; they have become interchangeable, just as heroes and villains are frequently indistinguishable" (Kanfer, "Shock"). Films were increasingly appreciated as expressions of a singular vision, bred in an artist's own experience and unique world view. In their own version of the "new movies" cover story, *Newsweek* explained to

71 In his study on the history of race and the film industry, Ethne Quinn notes how Poitier's popularity also had a "strategic significance" for the industry, drawing "attention away from the industry's own pervasive behind-the-scenes employment exclusions" (25).

72 For an overview see Bogle. For a discussion of the politics of Black film characters beyond the notion of stereotypes and 'positive' or 'negative' images see Gates. Gates argues that, when taken as "straightforward descriptors", designations of positive versus negative are "limiting categories that do not allow us to access the full, complex range of images that circulate in the media, nor do they allow for the possibility of nuanced engagement with these images by the people that consume them" (12).

73 Poitier himself acknowledged this dynamic. When asked about the essential goodness of his characters, he bitterly replied: "If the fabric of the society were different, I would scream to high heaven to play villains. But I'll be damned if I do that at this stage of the game. Not when there is only one Negro actor working in films with any degree of consistency. It's a choice" (qtd. in Harris 161).

its readership that films like *Easy Rider* or *Five Easy Pieces* "ultimately express the personal vision of the director rather than the corporate vision of a studio" ("New Movies" 51), despite ongoing legal conflicts about authorship of *Easy Rider* and *Five Easy Pieces* being co-written by established writer Carole Eastman.[74] In the same year that Charles Reich published *The Greening of America, Newsweek* that the "flowering of personal cinema in a America" was a "revolution that can't be reversed" ("New Movies" 51).

This revolution was accompanied by fantasies of emotional truth. Grace Hale recounts that by the mid-twentieth century, "[a] novel, a song, a photograph, or even a political manifesto could be authentic if it was true in an emotional sense" (*Nation* 67). This merging of authenticity as a new ideal of selfhood and a measure for the evaluation of art, suggesting that an artist that looked for emotional truth inside his own self was more likely to produce influential works of art, strongly affected New Hollywood discourse. The idea of auteurism, imported from French debates on auteur theory and popularized in the American context by Andrew Sarris, provided New Hollywood with a key ingredient for this process. "The strong director," Sarris argued, "imposes his own personality on a film; the weak director allows the personalities of others to run rampant" (*American* 31). Auteurism thus posited the film director as the primary autonomous agency involved in cinema, 'authoring' a film in the same way a writer authors a novel.

Not surprisingly, directors themselves championed the idea of auteurism as much as film theorists and journalists. John Schlesinger found it "inevitable that a director's own attitudes will subconsciously creep into his films," while Martin Scorsese emphasized the importance of "express[ing] myself personally somehow" (both qtd. in Baumann 64). These statements rely on an opposition between "making and processing" that Timothy Melley identifies in the cultural critique epitomized by midcentury authors such as David Riesman or William Whyte (see chapter 1.1.), an opposition that "ensures that true creation can never be the result of a *social* process and, in so doing, protects the romantic notion of the individual agents as *sole* sources of genius and creativity" (60, original emphases). Auteurism, then, was a theory of film well-suited for the emergence of a subject position of countercultural whiteness. It appealed to a "generalized anxiety about institutions," as Jeff Menne puts it, "using Hollywood as a scale model of the institution writ large" and auteur theory as a "doctrine that let them repress the institution's effects in order to celebrate their individuality in demiurgic terms" ("Cinema" 41).

---

74 In fact, actor and writer Buck Henry remembered an authorless confusion at the heart of *Easy Rider:* "Nobody knew who wrote it, nobody knew who directed it, nobody know who edited it [...], it looks like a couple of hundred outtakes from several other films all strung together with the soundtrack of the best of the '60s" (qtd. in Biskind 75).

Hence, auteurism within the New Hollywood discourse fulfilled a cultural function similar to what Hamilton calls rock ideology, relying on "authenticity based on an ideal of heroic genius and resistant rebellion" and conceiving creativity "in fiercely individualist terms, as matters of personal transcendence" (53–54). The "myth of the American auteur [as] the ultimate legacy of the New Hollywood was not only "cast in a distinctly masculine mold" (Godfrey 10) – as film critic Girish Shambu argues, auteurism functions as a "manspreading machine" (33) – but also reproduced the cultural authority of countercultural whiteness. Furthermore, director Paul Williams ascribed the successful transition from the studio age to an emergent period of creativity to a change in the class composition of decisions-makers:

> I can now go to Columbia or Universal or United Artists and talk to men of taste. This change is a class thing. Harry Cohn and Louis B. Mayer were lower-middle-class and made their films for the mass of people who belonged to that class. But now the film audience has grown more educated and so have the studio people. Directors don't have to deal with aborigines any more. ("New Movies" 44)

While Williams seemed invested in an elitist notion of high class, Derek Nystrom interprets the New Hollywood and its auteurist ideology as a particular moment within the formation of the professional-managerial class (PMC[75]), an ideology that exploited the fact that film audiences were "not merely younger, but also more affluent and more likely to be college-educated – in other words, they were the younger generation of the professional middle class" ("New Hollywood" 424). Similarly, Jeff Menne understands auteurism as "a kind of management theory for a cohort of filmmakers who were made cine-literate through university education" ("Post-Fordist" 6). A cohort, he later adds, that "self-identified with the counterculture" and was "able to arrogate its textual material—the movies—to theorize their own roles within its institutional crisis" ("Post-Fordist" 27). "What else is the auteur theory," Nystrom asks provocatively, "but a declaration of independence from the interests of capital [...]?" (*Hard Hats* 51)

In other words, the New Hollywood was an aesthetic regime that defined itself by distinguishing its output from the easily identifiable and categorizable products of the old Hollywood assembly line – and this aspiration to individual uniqueness

---

75 The concept of the professional-managerial class harks back to the work of sociologists Barbara and John Ehrenreich, who coined the term in 1977 (see Ehrenreich and Ehrenreich). Although employed for analytical and critical purposes, the concept resonates with the New Left theory of a "new working class," which Rossinow describes as "the stratum of college-educated managerial and technical employees, usually salaried, who were increasingly numerous and important in the changing U.S. economy" (*Politics* 193).

simultaneously made it part of a new middle class and a white cultural imagination. Through its aspiration to high art, its investment in emotional truth and its complex configurations of race, class and gender, *Five Easy Pieces* is a particularly illustrative example of this New Hollywood regime and its affective politics of expressivity.

3.2 Male Alienation, Female Ignorance, and New Hollywood's True Feelings

While the desire for authenticity engendered narratives circling around the white, male, heterosexual self, its connection to the privileging of emotional truth over rational reflection harbored a challenge for white masculinity. After all, it was *complex* feelings that testified to the existence of an authentic core self, not merely the primal violence that Sam Peckinpah saw at the heart of human nature (see chapter 2.2.). Popeye Doyle's emotional outbursts in *The French Connection* or *Easy Rider*'s drug-infused sensitivity was one thing; to go inward, though, to find emotional truth, involved not only laughter and rage but "appropriating the emotions that women alone were supposed to possess" (Pells 362).

In this section, I will discuss the aesthetics and politics of the expression of 'real feelings' and New Hollywood's fantasy of emotional truth by examining two films. The first, *Five Easy Pieces* (1970), featuring Jack Nicholson in his first leading role, counts as a landmark film of the New Hollywood era and as one of the most explicit articulations of its aspiration to narrative cinema as art. It is also, I intend to show, an exemplary case for the relation between countercultural whiteness and fantasies of emotional truth. At the same time, its reception illustrates the paradox at the heart of broad concepts such as alienation and authenticity in postwar discourse. *Wanda* (1970), in turn, has only recently been rediscovered as a major achievement within film history. Its exclusion from the New Hollywood canon, I will argue, stems not only from the fact that it was directed by a woman, Barbara Loden, but also from its distance to the affective logic of expressivity. The frameworks used in its reception testify to the rules of inclusion and exclusion regarding the New Hollywood as an aesthetic regime and a cultural canon; they also illustrate how the women's movement of the early 1970s both discarded and appropriated countercultural whiteness.

In her study on gender in the road narrative, Katie Mills lumps both films together, pointing to a shared affective display of "apathy and insanity" in *Wanda*'s protagonist and the characters played by Jack Nicholson during the New Hollywood period (143). While *Five Easy Pieces* and *Wanda* indeed share thematic concerns, I will argue that their approach to the question of selfhood and their invest-

ment in emotional truth could hardly differ more. As Sally Robinson notes in her study *Marked Men*, "the question of what constitutes 'real' or 'authentic' trauma and pain is very much at issue, and a good deal of confusion over where the ‚political' meets the ‚personal' is a hallmark of [...] fictions of crisis" (6). Both in their own way, *Five Easy Pieces* and *Wanda* constitute fictions of crisis that tackle questions of authentic pain, and their differences in dealing with these crises help to draw the limits of an affective politics of expressivity. Furthermore, in both films the intersection of class and gender becomes a site for negotiating the rules of access to countercultural whiteness.

3.2.1 Intersections of Authenticity: In the Underbelly of *Five Easy Pieces*

In his compendium *The Great Movies II,* Roger Ebert remembers the audience's reaction at the New York Film Festival premiere of *Five Easy Pieces:* "We'd have a revelation. This was the direction American movies should take: into idiosyncratic characters, into dialogue with an ear for the vulgar and the literate, into a plot free to surprise us about the characters, into an existential ending not required to be happy" (*The Great Movies II* 148). Back in the time of its release, Stephen Farber found *Five Easy Pieces* "remarkable for the perception and precision with which it delineates an *individual* character, who is idiosyncratic enough to resist anyone's theories of social malaise" ("Easy" 130, original emphasis), another argument that used a protagonist's uniqueness to make a case for the respective film's quality as a singular work of art.

This individual character was Bobby Dupea, played by Jack Nicholson. In the booklet accompanying the Criterion Collection edition "America Lost and Found: The BBS Story," film critic Kent Jones notes how Dupea's "ambivalence is seemingly permanent, and he is self-exiled to his own terrible purgatory, forever on the verge" ("Five" 37). Bobby, in other words, was a unique character rather than a specimen, and Jones' assessment echoes many other descriptions of New Hollywood anti-heroes: complex individuals, morally ambiguous, always on the run, never arriving anywhere. As discussed throughout this book, advocating complexity and ambivalence in individuals was part of a larger shift within discourses of subjecthood: "men are not seen as good or bad," Norman Mailer contended, "but rather each man is glimpsed as a collection of possibilities" (*Advertisements* 353). Rejecting recognizability in favor of a personal uniqueness was part of this shift, and it further strengthened countercultural whiteness as an important subjectifier.

In a recent contribution to an edited volume on the New Hollywood, Jonathan Kirshner concludes that "Bobby's problem is not with society; it is with himself" ("Jason's" 54). Given that the self was a crucial site of knowledge production

about society in postwar discourse, Kirshner's observation offers not a final word but a starting point for an analysis of Bobby Dupea's agency – an agency debated by reviewers and audiences alike. Some celebrated Bobby for uncovering the lies and hypocrisies of American society; some indicted his defiance as an empty gesture of rebellion without a cause, while praising the film for revealing this emptiness; still others were neither convinced by the protagonist's alienation nor by the film's commentary on it. The general theme of emotional and social alienation that undergirded *Five Easy Pieces* as well as the film's own aesthetic aspirations to emotional truth conveyed a sense that there had to be a deeper meaning, somewhere. The contested reception of the film and its hero, by contrast, illustrates the shaky premises and precarious terms both were grappling with.

"I Faked a Little Chopin": Emotional Truth and Art Cinema

In his chronicle of the New Hollywood generation, Peter Biskind describes Bob Rafelson as the ultimate hipster, "invested in being hip, [looking] to black people – both male and female – for validation, the kind of person for whom Mailer's 'White Negro' was written" (53). Together with Steve Blauner and Bert Schneider, Rafelson had formed the company BBS to finance *Easy Rider.* After its sensational success, the group signed a six-film deal with Columbia Pictures, with the only precondition that the budgets remained below a million dollars per film, and BBS soon became synonymous with an American version of auteurism. As Bert Schneider told *Variety* in 1970, the company did not care about stars or story but about the people – the men, one should say – who were making the film: "If his energy and personality project something unique, he is given the freedom and help to express himself. We'll gamble that films will reflect those personal qualities" (qtd. in Cagin and Dray 64).

For Stephen Farber, *Five Easy Pieces* constituted a second birth of the New Hollywood; only Rafelson's film, he claimed in *Sight and Sound*, fulfilled the promise of the late 1960s renaissance ("Easy" 128). While this sentiment was not shared by every critic, most reviews were positive, and almost no commentator failed to mention the film's artistic merits, its beautiful cinematography, its unconventional but effective narrative structure, and, naturally, the performance of Jack Nicholson as Bobby Dupea. David Pirie, writing for the *Monthly Film Bulletin,* marveled at the "complex character of Bobby Dupea" who "seems unusually real." Turning his attention towards the actor, Pirie lauded Nicholson for portraying Bobby "as a caged animal, alternating between private amusement and violent rage [...] but unable to express straightforward affection" (72). Stanley Kauffman, while critical of the film itself, also praised Nicholson in the *New Republic*, adding emotional truth to the already established qualities of the actor: "He has tenderness, fire of several

kinds, spontaneous charm and – which he specially needs here – conviction of some depth" ("Five" 21).

While "spontaneous charm" was Nicholson's most obvious resource as an actor, the case of "depth" was a more contested one, not least during the production of *Five Easy Pieces*. When Rafelson tried to convince Nicholson of crying in the film's climactic scene with Bobby and his father, he reportedly told the actor that "we had to see the underbelly of this character; he had emotion but it was all bottled up – blocked" (Walker 45). In a cultural environment increasingly sanctioning the logic of expressivity, tears translated into affective value, revealing the work of an authentic self behind a man's actions. In asking Nicholson to express Bobby's blocked emotions, then, Rafelson aspired to make visible what was supposed to be invisible: the blockage and, by extension, the existence of emotions inside Bobby Dupea.

As the story goes, Nicholson responded to his director's request by perfecting the performance of expressivity as a practice of losing control: "[he] had made up his mind to resist crying on cue […], preferring instead to let the monologue take him emotionally to whatever depths it could," ultimately finding "a level of emotion that he had never before been able to bring to a part, and the tears flowed naturally" (Boyer 46). In a 1986 *New York Times Magazine* piece, Nicholson described this scene as the big bang for a different kind of acting: "It was a breakthrough for me as an actor, for actors. I don't think they'd had this level of emotion, really, in almost any male character until that point" (R. Rosenbaum). The allusion to "male" characters is telling. As Sally Robinson has argued, a "vocabulary of blockage and release" entered discourses on selfhood and emotions between the late 1960s and the early 1970s, at roughly the same time the discourse of identity crisis became more explicitly gendered: "like the dominant model of (male) sexual pleasure as based on building tension and the relief of discharge, so too do representations of crisis draw on the image of a pent-up force seeking relief through release" (12). It is this dynamic of blockage and release that led to what Robinson describes as a masculinization of emotion (132) and which makes the affective politics of expressivity in fact a politics of male expressivity – and countercultural whiteness a subjectifier mostly available for white men.

Through its portrayal of Bobby Dupea, *Five Easy Pieces* translates this vocabulary of blockage and release into cinematic images. Bobby is introduced as an oil worker who spends his time between bars and bowling alleys, keeping up with a country-music-loving girlfriend he apparently despises, endowed with a vague sense of inner turmoil, first hinted at in an early moment in which Bobby finds himself alone but not at ease with himself. This interior turmoil is expressed in close-up shots of Nicholson on the fields, his face usually framed with industrial machinery in the background that know no pause. While these images suggest a

chasm between inner life and outward appearance, the film further emphasizes this gap in rare moments of release when Nicholson performs sudden and out-of-scale eruptions of emotions. After half an hour, the film reveals that Bobby in fact stems from a privileged background, himself and his closest family members being classical musicians, not oil workers. *Five Easy Pieces*, then, invites its audience to gradually understand Bobby as not authentically working-class but rather resisting enculturation by his upper-class family – fleeing the social milieu he was raised in to seek refuge in a different one. If the authentic person, according to Abraham Maslow, "transcends his culture", becoming "a little more a member of his species and a little less a member of his local group" (*Toward* 11), then Bobby Dupea is a complicated case, as the flight from his local group is accompanied by the specter of role-playing.

The second part of the film is set in Bobby's ancestral home, a space of "emotional sterility", as Hollis Alpert put it in the *Saturday Review* ("Homeless" 40), situated on an island somewhere at the shore of Washington State, the sterility of the upper-class milieu emphasized through the narrow interior spaces and metaphors of male paralysis: Bobby's father sits in a wheelchair and his brother wears a neck brace after an accident. What attracts Bobby's emotional attention, though, is his brother's soon-to-be wife Catherine, who appears to be the only person who is more than just a phony façade. When Catherine asks him to play the piano for her, Bobby does so only reluctantly, but the film immediately invests in the affective value endowed by the Chopin piece as the camera starts panning around the room, drifting away from Bobby's face and hands, over Catherine's calm hands and attentive eyes, and finally through the whole room, over a gallery of pictures of the family's past and portraits of famous musicians, turning back, on the last chord, to Catherine's face, deeply moved.

The emotional authenticity of this scene, however, is immediately put into doubt when Bobby has finished, as the two engage in a fierce argument about real feelings. Trying to ignore her emotional reaction to his performance, Bobby remarks that he just played the easiest piece he could think of, and Catherine counters by mobilizing a familiar trope in postwar discourses: the privilege of emotional truth over technical execution: "Can't you understand it was the *feeling* I was affected by?", she asks, to which Bobby responds: "I didn't have any." After that, the quarrel turns more aggressive, and ultimately, Catherine concludes disappointedly: "You played, I honestly responded, and you made me feel embarrassed for having responded to you." Bobby answers with an even more cynical assessment of the situation: "I faked a little Chopin, you faked a big response."

In his *New York Times* review, Roger Greenspun used this dialogue about real feelings to reflect on his own reaction to the film, suggesting that "[s]omething of this exchange carries into my feelings about 'Five Easy Pieces,' which at first ap-

pears to be rich with a quantity of felt life, but on reflection seems both more carefully studied and more coldly casual than profoundly understood" ("Rafelson's" 26). While Greenspun admitted that the film was "movie-making of a very high order," he confessed that "scene by scene I find myself moving from sympathy, to admiration, to respect" ("Rafelson's" 26). Greenspun's colleague Peter Schjeldahl was even more dismissive of the film. Not even respecting *Five Easy Pieces*, he found the plot's premise "corny and preposterous," described the protagonist as a "sentimental ringer," and concluded that the audience was ultimately "left to face the movie's essential confusion" (X13).

However, Schjeldahl's assessment provoked several letters from *Times* readers who passionately defended the film. Suzanne Lego objected to the critic's depiction of the protagonist; it was clear to her that Bobby Dupea was "running [...] from any kind of commitment that might lead to emotionality." Thus, she enthused, "like Antonioni's 'Blow-Up,' [the film] deals with the inability of a man to experience commitment, either on a real physical level or on a deep emotional level" ("Pieces" 13). Diane Crothers concurred with this reading, praising particularly Jack Nicholson who "portrays, with great range and sensitivity, the quintessential modern man who is incapable of love" ("Pieces" 13). Stressing the film's universal message even more, Brendan Robinson argued that the film "transcends its thoroughly American background, and Robert Dupea is a protagonist very close to the central human condition in our time" ("Pieces" 13).

What these *New York Times* readers argued echoed Pauline Kael's passionate defense of *Bonnie and Clyde* (see chapter 2.2.): the reviewer, they suggested, had missed what *Five Easy Pieces* was about, did not understand that confusion was its meaning, the search for lost truths its substance, the diagnosis of an affective deficit its point. Appreciative responses to *Five Easy Pieces* like these were dependent on countercultural fantasies of emotional truth, new ideas about expressive acting and the artistic character of cinema as such – and *Five Easy Pieces* became a prime example of New Hollywood's aspiration to authentic art. Hollis Alpert found a "sense of honesty and authenticity" in the film, "maintained [...] down to its last detail," suggesting that the film is "representative of a growing mood of revolt against the artificialities of the Hollywood system" ("Homeless" 41). Jacob Brackman at *Esquire* marveled at a piece of cinema full of "small authenticities which synopsis can't hint at" ("Films" 76).

Indeed, already the film's first image is more reminiscent of an abstract oil painting than of an opening shot, a blending of colors and textures that is exposed as the inside surface of a huge digger only with the first camera movement – a movement that anticipates the transition from a privileged art world to a blue-collar milieu later revealed as the protagonist's story. The last shot of Bobby in his working-class camouflage pits him against the backlight of a sunset on the oilfields,

directing attention to its quality as a singular image rather than its function as a narrative device. For Derek Nystrom, this shot, and other moments singled out as still images, illustrates the film's strategy "to foreground the act of filmmaking itself – which has the corollary effect of calling attention to the cultural and material resources of the filmmakers" (*Hard Hats* 45). As Brackman concluded: "Many critics have been using the word auteur to draw attention to tiny 'individual' touches with which directors flavor 'standard fare.' By that measure, *Five Easy Pieces* is too original, too artful even to register on the meter" ("Films" 76).

Nystrom further argues that the "culturally privileged filmmaking strategies that would come to signify the New Hollywood" allowed the film to avoid the "difficult questions it raises concerning class identity and affiliation" (*Hard Hats* 44), an assessment I concur with but will recalibrate for the purposes of this book. While *Five Easy Pieces*' treatment of class relations is superficial, to say the least, and its aspirations to be appreciated as a singular work of art are part of this limitation, I will argue that the evasion of these relations illustrates not only the film's limits but also the function of New Hollywood discourse within the white cultural imagination of the 1960s. To argue that the film falls short of a more thorough engagement with class identity as its subject matter presupposes that this matter was its subject. In the following, I will examine the politics of *Five Easy Pieces* from a different angle, starting from its investment in self-alienation and the gendered meanings of authenticity.

"Forever on the Verge": Bobby Dupea and the Male Romance of Alienation

According to Jay Boyer, Bobby Dupea displays a dangerous lack of authenticity, as he "resists the public identities he assumes or has forced upon him, but he can manage little – if any – clear sense of who he is apart from such roles. He has no core identity, no meaningful sense of self, no moral center of gravity" (16). For Stanley Kauffman, too, Bobby was nothing more than the "spiritually enfranchised playboy of the Western world" ("Five" 33). Penelope Gilliatt, by contrast, praised the film in the *New Yorker* for describing "as if for the first time the nature of the familiar American man who feels he has to keep running because the only good is momentum" ("Study" 101). Evaluations of Bobby as a character were used for assessments of the film as such, but not always in correspondence with each other. In a mostly negative review for the *Washington Post*, Gary Arnold admitted he "can't recall any film hero whose alienation was so vaguely defined yet so aggressively asserted" ("'Five Easy Pieces'" C1). Stephen Farber agreed but turned this description into praise for *Five Easy Pieces*. To him, the film revealed that alienation was "only an excuse to evade the responsibilities of relationships with other people" ("Easy" 129).

Alienation was also at the center of an early academic analysis of the film, published in the *Journal of Popular Culture* in the fall of 1972. The author Concetta Greenfield interpreted *Five Easy Pieces* through the lens of Charles Reich's *The Greening of America,* arguing that the main conflict of the film is "not one of generations but one of consciousnesses" (279). What most film critics failed to grasp, Greenfield asserted, was Bobby's function as a "representative of the crisis of Consciousness II opening up to the values of Consciousness III" (281). Echoing the New Left's politics of authenticity, described by Doug Rossinow as harboring a deep "confidence [...] in the social character of personal alienation" (*Politics* 207), she argued that the film's protagonist was not a "congenitally alienated hero" but a "socially alienated individual" (285).[76] Role-player, spiritual playboy, moral nonconformist, or a Reichian subject torn between consciousnesses: most commentators seemed to agree that Bobby showed severe signs of alienation, which meant that *Five Easy Pieces* was, in effect, a film about the search for authenticity.

In the character of Bobby Dupea, however, two different meanings of authenticity conflicted with each other. The working-class milieu itself, just like the imaginary black spaces conjured by Norman Mailer and others white hipsters, functioned as a reservoir of authenticity as such, making Bobby invest in the romance of the outsider and the existential hardships imagined in a life on the margins. As Nystrom observes, the "white working-class male performs [...] a sort of minstrel function" here, "in which the pleasures that must be foregone in order to maintain one's class identity are displaced and projected onto a denigrated other" (*Hard Hats* 54). While the adoption of a "quasi-racial identity" (Nystrom, *Hard Hats* 14) might be interpreted as a role-play, an inauthentic act, Bobby is capable of securing a distance to his new identity of choice, thus his class makeover turns him into a unique individual, not really at home anywhere, forever on the verge. Bobby performs this distance by constantly expressing an arrogant impatience with his girlfriend Rayette, as well as in a scene in which he loses his cool while talking to his co-worker Elton: "I'm sitting here listening to some cracker asshole who lives in a trailer park compare his life to mine. Keep on telling me about the good life, Elton, because it makes me puke."

Hence, Bobby Dupea's adoption of a white working-class masculinity bespeaks less a desire to belong than a countercultural fantasy of non-belonging, an aspiration to embody a unique self not at ease with any social identity. Bobby actively

76 Greenfield was not the only one who put the film in the context of Reich's book. The *Washington Post* interpreted the film as a "manifestation of the 'new' consciousness that doesn't seem very attractive or liberating," ultimately conceding: "One suspects that Charles Reich's vision of the 'greening' of America might not flourish among this strain of crabgrass" (Arnold, "'Five Easy Pieces'" 1).

"resists enculturation," in Maslow's terms, reproducing neither the social scripts inherent in his upbringing nor those attached to his chosen identity. Wandering the thin line between radical singularity and role-playing, Bobby engenders what Cagin and Dray recognized as the film's "tension and subject: the acute identity crisis of a man who doesn't seem to fit in anywhere" (66). It was a subject only later emphasized as the film's primary matter of concern. In fact, Carole Eastman's screenplay had "meant to define the character of Bobby in terms of his family connections, [while] Rafelson chose to define him apart from his family, at odds with it" (Boyer 38).

The "distortions of being" James Bugental had warned about in his *The Search for Authenticity*, however, loom large in the background. At any time, it seems, the conceptual ambiguity at the heart of alienation can turn Bobby's sanctioned estrangement from his class background into a symptom of unhealthy estrangement from his core self – and his rebellious gestures into illustrations of phoniness rather than authentic acts. Time and again, *Five Easy Pieces* suggests that Bobby's drifting might not be grounded in an authentic desire that expresses itself in untamed movement but rather in a gutless urge to avoid a serious confrontation with his own self. This, in sum, was the crucial interpretative question at the heart of the critical discourse around the film: Is there a defiant self rebelling against social forces, or had those forces distorted the self to an extent that Bobby Dupea was doomed to drift interminably?

For Gregg Campbell, who published a quasi-feminist reading of *Five Easy Pieces* in *Literature/Film Quarterly* four years after the film's release, Bobby was indeed a symptom for a social problem. Focusing on the character of Catherine and the contribution of writer Carole Eastman[77], Campbell argued that the screenplay revealed the film's emotional truth more directly than the film itself. To him, this truth amounted to an indictment, not a celebration, of the male politics of alienation. Not Bobby but Catherine, Campbell claimed, was "the true heroine" of the film (283), embodying the value of authenticity while Bobby merely illustrated the way normative masculinity followed the wrong track in its search for a core self. And indeed, *Five Easy Pieces* seems to grant Catherine the most explicit ethical statement of the whole film. When Bobby tries to convince her to go away with

77 Eastman had already written screenplays in the 1960s under her pseudonym Adrien Joyce, most importantly for Monte Hellman's existential western *The Shooting* (1966). By that point, she had already established as hallmarks of her writing "daring narrative ellipses" and "the presence of an existentially troubled, psychologically unreadable protagonist" (Godfrey 44). According to Peter Biskind, her role in the creative production of *Five Easy Pieces* led to backstage fights, as director Bob Rafelson "was not about to take a back seat to Eastman, however talented she might be" (119).

him instead of marrying his brother, Catherine is not even remotely interested: "If a person has no love for himself, no respect for himself," she answers, "no love of his friends, family, work, something [...] how can he ask for love in return?" Bobby responds by evoking the existentialist distinction between life itself and mere existence, asking her if "living here in this rest home asylum" would really make her happy. "I hope it will, yes," Catherine answers confidently, before leaving for good.

Campbell's argument that Catherine was the "only truly human person in *Five Easy Pieces*," the "only character who knows herself" (278), finds support in scenes such as these, as Catherine indeed seems to fulfill the qualities of Maslow's self-actualizing person, being not only at ease with herself but employing an "unusual ability to detect the spurious, the fake, and the dishonest in personality" (Maslow, *Toward* 181). Catherine, then, appears closer to an ideal of authentic subjectivity than Bobby, who will ultimately admit to his father that he is running away without knowing where to. His interest in her bespeaks a longing for being at ease with one's self, a state Bobby has sought by appropriating a cultural milieu he cannot help but despise. The politics of authenticity, however, connects an allegedly universal ideal to specific social configurations. While Abraham Maslow, for instance, described his self-actualizers as persons who could "let themselves be flooded by emotion" (*Toward* 132), he also specified this new subject ideal in gendered form. "Self-actualization is not altogether general", he wrote, it rather "takes place via femaleness or maleness, which are prepotent to general-humanness." Consequently, "one must first be a healthy, femaleness-fulfilled woman or maleness-fulfilled man before general-human self-actualization becomes possible" (*Toward* 196).

Hence, authenticity in postwar discourse, and in *Five Easy Pieces*, was not merely about knowing oneself and being confident about it. Even if Catherine might be the character most at ease with herself, her emotional truthfulness, as well as her status as the "only truly human person," relied on her femaleness rather than her humanness, hence she profits from the value of authenticity while unable to profit from countercultural whiteness, a subjectifier defined not by the successful attainment of but by the continuous search for authenticity. Bobby, in turn, is able to occupy this position despite all the role-playing, drifting and uneasiness. It is not that Bobby is inauthentic. He is just unable to authentically desire the life Catherine lives lest he loses the cultural authority of personal uniqueness.

Four White Women: Class, Gender, and the Limits of Countercultural Whiteness

Catherine's authentic femininity, in turn, is dependent on a negative foil, and *Five Easy Pieces* constructs this foil with the help of three other white female charac-

ters. The first is Bobby's girlfriend Rayette, a white-trash-cliché, ignorant of the spiritual problems of alienation, in love with the inauthentic worlds of country music and television.[78] Ray buys into the ideology of the romantic couple when Bobby obviously does not. She wants Bobby to tell her that he loves her, when Bobby's nicest comment is that she is a "good person," because she keeps up with an asshole like him. If Bobby performs working-class culture, Ray embodies this culture, so she is much more comfortable when they spend an evening with Bobby's coworker Elton and his wife Stoney. The scene further emphasizes the inadequacy of this blue-collar world to function as a fantasy of authentic hardship for Bobby, as Stoney fixates on the television screen for the entire evening, a subject brainwashed by mass culture if there ever was one.

Because *Five Easy Pieces* uses Rayette's social identity to critique the dominant culture, the film cannot grant her the status of authentic personhood as such. However, the two contemporaneous academic analyses of the film, already mentioned in the last section, interpreted this portrayal of white working-class femininity quite differently. For Gregg Campbell, Rayette was, in fact, "one of the most authentic persons in the film" and "essentially more dignified and human than the male protagonist" (277). In fact, all the genuine working-class characters, Campbell held, were more authentic than Bobby:

> Elton's twangy, banjo-plinking rendition of 'Raffle of a Dog' is a more profound and authentic statement than Bobby's playing the Chopin Fantasy on the freeway piano, because Elton's song is an *affirmation of himself* and his universe, while all of Bobby's acts, not least of all his piano playing, are a *denial of himself* and of his shared participation in the human drama. (Campbell 283, emphases mine)

For Concetta Greenfield, by contrast, Rayette was the ultimate embodiment of inauthenticity, a "mass-made personality" lacking "any sense of individual self, and/or any alternative to their present life-style" (283–284). This divergence seems to rest in a paradox of authenticity which Abigail Cheever analyzes via the figure of the "real phony." Writing about Holly in Truman Capote's *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, Cheever suggests that this "character is real in that she is not faking it, but it is fake insofar as it comes entirely from outside herself, rather than as a product of her own making" (49). Similar to Holly, then, Rayette's inauthenticity is not an act of distortion – after all, she is authentically loving her country music and clinging to a destructive relationship – but the product of a phony society, a phenomenon

78 Jonathan Kirshner recounts how Rafelson had originally found actress Karen Black too intelligent for the role, but Black promised him: "Bob, when you call 'action,' I will stop thinking" ("Jason's" 54).

Cheever names "superficial authenticity" and describes as "ingesting wholly the character provided by a given cultural milieu" (50). In the rhetoric of self psychology, Ray is not consciously role-playing but helplessly "enculturated," thus offering her services to countercultural whiteness as a constitutive other.

This difference in interpreting *Five Easy Pieces*'s cast of characters might be a curious case of two eclectic opinions on a film praised for its ambiguity, but they illustrate what was at stake in debates about authenticity. After all, Greenfield and Campbell both celebrated the film while finding themselves in opposite camps regarding its meaning – one praising the film for its honest portrayal of a countercultural hero and his rebellion against society, the other for the revelation of the ultimate emptiness of such a rebellion. However, even in their divergent judgments, their premises remain the same: Bobby is lacking an identity. For Greenfield, this turns him into an authentic rebel loner and the film into an indictment of social alienation; for Campbell, it blows his cover and reveals an inauthentic subject in denial of his true self. One blames the individual, the other blames society.

Through a second configuration of white womanhood, the counterculture-as-subculture entered *Five Easy Pieces.* When Bobby and Rayette drive up north to visit Bobby's parents, they pick up a couple hitchhiking to Alaska: a woman in her mid-forties who calls herself Palm Apodaca, obsessed with society's "filth" and all the "crap" it produces, and her younger female companion, who barely talks. The sarcastic tone of the scene, combined with Helena Kallianiotes' naturalistic acting, sets this scene apart from the rest of the narrative. The discontinuous editing that intercuts different phases of the car ride, with Apodaca's talking continuing on the soundtrack without any interruption, emphasizes the redundancy of her talk, evoking a familiar countercultural discourse about consumption and the need to drop out. For Owen Laderman, the scene illustrates how the "counterculture – transformed from visionary activism to shallow, petty proselytizing – is not driving anymore, but being driven" (92). Thus, *Five Easy Pieces* echoes other portrayals of the counterculture as a static context rather than a dynamic force, suggesting that a countercultural milieu has sacrificed the countering to become a culture in its own right, with behavioral norms and a phony rhetoric.

Finally, there is a third configuration of white femininity that *Five Easy Pieces* paints as inauthentic: the arrogant intellectual. This figure is embodied by Samia Glavia, a friend of Bobby's family, stiff and apparently humorless, preaching about the evolutionary function of reason in human nature, described as "devoid of any humanity" by Greenfield (284). The film delves in her exalted manner of talking, the camera frames her in profile with her audience in the background, as if she was speaking to herself rather than to anyone else. When Rayette interrupts Samia's elitist take on television culture, commenting that there are "some

good things on it, sometimes," the intellectual condescendingly responds: "I have strong doubts. Nevertheless, I am not discussing media." When Catherine, in turn, brings up the topic of love, Samia reproaches her as a hopeless romantic.

"I think these cold, objective discussions are aggressive", Catherine answers before leaving the room. Thus, in one of its most evocative affective scenarios, *Five Easy Pieces* contrasts the intellectual woman first with the mass-culture personality of Rayette, and then with Catherine's genuine romanticism. Rayette, her identity absorbed by mass culture, might not be able to occupy the position of countercultural whiteness, but she is still affectively authorized to discredit Samia, who is emotionally inauthentic. Samia's expressions are mediated by her intellect before being expressed to the outside, while the opposite is true for Catherine's passionate defense of the power of love.

As a character living in a substitute world without feeling, Samia embodies inauthenticity in *Five Easy Pieces*, and her attitude makes Bobby defend Rayette for the first time in the film. "Where the hell do you get the ass to tell anybody anything about class or who the hell's got it or what she typifies," Bobby asks Samia, before stating, "You're totally full of shit" – an emotional statement Nystrom describes as a "desperate attempt to escape the sterile intellectuality of his class of origin through a spontaneous outburst of proletarian physicality" (*Hard Hats* 42). Bobby's expressive act proves that he finds the self-righteous inauthenticity of the well-educated far worse than the naive phoniness of the working-class, the latter being ultimately more 'real' and defendable. After having taken sides, though, Bobby leaves the room looking for Catherine, his only true companion in the search for authentic selfhood. Working-class investments in mass culture, countercultural righteousness and intellectual flights from feeling, then, mark the margins of the terrain of white womanhood as sanctioned by the film, while this terrain's normative center is occupied by Catherine – who is in touch with her feelings, aware of the limits of male fantasies of untamed motion, satisfied with what she has.

As in *Easy Rider*, then, the working-class is portrayed as entirely enculturated, identified with a feminized sphere of mass culture and contrasted with an elitist high culture – which is itself completely out of touch with reality, a space in which men are paralyzed and women intellectualize. These two extremes of a class divide, imagined via a gendering of culture, authenticate Bobby and Catherine as models of authentic man- and womanhood, helping to constitute the white middle-class as a site of authenticity and uniqueness. The affective dissonance between these two characters, in turn, suggests that countercultural whiteness is a subjectifier much more easily accessible for alienated men than for authentic women. While the other white women are defined by their social position, Catherine transcends class; her authenticity, though, is still tied to her femininity.

Thus, while none of the female characters in *Five Easy Pieces* can authentically embody countercultural whiteness, they all contribute to its shape, delineating its borders by reconfiguring notions of gender and class, by feeding on fantasies of emotional truth and by deploying images of enculturation. The film negotiates these borders not least through the performances of expressivity that underlie its affective scenarios: Rayette's high-pitched voice with its strong Southern accent, expressive but clearly influenced by mass culture, contrasts with both the sterile performance of Samia, revealing the affective deficit of purely intellectual reasoning, and the balanced emotional performance of Susan Anspach as Catherine. Furthermore, while the emotional repertoires of the female characters seem aligned to their respective class position, yielding affective moments easily to be identified with a specific feeling, Nicholson's idiosyncratic performance as Bobby suggests affective intensity as such rather than a particular emotion, anxiously verifying the existence of a core self, haunted by identity crisis.

A Place Beyond the Ants: New Hollywood and Cinematic Transcendence

On the written page, Bobby Dupea might have been merely a symptom of an American malaise, but Jack Nicholson's emerging star persona granted this character the affective authority to indict the social forces as the heart of this malaise. While the film's most canonized scene – in which Bobby reprimands a waitress for not allowing him to compile a unique order from different elements of the menu – certainly is a prime example of an expressive affective scenario,[79] a different scene is even more illustrative of his defiant stance towards the social. Stuck in a traffic jam with Elton, Bobby jumps out of the car and goes on a rant, screaming: "Ants! Why don't we all line up like a goddam bunch of ants in the most beautiful part of the day and gas ourselves!" In a typical moment of Nicholsonian expressive idiosyncrasy, he even barks back at an agitated dog in a car window. Then, while roaming through the car lines, Bobby discovers a piano on the back of a truck before him and enters the platform while the traffic jam slowly dissolves. In what Greenfield described as an "act of imagination against the traffic alienation"

79 When the waitress arrogantly insists on the predetermined combinations of food, Bobby becomes increasingly angry, ultimately emptying the table in a violent statement for a customer's freedom of choice. Marion Levine, one of the interviewees Tom Stempel asked about recollections of the film, remembered this scene very well, and recounted how it impacted her own sense of self: "I think to myself, what would the Jack Nicholson of *Five Easy Pieces* (1970) do in a situation like this? If he could tell that diner waitress where to put the chicken salad, couldn't I tell off all the assholes making problems in my life?" (qtd. in Stempel 88)

(286), Bobby starts to play a Chopin piece on the piano while being transported away by the truck, leaving the highway, abandoning the ants.

In this scene's double movement, *Five Easy Pieces* hints at the fact that Bobby's blue-collar identity is nothing more than a performance and simultaneously marks him as a unique self transcending its social context. For Andrew Schroeder, it is one of two scenes that illustrate the film's "narrative pleasures of freedom," moments in which

> the viewer could glimpse what a certain kind of freedom might actually look and feel like, where defiance becomes as 'easy' as leaping out of traffic to a waiting piano, as magical as the unimagined possibility that one did not need to remain exactly where one was, and that there was a place beyond the traffic where one is never sure where one will end up once the choice to pursue it is been made. (125–126)

In describing the scene, Schroeder not only evokes familiar tropes of Deleuzoguattarian theory – lines of flight, the radical openness of the event, the promise of becoming overpowering the necessities of being – but also summarizes New Hollywood's understanding of itself: as a realm of magical freedom where defiant rebels enact passionate liberations from constraints, transcending the rules of the industry through unexpected and spontaneous acts of imagination.

Positioned at the very moment of transition between a portrayal of Bobby's working-class life and the return to his family, the scene also negotiates auteurism's class dynamics as discussed above. As Michael Szalay argued in his analysis of white literature at midcentury, authors increasingly relied on the metaphor of slavery, now thought to encompass the spiritual alienation presumably felt by the growing number of white-collar workers, to navigate the intermediary class position of the Professional-Managerial Class (PMC). "Locating the slave inside," Szalay argues, "allows the professional or manager to imagine himself both a (white) capitalist-owner and a (black) worker-slave," as well as "to transcend, in an act of self-liberation, the class conflict that he is paid to mediate" (185).

Bobby's rant on ants, followed by his escape from the traffic jam through an act of creative imagination, translates this strategy into an affective cinematic moment, concealing the character's intermediary function by imagining his transcendence. Maybe this was the real magic of Bobby Dupea: defying his working-class environment through playing Chopin, defying his privileged roots by doing it as a spectacle, a unique self transcending the social, on the back of a truck in the middle of nowhere, in opposition not to capitalism but to society at large, his affective authority resting on the power to repeatedly leave his own context – a project particularly attractive for those who, in James Baldwin's words, "believe the world is theirs and who, albeit unconsciously, expect the world to help them in the achievement of their identity" ("Black Boy" 105).

This achievement of an identity was increasingly tied to the idea of emotional truth. In the scene with Bobby and his paralyzed father, over which actor and director had quarreled, *Five Easy Pieces* ultimately fills the void of its protagonist; Bobby admits that he is lost in a fantasy of untamed motion that will probably not lead anywhere. "I move around a lot," he confesses to his father's inexpressive face, "not because I'm looking for anything really. I'm getting away from things that get bad if I stay. Auspicious beginnings, you know what I mean?" The tears he then sheds turn his performance into an authentic emotional expression, endowing further cultural value to a film that found itself in the moment its protagonist was finally losing control.

But this climactic scene is not the end of the film itself. In Carole Eastman's original script, Bobby and Rayette would go over a cliff in their car, with only Rayette surviving. Jack Nicholson, among others, advocated for a different ending: "Bobby Dupea would live, despite his inability to conform" (qtd. in Cagin and Dray 69). Hence, *Five Easy Pieces* ended not with death but remained "committed to the notion," as Mailer wrote in his portrait of the hipster, "that the substratum of existence is the search, the end meaningful but mysterious." It was impossible, Mailer added, to "live such a life unless one's emotions provide their profound conviction" (*Advertisements* 341).

In the last shot of the film, then, a truck is driving away, with Bobby Dupea in it, while Rayette is left at the pit stop, unaware of his decision to make his way up north all by himself[80] – a pregnant woman, lost in the middle of nowhere, forced to survive rather than to search for her identity. On the Criterion Collection DVD of *Five Easy Pieces* (1970), director Bob Rafelson ends his audio commentary of the film with a personal statement about its protagonist. To him, Rafelson asserts, Bobby Dupea was neither a good man nor a bad man but "a man that had many qualities." This, in turn, made him "a good character" and "a good reason to make a movie" (Rafelson). While Rayette might have had a good character, she was, in the times of New Hollywood's passion for personal uniqueness and male expressivity, no good reason to make a movie. Barbara Loden would probably have thought differently about this, she might have even made a film about Rayette. In a way, she did.

80 Martin Scorsese explained his choice for narrative closure at the end of *Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore* (1974) – Alice ends up with a prosperous rancher after having made her way on the road alone – by observing that to pursue his original plan with "Alice continu[ing] on down the road without David" would "paradoxically be misinterpreted as feminist propaganda" (qtd. in Mills 155). Gender alone, his comment suggests, would turn a singular work of art into a social problem film, expelling it from New Hollywood's realm of magical freedom.

3.2.2 Not Looking for Freedom: The Inner Wastelands of *Wanda*

In his review of *Five Easy Pieces,* David Pirie grouped the film together with *The Rain People* (1969) and *Wanda* (1970), categorizing all three of them as movies that put forward a new kind of realism. "These films are concerned," Pirie wrote, "not with the relatively glamorous life of drug-oriented drop-outs, but with the aimless wanderings of social misfits" (72). Pirie's appreciative reading of *Five Easy Pieces* as a pessimistic and de-romanticizing view of the alienated outsider allowed him to relate it to darker films of the New Hollywood era. Lumping it together with Barbara Loden's *Wanda,* however, was a surprising gesture, considering the stylistic differences of the films as well as the different natures of the "aimless wanderings" at the heart of their narratives. In fact, the manners in which the three films construct the outsider status of their "social misfits" illustrate the extent to which the politics of alienation and authenticity rested on the unequal distribution of resources for embodying countercultural whiteness. After all, as Kate McCourt notes "the life that [...] Wanda attempts to get away from in the film is exactly the lifestyle Jack Nicholson's character has run to as an escape from his upper-class background [in *Five Easy Pieces*]" (McCourt).

Francis Ford Coppola's *The Rain People* (1969), in turn, is about a white middle-class woman who learns she is pregnant and temporarily leaves her husband and suburban life to decide if she is ready to be a mother. While her gender identity prevents her from embodying the figure of the rebel loner on the open road entirely, her class position grants her at least access to the cultural practice of spiritual soul-searching. Released in the same year as *Easy Rider*, although with much less media attention and financial success, several reviewers compared the two films to each other. Stephen Farber, for instance, argued that *The Rain People* "asked us to see that the search for freedom might conceal an evasion of responsibility," offering a corrective to *Easy Rider.* Rather than pointing to the unequal socioeconomic preconditions for heading out onto the open road, however, Farber framed this corrective in psychological terms. It was because the protagonist was "running from an honest confrontation with herself" that *The Rain People* revealed the cowardice of the search for freedom ("Easy" 128).

He might have said a similar thing about *Wanda,* even if Barbara Loden's film makes it all but impossible to ignore socioeconomic circumstances, even if the film's protagonist is not really looking for freedom. While *The Rain People* centers on a rare feminine version of the alienated self, suggesting that, at least to some extent, it was possible for female characters to occupy the position of countercultural whiteness, *Wanda* was a nightmare of untamed motion, the framework of alienation completely absent. In an essay accompanying the 2019 release of the Criterion Collection edition of the film, Amy Taubin calls *Wanda* "a complete

anomaly" in American movie history (Taubin). An anomaly, one might add, that sheds light on the rules and regulations of New Hollywood discourse.

"Stalling the Senses": Diagnosing Affective Deficits at a Distance

The same year Bobby Dupea left Rayette at a gas station on American screens, some of these screens saw Wanda Goronski wake up on a couch, sit up and gaze out the window, where "the forbidding horizon is choked up to the sky, trucks are maneuvering in the dust" (Léger 9).[81] Already in these first shots, Barbara Loden's film is sober, harboring an almost documentary-like quality while painting the picture of a woman lost in the middle of a nowhere that appears to be her life. These first images of the "ruinous state of her sister's home" make "the poverty of her life [...] concrete" (Cruz 52–53). Although Pirie linked the films through their "realism," the realism of *Wanda* is different to the realism of *Five Easy Pieces*, and in a way, *Wanda* is more realist than even champions of realism were ready to support during the time of its release.

After her waking up, the film cuts to a wide shot overseeing a bleak industrial landscape. Wanda, at first only a small point in the distance, is walking through this landscape, her movement drawing a diagonal on the screen. The camera observes the labor of movement at a distance, and the sheer duration of the scene deromanticizes countercultural fantasies of untamed motion, emphasizing the time and strength it takes to move through space with only a body and no vehicle of one's own. Asked about reactions to this opening scene by viewers who found it "boring," Loden explained laconically: "I wanted to show that it took a long time to get from there to there" (qtd. in Taubin).

While in *Five Easy Pieces*, the oil fields in the background of Bobby's close-ups evoke his inner turmoil, the landscape in the opening sequence of *Wanda* repels any easy metaphorical grasps on the film. Although Molly Haskell speaks of a "psychological wasteland" that Wanda inhabits ("Mad Housewives" 23), the landscape in the film contextualizes rather than mirrors her self. Wanda's life is bleak, the first scenes of the film suggest, but it is not because she harbors an inner wasteland, it is because she moves through a bleak environment towards a bleak new

81 Throughout this section, I will occasionally make use of Nathalie Léger's precise and poetic image descriptions in her *Suite for Barbara Loden* instead of adding my own. While I initially cherished Léger's meditation on the film and its director, Cynthia Cruz's *The Melancholia of Class* taught me to confront my own middle-class bias when engaging with texts by or about working-class people. Cruz points to the fact that Léger "is somehow unable to see social class in the film," seeing only a "woman stripped of voice and context, emptied out." In the hands of Léger and other critics writing from a similar perspective, Cruz argues, Wanda and Loden become "a *tabula rasa*, a blank slate onto which middle-class writers project themselves" (53).

life. After all, *Wanda* tells the story of a white working-class woman who, for reasons not made entirely transparent, leaves her husband and child, starting a journey that places her at the disposal of strangers and chance. In these first moments of the film, however, Wanda is merely a "figure as it doggedly moves on, lit up for a moment, now just a vague, blurry smudge, now almost transparent, like a backlit hole in the picture, a blind spot on the decimated landscape" (Léger 8).

All this is to say that *Wanda* did not follow New Hollywood's poetics of expressivity. Rather than investing in a countercultural fantasy of untamed motion or penetrating the self to arrive at a moment of emotional truth, *Wanda* rests in still images and stays on the surface; the camera remains mostly static, observing Wanda aloofly. Some reviewers were appreciative of this restrained attitude. Roger Greenspun wrote that the film "seems at home with its idioms, close to its actions, opening up only rarely [...] and to moments of genuine insight and not admiration-begging cinematic claptrap" ("Young Wife" 22). This appreciation was shared by some of his colleagues, and *Wanda* won the International Critics Award at Venice in 1970. Still, it was quickly forgotten and did not appear in any of the retrospective canonizations of New Hollywood during the next decades. In 1980, commenting on Barbara Loden's death, Stanley Kauffmann deplored that the film was not available for rental and thus could not be seen at all (Kauffmann, "On Films September 27, 1980"). While *Wanda* was finally recovered and restored in 2010, it is rarely analyzed in detail in monographs or volumes on the New Hollywood.

This is even more surprising because *Wanda* was the quintessential auteur film. Loden had picked up a story from a newspaper, turned it into a screenplay, directed the film and starred in the leading role. *Wanda,* then, seemed much more the expression of a singular artistic vision than films such as *Bonnie and Clyde* or *Easy Rider* with their tense discussions between authors, directors and actors about which part of a film owed what to whom. Loden herself rejected being part of the New Hollywood or an auteur renaissance, however, positioning herself instead within a tradition of independent filmmaking and putting forward an idea of cinema as a sober cultural practice rather than an heroic act of creative imagination: "It's not a new wave," she told the *New York Times,* "It's the old wave. That's what they used to do. They took a camera and they went out and shot" (M. Phillips 32).

While some contemporaries acknowledged the film's artistic merits, others discovered in *Wanda* an affective deficit rather than a new realism. Gordon Gow, in *Films and Filming,* granted that the film made its "salient point [...] firmly," but ultimately judged that its style "tends to stall the senses" ("review of *Wanda*"). In the *L.A. Herald-Examiner,* Winfred Blevins concurred, stating that although the film was "visually striking," it "never engaged my feelings significantly. It engaged my mind only in making me think about why the picture did not make me care,

and why it therefore bored me into stupefaction" ("Wanda's" B7). Estelle Changas, in *Film Comment,* argued that "Loden gives us little complexity of character or any understanding of her mute-like protagonist's inner life," so that she "emerges as an anthropological study with whom we can feel little identification or respond to with anything but pity" (51). And Craig Fisher, writing for the *Hollywood Reporter,* foresaw that Barbara Loden would make "better films when [...] she can make her audiences feel something more for them, besides pity" (Fisher). These judgments testify to the new cultural authority of affective intensity and emotional truth in the evaluation of film anno 1970. To many reviewers, it seems, *Wanda* did the exact opposite of what Pauline Kael had praised *Bonnie and Clyde* for, it told an audience what to feel but did not make them feel anything.

"Why She Does Not Matter": Countercultural White Feminism and Wanda's Ignorance

From the moment of its inception, then, *Wanda* seemed at odds with the project of the New Hollywood, and at odds with its themes of alienation and authenticity. Not only was it one of the few films of the era featuring a female protagonist (and one of the even fewer films directed by a woman), it also put into perspective the gendered nature of the romance of the road. As *New York Times* critic Marion Meade described the gist of the film: "[W]here do you go after you reject the only life society permits? And once a woman gains her freedom, what can she do with it? The answers: nowhere and nothing" (D11).

While *Wanda* grappled with what Betty Friedan had termed the "problem that has no name" seven years earlier, then, the film was far from an organic expression of the women's movement that was emerging at the time of its release. In contrast to *The Rain People*, with its pregnant middle-class woman on the search for her true self, *Wanda*'s portrayal of a working-class woman's journey didn't seem a natural match for the rebellious spirit of early 1970s feminism. Hence, as Nathalie Léger recounts, *Wanda* was critiqued harshly by some feminists, who "saw in Wanda an indecisive woman, subjugated, incapable of affirming her own desire, who made no demands, who didn't even create a militant counter model; no self-awareness, no pioneering mythology of the free woman" (118–119). Wanda took on the open road, but she was not even running from herself.

"Glamorized characters in Hollywood movies, no matter how unfortunate, are always saved in the end by some remarkable inner quality," Loden noted in a piece on the film (qtd. in Reed, "Watch" 52). But only "some people feel connected to the cultivation of selves, will, desire, and inflated poetic interiority" (Berlant, *Cruel* 157). Loden's Wanda did not seem to be such a person, and the film's refusal to hint at an inner life of her protagonist convinced Winfred Blevins of the *L.A. Her-*

ald Examiner even more that personhood was defined by motivation: "Wanda confines us, or at least me, that to be human is to want something, to be alive is to be in motion. Wanda is not. That is why she does not matter" ("Wanda's" B7). This crucial idea, that "to be human is to want something," had received a feminist twist with Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1962), a text steeped in metaphors and notions associated with self psychology and the cultural criticism of the 1950s. Friedan's book, by "fram[ing] the questions of freedom in existential terms, in the language of identity and the psychology of alienation" (Cotkin 261), put the suburban housewife in the crisis-ridden position that a normative white masculinity had heretofore exclusively embodied. As bell hooks would later write about Friedan and early second-wave feminism, Friedan's "problem that has no name" actually "referred to the plight of a select group of college-educated, middle- and upper-class, married white women – housewives bored with leisure, with the home, with children, with buying products, who wanted more out of life." It "ignored the existence of all non-white women and poor white women" (1–2).

Friedan's reconfiguration of universalist and existentialist discourse, which owes some of its discursive strategies to Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (Cotkin 256–265), would influence an increasingly vociferous feminist critique of the New Left. As Doug Rossinow summarizes this development:

> Just as new left radicals asserted that the culture of capitalism distorted people's personalities, new left feminists argued that social forces shaped women's and men's psyches and socialized the sexes into rigid gender roles that relegated women to a subservient position in society and led men to assume a birthright of power. (*Politics* 318)

The opposition between the self and the social thus merged with a growing feminist awareness of structural inequalities, constructing a politics based on the premise that women were denied their full human potential. Much of women's liberation discourse "cast 'women' collectively as the young rebel protagonist raising her consciousness of oppression by a paternal tyranny" (Medovoi, *Rebels* 258). Instead of mankind as such, it was "women" now who suffered from a crisis of identity, a crisis to be overcome by a female search for authenticity. "Shifting the grounds of the question or inquiry from 'femininity' to the gender neutral 'identity,'" Elizabeth Lunbeck notes on this politics, "promised women access to, among certain positive gains, the same sorts of issues and problems that plagued men" (246). To the extent they understood patriarchy as a form of enculturation that beleaguered the self, white women's liberationists invested in the countercultural notion of identity-as-choice, of a conscious decision to defy those social forces that prevented their core self from expressing itself in the outside world. However, as bell hooks noted in 1984 in her discussion of Friedan and white feminism, "[b]

eing oppressed means the *absence of choices*" (5). *Wanda,* however, was not a story of a consciousness raised or a new identity chosen. As Loden said, "I simply wanted to show an ordinary person without any redeeming qualities at all––the type of girl who never had a chance" (qtd. in Reed, "Watch" 52).

Immediately after a scene in which Wanda tells a judge that she has no objections to her husband being granted full custody for their children, the film shows her entering her workplace, a clothing workshop. While Wanda stares into her boss's office, the film intercedes the main narrative with a montage of various female workers sewing or ironing clothes, "[t]he faster and the more precise the movements, the more absent the faces" (Léger 19).[82] Wanda interrupts the montage by entering the boss's office to negotiate her last pay and ask to get more steady work, a request the boss denies. "He says, *You're just too slow for our sewing operations, that's it.* She thanks him. He says no, he refuses to give her what she's asking for; she thanks him and leaves. From behind her comes the noise of the workshop, the girls chattering amongst themselves, the machines, the hum of ordinary life" (Léger 20).

New York Times critic Marion Meade wrote that *Wanda* bespoke a "universality extending far beyond the Pennsylvania coal fields," as the "consequences [Wanda] must face are essentially the same for a middle class housewife whose mildewing liberal arts degree now qualifies her for a miserably paying clerical job" (D11).[83] But this seems not only a widely inaccurate depiction of class relations but misses another crucial point. What distinguishes *Wanda* from the discourse of white middle-class feminism is less the attention paid to Wanda's specific work environment but the film's affective scenarios and the politics these scenarios allow for or prevent. In Wanda, the film and the character, there is nothing of the feminist rage that Leni Wildflower expressed in her foreword to Paul Potter's *A Name for Ourselves* – "feeling fears and knowing they are justified, spitting out my rage with a freedom which sometimes literally sings out and makes by body soar," learning to know "the strength and beauty and love which lives inside me" (*A*

82 It is a cinematic collage of "the invisible women, the faceless women, the nameless women" Debby D'Amico had addressed in her letter "To My White Working-Class Sisters," a bitter critique of middle-class women's liberation discourse, written in the year of *Wanda*'s release for the women's magazine *Up from Under.* D'Amico called white working-class women to recognize "that those who share the hardships we share are not the white middle and upper classes, but the black and brown people who work at our sides" (525).

83 In recounting the process of filming, Loden used the metaphor of housewife to evoke creativity and artistic freedom rather than monotony and confinement: "It was like being a housewife. You do everything, you don't differentiate. I swept the floors, got the costumes together, and dressed the sets" (qtd. in Thomas, "Miss Loden's" G17).

Name xvii) – an affective attitude rooted in resistance against social constraints and liberation from self-alienation. No such strength and beauty and love in *Wanda,* at least not *expressed,* a secret at most.

Some critiques of *Wanda,* then, in assessing the feminist potential of the film, illustrate the white middle-class bias of the women's liberation movement around 1970, at least of the part that had inherited Betty Friedan's emphasis on identity and the notion that "the problematic group was white, middle-class suburban people, not inner-city African Americans or rural poor whites" (Horowitz, *Betty Friedan* 207–208). "Assuming that Loden has the same access to social, cultural, and material capital as them," Cynthia Cruz observes, "non-working-class women writers and critics can't understand why she makes the choices she makes" (55) *Wanda,* then, illustrates the limits of the framework of the self and its defiance against social forces, the limits of the logic of identity crisis as a diagnosis and consciousness-raising as a remedy, emphasizing instead that some cultural capital was necessary to articulate an explicitly feminist position. Thus, even if Roger Greenspun titled his review semi-ironically "Young Wife Fulfills Herself as a Robber" ("Young Wife" 22), this is no story of self-fulfillment, as questions of anxiety and unfulfilled potential have no place in *Wanda.* Wanda's reasons for leaving her home are completely opaque, her illiterateness prevents even the slightest hint at a consciously defiant attitude.

Wanda's 'ignorance' was a subject discussed in almost every review, often not to the film's benefit. Vincent Canby wrote that the protagonist "*is* stupid and, for the most part, without ordinary feeling, but no special alibis are offered, at least none that can easily be laid at the feet of Society or Environment" ("Wanda's" D11, original emphasis). In *Time,* Jay Cocks found that "Wanda can blame her woes only on what very often seems like stupidity, a trait readily conducive to personal, but not dramatic tragedy" (Cocks, "Unfocused"). *Hollywood Reporter*'s Craig Fisher saw the film's fault in the fact that Wanda herself was "not a great character," as great characters were "those whom we come to know, whom we can love or hate because we have been made to understand them, or who become indelible because there is so much there that they defy understanding" (Fisher). It was New Hollywood's most notorious critic, however, who blasted the film and its protagonist most vigorously. Calling Wanda a "passive, bedraggled dummy" and a "sad, ignorant slut," Pauline Kael argued that her dumbness and unhappiness made her "a sort of un-protagonist." "Generally," Kael moaned about the film's lack of emotional truth, "you'd have to have something stirring in you to be that unhappy, but she's so dumb we can't tell what has made her miserable" ("Eric" 136).

Wanda, in sum, offered neither a chance to identify an opposition between a unique self and social forces nor to delve into performances of expressivity. Bobby Dupea's inability to communicate feelings in *Five Easy Pieces* conveyed an idea of

emotions buried somewhere deep down in the core self, not easily accessible but always present as a potential. Wanda's passivity, by contrast, did not hint at deep feelings inside to begin with. With hardly any evidence of a core self accessible by getting blockages out of the way, with nothing stirring in her, the film boycotts the logic of expressivity and countercultural fantasies of emotional truth in favor of an emphasis on social class. In some of the New Hollywood's most acclaimed examples, the social position Wanda occupies served mostly as a negative foil or as a representation of social problems: the farmers of the Great Depression, the townspeople of the Deep South, the television addicts of mass culture. These characters were raw material in the construction of countercultural whiteness rather than complex subjectivities, what Charles Reich termed "projectiles ready to be set in motion by outside energies" (*Greening* 77).

Wanda's defiant disavowal of individual agency makes the film both stand out from and a unique perspective on the New Hollywood canon. After all, it suggests that the motifs used to describe New Hollywood aesthetics, such as the "unmotivated hero" or the "incoherent narrative", conceal more than they reveal. For Thomas Elsaesser, writing in 1975, the "combination of the unmotivated hero and the motif of the journey" was the central feature of the New Hollywood cinema and its "pathos of failure" ("Pathos" 280). But while the apparent absence of motivation on the part of white male (anti)heroes of New Hollywood endowed these characters with the cultural authority of identity crisis and induced their search for an authentic self, Wanda is not even trying, so there can be no pathos of failure. Her lack of motivation points not to identity crisis but to her position within a regime of race, class and gender. *Wanda* was preoccupied not with the burden of freedom and spiritual alienation but with unfreedom and survival. In reconfiguring the popular trope of the choice to leave one's home for the open road, the film ignores the source of this decision and turns toward its consequences.

Comparing *Wanda* to *Easy Rider* and *The Rain People* because of the three films' investment in "aimless wanderings of social misfits" (Pirie 72) misses the crucial difference that Wanda misfit but despairingly so; her aimlessness, rather than providing existentialist insights into the condition of man, was rooted only in existential needs: having no money and nowhere to go. The article that had inspired Loden to make *Wanda* was about a woman who thanked the judge for guaranteeing her a daily bed and food after being sentenced to twenty years for being involved in a bank robbery. While *The Getaway* would present life in prison as the ultimate symbol of spiritual confinement (see chapter 2.2.), prison is just another way of surviving in the world of *Wanda*, maybe even preferable to the life on the road that so many couples on the run used as a vehicle for New Hollywood's countercultural fantasies of untamed motion.

"Just Among Others": Inauthentic Feelings and Cinematic Immanence

There is a couple on the run in *Wanda,* however, and just as in *Bonnie and Clyde* and *The Getaway,* a man accused of armed robbery is its initial spark. According to a 2017 piece about the real case that inspired Barbara Loden, William Ansley had a suspended sentence in Philadelphia when he met Alma Malone in his New Orleans bookshop, who was looking for a job (Weinman). In the film, they meet by chance: When Wanda enters a bar, she mistakes for the bartender a man who is in the middle of robbing the cash register. She stares into the broken bathroom mirror before washing her face while he assesses the new situation: an unconscious bartender gagged on the floor, a strange woman now returning to the counter and ordering a drink. He looks nervously through the window, she combs her hair, then he says "Let's go," and they go.

Wanda's couple on the run is neither *Bonnie and Clyde*'s countercultural legend – "robbing a bank is not a symbolic gesture, or a form of protest" but an "act of survival" (Cruz 60) – nor *The Getaway*'s fantasy of remarriage, but an unstable relation infused with power and affective uncertainty: "She's still watching him, she is asking him a question and he isn't answering. She tries on different expressions, flickering between joy, tenderness, and surprise, as though there was something between them" (Léger 39). At the heart of Wanda's relationship with Mr. Dennis, Léger's description suggests, lies something between genuine affection and the realization of dependency, that is not a distortion of self, not the opposite of an authentic way of life, but simply social practice in motion. Stanley Kauffman, one of the few reviewers who praised the film for featuring a protagonist usually not seen on American screens, noted the affective dynamic at the heart of this relationship: "[H]is outbursts are the strongest show of true feeling that anyone has ever offered her and since she has no great depths of feeling to offer anyone else, she clings to the strongest feeling that comes her way" ("On Films March 27, 1971" 24).[84]

In Kauffmann's observation, one senses a glimpse of an alternative model of emotional truth, a rejection of the expressivist logic that suggests emotions are deeply buried inside the subject and speak its truth once they dare to come out.

---

84 The film's couple-on-the-run-theme provoked critic Judith Crist into a comparison with *Bonnie and Clyde* that only further manifested *Wanda*'s distance from the New Hollywood reception discourse: While Arthur Penn took the "apotheosis of the gangster-couple mythology and presented it in sociological rhythms," Crist critiqued Loden for "present[ing] only a doomed creature and proceed[ing] to an attenuated detailing of the doom." In Crist's eyes, the gangster Mr. Dennis would have been a much more endearing character than the protagonist, as he "reveals himself as a total psychotic with dreams of grandeur," making it "a pity that the film is not devoted to him" ("Nobody" 57).

In arguing that her emotions are not autonomous expressions but rather reactions to stimuli from the outside, Kauffman evokes a notion of emotionality akin to neuroscientist Lisa Feldman Barrett's constructivist framework, which holds that "we construct our emotional experiences [...] on the spot, as needed, through a complex interplay of systems" (40). In *Wanda,* then, the path to the core self is an impasse, not because the road to the core is tragically blocked, in a pathos of failure, but because there is nothing to be found to begin with; emotional experience is not an alternative dimension of life, to be pitted against a social position, but an outcome of this position.

After Mr. Dennis has been shot in a failed attempt to rob a bank, after Wanda herself has escaped first the crime scene and then a rape attempt, the film ends with Wanda entering a bar, somewhere in the middle of another nowhere, where "there's music, chatter, someone hands her a drink, food, cigarettes, they shuffle up to make room for her, they show her just the right balance of attention and indifference" (Léger 121). It is the opposite of the ending of *Five Easy Pieces:* Rather than turning her back on society to profit from the cultural authority of the existentially alienated self, Wanda returns to the company of strangers. "Amidst all of the chaos, crisis, and injustice in front of us," Lauren Berlant argues in *Cruel Optimism*, "the desire for alternative filters that produce the sense – if not the scene – of a more livable and intimate sociality is another name for the desire for the political" (*Cruel* 227).

It is this desire, I want to argue, that speaks from the closing scene of *Wanda*, a desire at odds with the dominant political imaginary of the 1960s and 1970s. Maria Farland noted how the feminist appropriation of the image of the 'total system' bred a politics in which "the only solution seemed to be escape, and the only escape seemed to reside in transcendence" (394). But transcendence receives a final blow when the image of *Wanda* becomes a freeze frame, with Wanda in the bar, among strangers, a closure of immanence that marks a stark counterpoint to New Hollywood's existential endings and its obsession with white men finding themselves. "Wanda, at the end of her journey, is sitting with other people, a little squashed, on a bench. The image freezes, grainy and flawed. Wanda. Just among others. Just as she is, in the world as it is. Fade to black" (Léger 122).

No authentic core, the self and the social helplessly entangled, the expressivist logic out of service: *Wanda*'s exclusion from the New Hollywood canon is not a curious blind spot, nor is it only due to New Hollywood's bias for male directors; the film is aesthetically and politically at odds with it. To return, one last time, to David Pirie's comparison of *Five Easy Pieces* and *Wanda:* both films indeed revolve around people on their own, wandering aimlessly, but one is looking for an authentic identity, the other for the means to pull through; one looks for the self, the other looks for means of survival. Bobby, *Five Easy Pieces* suggests, is tragically

alienated from an emotional core he would need to get in touch with: self-liberation. When Barbara Loden alluded to socioeconomic problems of rural regions in discussing her film, the *New York Times* asked her if she had an answer to these problems. "No," she said. "Just to change the whole society" (M. Phillips 32).

3.3 Sex Work, Men's Liberation, and New Hollywood's Failures of Feeling

In *Five Easy Pieces*, the specter of absent, hostile or inauthentic feelings looms large in the background. Television enculturates the masses, intellectuals intellectualize without showing any sign of emotional engagements, drop-outs despise society, and the alienated white man looks for but cannot find the authentic life he craves. In the two films I discuss in the following section, the dangerous phenomena James Bugental had termed "distortions of being" are tackled more directly. In both *Klute* (1971) and *Carnal Knowledge* (1971) inauthenticity is not existential but pathological, and in both cases this pathology indicates some larger social problem.

Furthermore, both films are steeped in gendered discourses that emerged in the wake of a call for women's liberation and would prevail throughout the 1970s, discourses of crisis that helped to reconfigure countercultural whiteness: the debate around cultural narcissism and the idea that men were not allowed to express emotions. While narcissism, both as an individual pathology and a cultural phenomenon, was increasingly linked to women and marked as a dangerous flight from emotion, the 1970s also witnessed how the "apparently unimpeachable truth that men aren't permitted to express their emotions" gained credence (Robinson 128). For some commentators in the 1970s, the existential crisis of the self had become a crisis of white masculinity, while the increasing cultural visibility of marginalized subjectivities translated into cultural diagnoses of permissiveness and narcissism.

Klute deals, among other things, with the gradual discovery of real feelings by a New York sex worker who falls in love with a detective. *Carnal Knowledge*, in turn, follows two college friends from late adolescence until mid-age to negotiate the potential and pitfalls of emotional truth for heterosexual men. For all their differences in content and aesthetics, both films aspire to dig deep into the gendered self, carving out some fundamental truths about men and women; and both ultimately make use of sex work as the ultimate marker of inauthentic feelings. In their engagement with gender, sexuality and emotional truth, they illustrate how an expressivist politics of losing control is overwritten by a much sturdier logic of gender. *Klute* and *Carnal Knowledge* thus helped to pave the ground for the battle cry that would start Glenn Bucher's 1976 book *Straight/White/Male:* "Why [...]

has an inquiry about the liberation of straight, white males now seen the light of day? Because these persons are in trouble!" (6–7)

3.3.1 "I Have Never Felt that Before": Losing Control and Falling in Love in *Klute*

If authenticity worked as a "quantitative dimension along which we can move" (Bugental 45), becoming a sort of new morality, then the history of the New Hollywood testifies to this development. After all, it was the waning and ultimate abandonment of Hollywood's self-censorship through the Production Code (see Baumann 97–105) that allowed films to delve deeper into what they found to be more fundamental truths about human experience. Liberated from restrictions in terms of subject matter, films created unvarnished images of violence, lingered in fatal endings, and, naturally, talked about sex. In *Klute,* Bree Daniels, the sex worker played by Jane Fonda, confesses to her psychotherapist when asked about her profession: "I don't have a problem with it *morally.* I don't enjoy it *physically.*" The trouble with sex talk and sex work, the film suggests in this passage – and will corroborate over its entire narrative – is not one of virtue but of authenticity. *Klute* is, as some have argued, a film about changing notions of public and private and an early investigation into the paranoid cultural climate of the 1970s (Jameson). But it is also a film about the possibility of authentic feeling, a film engaged in a movement of losing control and revealing the gendered rules and restrictions at work in the affective logic of expressivity.

Klute still stands as a showpiece of the New Hollywood, and already during its release, critics praised it by relying on the idea of a renaissance in filmmaking, understanding it as a singular work of art rather than the latest deployment of the detective tradition within American fiction. Sympathetic reviewers, and many who articulated reservations about the film, noted that *Klute* was a thriller in name only, recognizing its privileging of psychology over suspense. "As a mystery, 'Klute' is average; as a character study it is the best in years," wrote Emerson Batdorff in the Cleveland-based newspaper *The Plain Dealer* (C2). *New York Times* critic Roger Greenspun concurred: "For this is a thriller in which even the climactic terror [...] seems more like interpersonal relations than climactic terror" ("'Klute'" 35). Director Alan Pakula had planned this emphasis from the moment he began conceiving the film. In the notebook he kept during the writing of the script, he reminded himself to make the characters' obsessions and compulsions

the base for any drama and suspense.[85] This focus translated successfully into the reception of the film as contribution to the psychology of the self. In *The Nation*, Bruce Cook announced: "*Klute* is the kind of total movie that will involve you completely. It will tell you things about the way we live now. It may even tell you a few things about yourself" ("review of *Klute*").

Although the film is named after the detective played by Donald Sutherland – Pennsylvania-based private investigator John Klute, who travels to New York to investigate the disappearance of businessman Tom Gruneman – Bree Daniels is the emotional center of the film. She had been sexually involved with Gruneman during the latter's stays in New York, but even if that makes her a crucial element of the crime plot, it is her private life that comes sharply into focus from the beginning of the film. The long sequences of her therapy sessions provide not only background information but structure a film that feels, as the first part of what director Alan Pakula would later describe as his "paranoia trilogy," intentionally unstructured.

"Do You Really Know Yourself?": Obscene Letters and Dark Secrets

Klute allegorizes the 1960s waning of censorship in Hollywood in its opening scene, which is set in Pennsylvania. In a first meeting with investigators, Gruneman's wife learns that the police has found a letter her missing husband had written to "a girl in New York City." It is an "obscene letter," the detective warns her, but curiosity trumps censorship as the wife reaches for it anyway, performing a movement from suppressed secrets to complete transparency while establishing obscenity and its relation to authentic feelings as one of the film's matters of concern. Reaching out for the obscene letter also instigates the film's movement from suburbia to New York, a world of sex, money and dirty secrets, before the scene is intercut by the credits sequence, which features a female voice apparently talking to someone over the telephone: "Never feel ashamed, I mean, you mustn't be. You know, there's nothing wrong, nothing is wrong. I think the only way can we ever be happy is to let it all hang out, you know. Do it all, and fuck it."

If *Klute* is not as invested in portraying the crisis-ridden city as *The French Connection,* which was released in the same year (see chapter 2.3.), its image of New York is similarly bleak. In contrast to the urban thriller's emphasis on loca-

85 I have examined Pakula's notebooks at the Alan J. Pakula Papers in the Margaret Herrick Library, Los Angeles. Due to an unclear copyright situation, I refrain from quoting directly from the notebooks and only paraphrase or summarize my findings at occasions throughout this section. If not indicated otherwise, all allusions to the director's plans and intentions refer to "Klute Notebooks 1970–1973".

tion shooting and a new realism, *Klute*'s relation to the city as a space is more abstract, as Pakula intended to emphasize the contrast between urban masses and the small-town individual during the shooting. This individual is John Klute, an investigator hired by Gruneman's associates, not for his expertise but because he personally knew the missing businessman. Klute, then, is a stranger to the city and will have to learn new rules to navigate the streets of New York and solve the mystery. Writing for the *Daily News,* Rex Reed emphasized the relation between urban daily life and its metaphysical dimension in the film, explaining that

> on a deeper psychological level, it is an illuminating portrait of people trapped in New York, junkies and peddlers, predators and victims, the lonely and the tortured people who have no defenses because life has beaten them into submission. In the unveiling of their lives, there is a lesson about the dark sides of human nature that lie dormant in every man. ("Altman's" 31)

By displacing the realist description of a "portrait of people trapped in New York" onto a symbolic level, a "lesson about the dark sides of human nature," Reed suggests that the city in *Klute* is not *The French Connection*'s chaotic rhizome in need of affective policing but rather the site of a battle between vice and virtue. When in the second part of the film Bree and Klute cooperate in the Gruneman investigation, they enter a night club to look for a sex worker Bree has not seen in a while, and Klute's uptight body and his appearance couldn't clash more with the racially mixed crowd of long-haired, mustached and hip young people enjoying psychedelic rock music on the dance floor. The camera, in a move reminiscent of the opening scene at the suburban dinner table, abstains from joining the frenzy and pans the room in a straight horizontal line, evoking the image of an enclosed social space rather than reinforcing the expressivity of the environment.

In approaching urban space itself, however, the film actively rejects horizontals. "I tried to fight against the horizontal format of Panavision and seek verticals," Pakula said in an interview, "[t]he horizontal relaxes, creates a pastoral feeling" (qtd. in Webb 102). In his study on authenticity in noir narratives, Erik Dussere examines this use of verticals more closely: while "Bree is often shot from an exterior perspective, seen through a window or skylight or fence, giving us a stalker's-eye view of her," he notes, the man ultimately revealed as her stalker (and Gruneman's killer) is a corporate executive who is "always shown high up in a suburban office building" from which he "seems to look down, like Sauron's eye in a business suit, on the street-level bustle and urban messiness of Bree's life" (118). To create a paranoiac mood, then, *Klute* visualizes the city as a vertical order of things rather than stretching it out to focus on its porous boundaries, as *The French Connection* had. Consequently, the film seems much less invested in New Hollywood's fantasies of untamed motion but rather in digging deep to

carve out buried truths. In fact, one is a remedy for the other. As a New York sex worker, Bree signifies the restlessness of the city and its inherent vice – "She'll turn 600–700 tricks a year," John Klute learns about her in the beginning – and *Klute* is not least the story of her going beyond the urban surface, ultimately leaving the city.

Even before the film allows Bree to reflect on her life through extended scenes with her psychiatrist, *Klute* alludes to Bree's emotional state and the relation towards her job. She is with a client, tries to make him less insecure, more comfortable, sets up the bedroom, negotiates the financial conditions. "[M]oney [...] is the principle of the inauthentic in human existence," Lionel Trilling had put it in his speech on "Sincerity and Authenticity" a year earlier (124). The scene then transitions to the sex itself. Bree, filmed from above while the guy is on top of her, looks at her watch, apparently interested only in the amount of time she must spend with her client. The scene emphasizes Bree's professionalism but also creates the first images of emotional inauthenticity associated with sex work. Later, after returning to her apartment, accompanied by the first appearance of an unnerving soundtrack evoking the mood of paranoia that would become the film's central motif, Bree engages in a silent prayer and sings church songs. Earlier, Bree had tried to get a job with an advertising agency but was rejected, alongside every other woman in the casting.[86]

Taken together, these first scenes construct the character as confident but not satisfied with what she does for a living. She dresses in fashionable clothes and navigates the city with ease; the interior of her apartment associates her with progressive causes, a JFK poster hangs on the wall, hippie garments inhabit her wardrobe. She is a professional, a modern woman, but she is lacking something, as her outward appearance stands in stark contrast to what *Klute* suggests is a psyche alienated from a core self. When Bree is turned down for a role in the theater play she had auditioned for, the play's director points to a crucial problem: "Do you think you know yourself?", he asks, and Bree answers defensively: "As much as anybody, I guess." "Do you really know yourself," the director insists, lead-

86 In his essay on Alan Pakula's "paranoia trilogy," Fredric Jameson analyzes *Klute* as an inversion of the public-private-dichotomy, suggesting that the "countryside becomes the public realm and the city the private one," and that "the official or professional figure [...] is the bearer of private feelings, of love and affection as well as of therapeutic consolation" and "the prostitute [...] who might be supposed to be associated with the double life and the sexual underworld, in reality represents professionalism and business life" (52). While the framework of my analysis is entirely different, I would add to Jameson's description that the film's measure of this inversion is first and foremost the (in)authenticity of emotion, as articulated through notions of public and private dimensions, professionalism and love and affection.

ing her to admit that she tends to "forget myself when I'm acting." To which the director responds:

> No, you can't forget yourself, you can't. You have to know yourself and to kind of like yourself. You have to relate to people. I had an identity crisis two years ago and since then I've been working to know myself. It's very important.

This scene, which does not do much in terms of plot, again pushes notions of identity and the core self to the foreground of New Hollywood cinema. The trajectory towards a career in the arts is blocked if Bree cannot reach her core self. Bree's therapeutic project, then, parallels the common postwar narrative of overcoming identity crisis and closing an affective deficit, this time marked not by a lack of motion but a lack of emotional truth. For this project to be successful, Bree must learn how to lose control.

False Control: Therapy, Sex, and the Narcissistic Self

"When you're a call girl, you control it," Bree confesses in the first therapy scene, and control will be the central theme in all the extended sequences in which Bree talks to her psychiatrist. These sequences provide an affective scenario that incites the expression of feelings, a space of free speech where Bree takes pains to articulate her most personal thoughts. In the therapy scenes, *Klute* constructs a psychic portrait of Bree, never leaving in doubt that the viewer is witnessing a person's authentic attempt at reaching her core self. Elaborating on the relation between sex work and control, Bree continues:

> It's theatre, it's an act. You don't feel anything. You don't have to care about anything, you don't have to like anybody. You just lead them in the direction they wanna go in. You control it, you call the shots, and I just feel great after it.

Later during the same scene, Bree notes that being in control might "feel great" but is not necessarily enjoyable: "I came to enjoy it because it made me feel good. It made me feel like I wasn't alone. Make me feel [...] that I had some control over myself, control over my life, that I can determine things myself." The confession debunks Bree's feeling of control as a deception of herself, a distortion of being, just as the therapy sessions identify a fundamental lack within herself. Jane Fonda's performance accentuates this lack: her stumbling, her looking for words, her nervousness stands in stark contrast to the psychiatrist's straightforward questions. This is a different Bree than the confident modern woman established in the first scenes, her self-determination seems to merely hide a self in need of liberation. This liberation, the film suggests, will not be engendered by a

rational process of self-understanding but by an emotional process of learning to actually feel rather than observing as if from a distance that something makes one feel good.

For *Klute,* then, sex work constitutes less a moral problem than an inauthentic way of life, a form of role-playing, endangering the subject by offering her a fake form of control while leaving her lost in an emotional wasteland. This reasoning, and the notion of fake feelings at its center, became a key tenet of a discourse on narcissism that entered public debate during the 1970s. Even before Christopher Lasch published his best-selling *The Culture of Narcissism* in 1978, the term enjoyed increasing salience as a national diagnosis (Lasch).[87] Natasha Zaretsky underscores the crucial role emotions played within diagnoses of "cultural narcissism," describing the figure of the narcissist in a way that might also describe Bree Daniels: "[I]f one scratched below the surface, the narcissist's emotional life was revealed as shallow and severely compromised by chronic feelings of restlessness and boredom, feelings that could only be momentarily relieved through external rewards" (189). The diagnosis of narcissism, as it spread from psychoanalysis to public discourse, rested on a distinction between a false appearance on the surface and an emotional truth within – and on the identification of those inauthenticities that prevented the subject from attaining this truth.

Elizabeth Lunbeck has identified the "Americanization" of narcissism during the 1960s and 1970s as a parallel process of normalization and pathologization: debates between psychoanalysts traveled into journalistic accounts, which were in turn interpreted by cultural critics eager to make sense of changing times. Lunbeck contrasts two psychoanalytic concepts of narcissism with each other: while Heinz Kohut saw pathological narcissists mostly as victims to be healed from an overdose of something that was fundamentally healthy, Otto Kernberg "focused on narcissism's darker side" (3). Neither of them was much interested in cultural climates and social environments, but commentators tended to cling to Kernberg's notion of narcissism as pathology, broadening the term to diagnose a fundamental inauthenticity at the heart of American society.[88]

---

87 Literature on the phenomenon of narcissism abounded in the 1970s, both before and after the publication of Lasch's book. Examples include Henry Malcolm's *Generation of Narcissus* (1971), Marie C. Nelson's *The Narcissistic Condition: A Fact of Our Lives and Times* (1977), or Aaron Stern's *Me: The Narcissistic American* (1979).

88 In *The Culture of Narcissism,* Christopher Lasch would later explicate the underlying gender, race and class dynamics inherent in this discourse, framing cultural narcissism in a way that allowed him, in Lunbeck's words, to "portray a social world in which the once-stalwart psychological boundaries between rich and poor, black and white, ghetto and suburb, and 'Mom' and 'matriarch' had dissolved" (208).

The discourse of cultural narcissism tightened an increasingly common linkage between narcissism, femininity after feminism, a critique of consumption and a racialized debate on the city-in-crisis, as it pointed to crime, sex, permissiveness, and other legacies of the social movements of the 1960s. Within the discourse on narcissism, the "countercultural young came under especially sharp scrutiny, cast by their elders as hedonists questing for self-realization and reveling in an Elysium of instantly gratified desires" (Lunbeck 3). As Imogen Tyler summarizes the political unconscious of the narcissism rhetoric, the figure of the sex worker stood beside "sexually liberated women, feminists, career women, lesbians and bad mothers" in illustrating narcissism as a cultural pathology in the work of Lasch and others (353–354). In a way, then, *Klute* prefigured this entanglement of narcissism with gender politics and the legacy of the 1960s, by linking urban space to the figure of the modern women, and a narcissistic flight from feeling to her occupation as a call girl.

Lawrence Webb argues that *Klute* consciously "points to the ways in which the affective labour, especially of women, has been marshaled into the productive circuits of post-Fordist capitalism" (100). While this reading of the film is plausible, I would insist that in its treatment of sex work the film is much less invested in an analysis of affective labour than in the problem of emotional authenticity. During the writing process, Pakula reminded himself not to sentimentalize the prostitute's world because of the interior lifelessness of call girls, which made them into ghostly figures rather than authentic beings. Sex work, then, might not be a moral problem for the film, but neither is it a socioeconomic one – instead, it illustrates a broader cultural crisis.[89] Unlike in the case of *Taxi Driver* (1976), however, it is less a symbol of vice and decay than an example for self-alienation and inauthentic feelings; Bree exemplifies a personality type "whose worldly success and manifest charm shielded an emotionally shallow and intensely needy inner core" (Lunbeck 18).

It is this gap between the inauthenticity of sex work and actual romantic feelings *Klute* seeks to close. Within its emotional narrative, the therapy scenes provide a constant meter of progress on Bree's way from self-alienation to emotional authenticity. While the first session primarily discusses Bree's job and her conflicted feelings about it, the second scene in the therapist's office reveals her emotional

89 In late July 1971, only a month after *Klute* premiered in the city, *New York* magazine published an ambitious investigative report on sex work in New York. Again, this points to parallel thematic concerns as well as to stylistic affinities between the New Hollywood and the New Journalism movement. Marc Weingarten notes how the "sprawling, multipart examination" in the report was "more sexually graphic and existentially bleak than anything *New York* had attempted before" (273–274).

attitude toward the beginning love affair with John Klute. Again, the session is preceded by a sex scene, but this time the sexual act is incited by genuine affection rather than economic transactions. A shot of Bree's face with Klute on top evokes a similar shot during the sex with the john, only that Bree is not looking at her watch this time but actually enjoys herself. Sex and therapy are closely connected, then, as *Klute* assembles both to build a truth-machine that teaches Bree to understand and experience herself. Pakula noted to himself that Bree's emotional hangups should climax in a scene with Klute and not in a therapeutic scene – most suitably after having an orgasm. In the film's logic, personal transformation happens in real life, not in therapy, the latter only providing an adequate confessional setting for authentic reflection on this transformation.

When asked about her emotions towards Klute in the beginning of the second therapy scene, Bree admits that she feels "angry," but only because Klute incites a feeling that she is not used to feel. While Bree suggests that she has somehow lost control of her life and feels the urge to fight back against this loss of control, a flashback to a passionate kiss between Bree and Klute in bed delivers an affective correction of this urge. Ultimately, Bree admits, there is a difference with Klute: "I feel physically, that's what's different. I mean, I *feel.* My *body* feels. I *enjoy* making love with him. Which is a very baffling and bewildering thing for me, because I have never felt that before." This second session, then, marks Bree's baffling and bewildering new feelings as authentic, as indicative of a recovered access to a core self. Just as Pauline Kael had written about the audience of *Bonnie and Clyde* four years prior, John Klute made Bree feel something she is not able to articulate in words; for the first time in years, the film suggests, she experiences something, if only something elusive. Rather than remaining in control of her emotions, Klute pushed Bree into the disconcerting but excitingly smooth space of affect.

To navigate this space is a constant struggle. As Bree admits to her psychiatrist:

> I wish I could just let things happen and enjoy it for what it is and while it lasts and relax about it. But all the time I keep feeling the need to destroy it, to break it off, to go back to the comfort of being numb again. I keep hoping in a way that it's gonna end, because I mean I had more control before when I was with tricks, at least I knew what I was doing and I was setting everything up.

When trying to describe what "it" feels like, Bree's rhetoric evokes the language of expressivity I trace throughout this book: "the sensation that something that is flowing from me naturally to somebody else without it's being prettied up…" What Bree gains in losing control, then, is authentic feeling, an affective intensity whose source is outside of the market relations she is usually subjected to in romantic encounters, an emotional truth that is no distortion of being, no role-

play. By juxtaposing a narrative of romantic encounter with long confessional sequences set in therapy, *Klute* enacts a complex cultural work of authenticating feelings, relying on the combination of a visual logic that pits different ways of sexual intercourse against each other and a narrative strategy that verbalizes the psychological impact of these acts.

The film thus asks for the source of emotional expressions, and to the degree that it finds this source in a core self rather than in what analysts call coping behavior Bree Denials becomes an authentic being, a unique self, and, by consequence, a New Hollywood character. In the background, however, looms a complex history of cultural strategies to mark women's adaptation to gender regimes as free choices, authenticating some acts while pathologizing others. *Klute* illustrates the contextual shifts in which these strategies take place, and the discourses to which they adapt. These shifts consist in the elements that also constitute the core of the historical narrative I'm tracing in this book: the increasing valorization of emotion, the salience of notions of identity and identity crisis, the rebranding of authenticity as individual uniqueness and the effects of the social and cultural movements of the 1960s.

Many reviewers appreciated and applauded this portrayal of a woman learning how to feel. In the *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, Bridget Byrne described Bree as "a bright, witty, bitter, tough, sexy girl, with her fair share of failings and assets, a very, very real person" (Byrne). Charles Champlin, in the *Los Angeles Times*, agreed, praising Jane Fonda for creating "a fully realized individual human being whose truths seem to emerge from deep within herself instead of sitting on the surface like make-up" ("Jane Fonda" IV1). By engaging with the logic of expressivity, Champlin actively transformed into a quality of the film what was, in fact, its very explicit gesture. After all, for Fonda to be able to play a character whose truths emerge from deep inside, her character had to sit in a therapist's office for a considerable portion of the film's running time.

The emotional narrative of *Klute,* then, is a movement back to authentic feelings, a movement that retroactively frames Bree's former life as a flight from emotion rather than a conscious life choice. As a single and childless woman, Bree's development from confident-but-unhappy to insecure-but-enjoying ultimately leads toward a heterosexual relationship, a way of life increasingly critiqued by feminists as a patriarchal "distortion of being" during the time of *Klute*'s release. As Zaretsky points out in discussing the role of motherhood in diagnoses of cultural narcissism:

> At the same moment that the women's liberation movement was attempting to redefine motherhood as a freely chosen path rather than as a preordained destiny, the narcissism debate figured maternal ambivalence as pathological cause and childlessness as pathological

> symptom. As a result, discussions of narcissism often contained within them an implicit critique of feminism, even if the word was never mentioned. (198)

Even if *Klute* never mentions motherhood or child-rearing, casting the modern single woman's choice of profession as a form of emotional rather than financial deprivation allows the film to connect the journey towards authentic emotion to a love story. In this love story, John Klute is a romantic outsider of a different sort, almost the opposite of Norman Mailer's existential hipster: the suburbanite, unstained by urban neuroses, with uptightness being his main problem and, hence, a problem to be cured by becoming expressive through losing control.

Emotional Arcs and Powerful Prostitutes: The Gendered Politics of Expressivity

There is a notable similarity between *Klute* and *Five Easy Pieces:* both deal with protagonists leading a restless, promiscuous life and both encounter possibilities of domestication incited by more mature characters of the opposite sex leading a more stable way of life. While this alternative is discarded in *Five Easy Pieces* – Bobby Dupea is not able to stop leading his wayward life to settle down – Bree Daniels is ultimately redeemed through her encounter with John Klute, emerging as a woman, as director Alan Pakula anticipated it in the notebook he kept during the writing process, even contemplating scenes where Klute would do the dishes, to later reverse the roles. Beside this reversal, however, there is a parallel between these characters, as another narrative arc accompanies Bree's development from narcissistic and emotionally empty prostitute to a woman with actual feelings. It is Klute's development from being an uptight small-town detective to creating a looser and more expressive form of white masculinity.

When Klute first knocks at Bree's apartment door, she rejects answering the same questions she had already been asked by the police and closes the door on him. He is persistent, though, and when they speak to each other at last, there is an affective dissonance that underlines the confrontation between completely different ways of life. Donald Sutherland abstains from any expressive idiosyncrasies, he plays Klute as a mysterious and sealed character, bordering on the caricature of a square white man. After finally having granted Klute access to her apartment, Bree notes coldly: "You remind me of my uncle." Increasingly impatient with his passivity, she soon starts to deliberately make Klute nervous, turning his desire to know all about her relation to Gruneman into questions about his own desires: "What do *you* like? You're a talker, a button freak? Or you get it off wearing women's clothes?" As he avoids any reaction to her teasing, she ultimately condemns the "goddamn hypocrite squares." In turning around and starting to take off her

dress, she finally succeeds in unsettling his visitor, and being back in control makes her smile.

While Bree is lost in the blind alley of false emotions and suffers from a dangerous addiction to being in control, then, Klute shows severe signs of an affective deficit. His body is stiff, he seems insecure, not at ease with his emotions. While Bree and Klute seem almost opposites, one identified primarily with her body and sexual confidence, the other with a sharp mind and sexual insecurity, both are implicated in parallel emotional narratives of losing control, only with different starting points. For both, though, sex offers a road towards authenticity. When Bree visits Klute at night, not able to sleep and not wanting to sleep alone, Klute, dressed in his square pajamas, offers her his bed while himself moving to a mattress on the floor. During the night, however, he ultimately succumbs when Bree crawls down to him. Afterwards, Bree teases him again, stating: "Don't feel bad about losing your virtue; I sort of knew you would. Everybody always does."

While Bree's more pessimistic, urban outlook on sex and love gains the upper hand here, in a later scene it is Klute who possesses all the affective authority when Bree visits him after suffering a minor breakdown at a party, apparently instigated by a fallback into a night-club world of instant gratification and easy sex. When Klute wakes her up during the night, Bree starts fighting him but ends up in his warm embrace, smooth jazz music replacing the nervous piano sounds on the soundtrack to ease the paranoia. It is the musical theme that, from this point on, accompanies the growing affection that builds between Klute and Bree; it returns during a scene in which they are seen shopping fruits on the street, Klute now wearing looser clothes, engaging with city life much more confidently.

Klute reaches the ultimate breakthrough – his peak-experience, so to speak – when he impulsively attacks Bree's former pimp, authenticating his feelings for her but also performing an emotional truth expressively for the first time: there is something inside him so strong that it cannot help but to aggressively come out at some point. Echoing the narrative of *Five Easy Pieces,* the character of Klute seems to hint at an existential alienation at the core of masculinity, a dynamic that blocks the expression of true emotions buried deep inside. In the scene with Bree and his pimp, Klute finally succumbs to the affective logic of expressivity, his feelings for Bree translating into direct emotion, unmediated by any intellectual intervention. It was the goal Pakula had in mind for Klute, having noted that calm and controlled characters were interesting only if one feels they hold back emotions that nonetheless exist.

The two forms of inauthenticity portrayed in *Klute,* then, differ from each other while remaining connected. The film distinguishes between the inauthentic life of the sex worker, in desperate need of controlling something, and the inauthentic life of the 'square' detective, who merely listens and watches, lacking a se-

rious connection to his body. Both Bree and Klute have problems with realness, and both show signs of coping behavior, one fleeing into a world of casual sex and sex work, the other by retreating and hiding behind a shell. Their behaviors constitute flights from emotion, and the cure seems to lie in what Sam Binkley describes as a process of "self-loosening that would release [...] a river of unfettered empathy for one's neighbors [...], a deeper experience of one's body and oneself, and an enhanced sense of the everyday textures that compose routine experiences" (35).

But there is a gendered difference in how to undergo this cure. Although both emotional arcs are steeped in fantasies of emotional truth, the default subject positions of these fantasies privilege the male narrative of losing control. After all, Bree attains authenticity by becoming less expressive, Klute by becoming more expressive. It is a difference inherent in the framing of the respective distortion of being: A blockage of emotional forces is something different than a flight from real feelings; the remedy to the former problem is affective release, for the latter it is a retreat from coping behavior. For them to meet in a middle, Bree must stop the destructive forces from overpowering her, braking instead of releasing, letting go by learning to seriously engage with someone else. Klute, in turn, must let emotions flow again, letting go by releasing energy. They both lose control, but in different ways, with emotional truth rather than moral value being the measure of this double trajectory, and the sex scenes mark the points where both developments converge.

In a discursive environment where the slogan of women's liberation became increasingly pervasive, the emotional narratives of *Klute* bespeak an inversion of the logic of liberation by translating it into affective terms. Men are not too much in control of society, they are too much in control of themselves; instead of giving up control, they lose control to emotionally liberate themselves. Women, in turn, lose control in order to (re)learn the cultivation of true feelings, looking for affective redemption not in an urban space marked by the rules of sex and money but through genuine affection for a romantic partner. *Klute* is a love story, then, with love being a countercultural concept – a concept that demanded, as Binkley notes, a "technique of personal authenticity":

> to love was to assume responsibility for being real in all one's behaviors, to wean oneself of habits of pretense and appearance that safeguarded the facade of the social self, obscuring authentic sentiment with conventions of recognition and honorific regard. (170)

Klute, then, not only promotes the idea of authentic sex as stemming only from genuine love, it also embeds this argument within an imaginary that connects sex work to a pathological form of control. This idea is made explicit in the show-

down scene of the film, when Cable, one of Klute's contractors and the man ultimately found responsible for both Gruneman's disappearance and the murder of two sex workers, confesses his guilt to Bree. As Bree, to buy time, assures him she understands, Cable sees through her tactic, starting a diatribe against sex workers:

> Well, that's what you do. You make a man think that he's accepted. It's all just a great big game to you. When you are all obviously too lazy and too warped to do anything meaningful with your life. So you prey on the sexual fantasies of others. I guess it comes to no great surprise to you if I say that there are little corners in everyone which were better off left alone. Sicknesses, weaknesses, which should never be exposed. But that's your stock and trade, isn't it, this weakness. And I was never fully aware of mine. Until you brought them out.

This portrayal of the sex worker is echoed by Christopher Lasch in his diagnosis of cultural narcissism in 1978. In Elizabeth Lunbeck's summary, the sex worker was, for Lasch, "a loner [who] depended on others 'only as a hawk depends on chickens', [attempting] 'to move others while remaining unmoved herself'" (246). Cable's speech, however, is both a social critique and a personal confession. Sex work becomes a truth machine of its own, triggering men to explore their dark side, revealing the weaknesses within human nature. Sex work makes women deny their own individuality but reveals what is buried most deeply in the male self. It is a logic that would return some years later in psychotherapist Herb Goldberg's 1975 bestseller *The Hazards of Being Male*, in a section that almost reads as a satire of incel discourse from today's vantage point:

> Feminists have expressed the idea that prostitution is an exercise in male chauvinism, one that results in the degradation of the female wherein she is simultaneously being exploited by her customers, her pimp, and the police. While there is merit to this argument, there is still hardly a more humiliating, self-annihilating and less satisfying experience for a man than a visit to a prostitute, an experience that thoroughly reinforces the hateful self-image of himself as a despicable animal. (36)

It is this hateful self-image, deeply engrained with something we now identify as the language of incels, that Cable's confession brings to the forefront, making explicit what Pakula had noted on sex workers: that their compulsive needs to manipulate men was what endangered their lives. To carve out an allegorical meaning of *Klute* would at least have to consider the imaginary expressed in its production of knowledge around sex work: women's control over men's natural weaknesses lead to murder. Sex work translates to female power, the film suggests, and giving up this power is tantamount to letting romantic feelings happen. Not only does *Klute* mark sexual desire as more authentic than sex work, but it also constructs the latter as the primary symbol of both unreal feelings and female power.

This puts *Klute* in a curious relation to New Hollywood's urtext. After all, in *Bonnie and Clyde,* as well, the woman was hip and modern, the man rendered impotent. But while female desire and agency remained the driving engine of the 1967 film, female desire and agency became heavily contested topics over the following years. In 1971, when *Klute* was released, the confident hip femininity of Bonnie Parker loomed everywhere, provoking reactions and attempts to make sense of cultural and social change. In *Klute,* Bree Daniels is a singular self, but the development she undergoes differs distinctly from the existential motif of the eternal search or the tragic insights into a universal identity crisis that were at the heart of many other New Hollywood narratives and their male (anti-)heroes. Bree Daniels' emotional trajectory, in contrast, looks suspiciously like earlier psychological models of adjustment and maturity, models that self psychologists had been trying to do away with for decades. *Klute,* then, constitutes another case of a simultaneous backlash and appropriation, a complex reconfiguration of the politics of countercultural whiteness.

3.3.2 The Truth about Men: *Carnal Knowledge* and the (Gender) Trouble with Authenticity

With some exceptions, most reviewers had understood *Five Easy Pieces* to be about humanity's or contemporary America's state of alienation, not necessarily about a particularly male one. The gender dimension of *Carnal Knowledge,* released one year later, was impossible to ignore. Mike Nichols' film, based on a screenplay by cartoonist and playwright Jules Feiffer, followed two white college friends over a span of two decades, focusing on their respective love lives and different outlooks on sexuality; Jack Nicholson starred as the chauvinistic and sexually aggressive Jonathan, Art Garfunkel as the more romantic and shyer Sandy.

To many, *Carnal Knowledge* seemed almost too explicit about its subject matter. Harry Clein, writing for the *Coast Agent*, used his review of the film to talk about a general exhaustion of the New Hollywood, observing that each of the new films by directors Monte Hellman, Robert Altman and Mike Nichols "leaves something to be desired as entertainment, as drama and as a movie" (14). Talking about *Carnal Knowledge* in particular, Clein maintained that the problem of the film had to do with control:

> Mike Nichols' directorial hand is always in evidence but never obtrusively. If there is any fault with his work here, it is that he is almost in too much control. You're tempted to root for something to go wrong. Nichols seems to have had it all worked out perfectly, theoretically

> and intellectually, but he never seemed to have felt anything for these characters. He hasn't quite helped make Feiffer's almost-caricatures into human beings. (15)

Expressing a desire for emotional truth and affective intensity, as well as an investment in complex characters, by way of observing their absence in *Carnal Knowledge,* Clein's assessment of the film is the New Hollywood discourse in a nutshell. What Clein found here was perfection, intellect, control, elements that served as constitutive others for the affective logic of expressivity. A true auteur, Clein suggested, had to feel something for his film, his audience had to feel something while watching the film, and the characters of the film, in order not to become caricatures, had to be depicted as feeling something as well.

Stephen Farber seconded Clein's judgement in the *New York Times*, emphasizing that the "only way a film can implicate an audience in its social criticisms is by demanding a more complex *emotional* response." In the case of *Carnal Knowledge,* Farber argued, the filmmakers seemed "more interested in making a knowing, sardonic *point* than in honestly exploring the full emotional experience of their characters" ("A Film" D9, original emphases). On the other end of the spectrum, writing in the same newspaper, Vincent Canby was so impressed he did not want the movie to end. "[W]hat passes for imperfection in conventional movie narrative terms," he explained, "is what made me more or less unwilling to leave the theater at the end of 'Carnal Knowledge,' and prompted a brief fantasy to the effect that the projectionist had made a terrible mistake, that there were reels to go before we could sleep" ("I Was" D1). Again, what film critics battled over was whether a film of the New Hollywood constituted an emotional experience, if it merely told the audience how to feel or if it actively made them feel something. But also, they argued about whether *Carnal Knowledge* had something substantial to say *about* feelings.

"It Is an Act, But the Act Is Them": Heterosexual Role-Playing Games

While some reviewers assessed the film's approach to its subject matter as a "harsh, angry and bitter" portrait of "us as sexual beings" (Blevins, "'Knowledge'" C1), others found it "cold, superficial, manipulative" (Schickel, "View" 12), or bringing only "old news to an audience experienced in sensitivity training and primed on the literature of Women's Liberation" (Farber, "A Film" D9). The emergent discourse of women's liberation, not often considered in the context of *Five Easy Pieces,* was almost unanimously used as a framework when reviewers discussed *Carnal Knowledge* a year later. Both in the film and outside of it, gender trouble was suddenly everywhere. In *Cue,* William Wolf maintained: "The awful truth, which is seen in the cleverly perceptive script by the ingenious Jules Feiffer, is

that worshiping society's clichés robs man of real satisfaction. There's enough substance here for a year of women's lib debates" (Wolf, "New Films"). While Wolf argued that the film engaged seriously with the emerging concept of oppressive sex roles, Pauline Kael would have none of that. To her, *Carnal Knowledge* looked "as if *Playboy* had suddenly seen the error of its ways and now sold its remorse in the same crusading format" ("Review of Carnal Knowledge" 43). *Playboy* itself, in turn, found *Carnal Knowledge* to be an "amazing, brutally honest film," a "perfect cinematic treatment for the harsh truths that underlie Feiffer's deceptively simple thesis" ("Review of Carnal Knowledge").

By the time of the film's release, the "ingenious Jules Feiffer" was already a popular cartoonist who had been published in a wide range of outlets, from the *Village Voice* and *Playboy* to the *Los Angeles Times,* the *New Yorker,* and *Esquire.* In an interview with *Playboy* released shortly before the film itself, Feiffer quoted a line from the latest draft of his script, in which Jonathan explains to a woman: "Remember when you were a kid and the boys didn't like the girls? Only sissies liked girls? What I'm trying to tell you is that nothing's changed. You think boys grow out of not liking girls, but we don't grow out of it. We just grow horny" ("Mailbag: Nichols" 11). Even if these lines did not make it into the final cut of *Carnal Knowledge*, they seem an adequate slogan for a film steeped in the (im)possibility of male authenticity. What the film tackled most openly, after all, was the question if romantic coupledom could be anything more than phony role-play.

The first dialogue between the college friends is heard only in voice-over while the opening credits appear on a black canvas. This visual deficit already hints at a lack of authenticity at the heart of the conversation. Jonathan and Sandy start by discussing whether, in a case of unrequited love, one prefers to be the one who loves or the one who is loved, then continue to reflect on their current romantic affairs. Only when the image catches up with the dialogue, Jonathan and Sandy are revealed as guests at a party, and Jonathan suggests that Sandy approach Susan. In the following encounter, it is Susan, however, who speaks the first sentence, anticipating a constant motif of the film: while the women are mostly mature, more honest and authentic, men are emotionally crippled creatures. While *Five Easy Pieces* found an existential alienation at the heart of this male affective deficit, *Carnal Knowledge* emphasized the strategic, opportunistic nature of male behavior. The first part of the movie constantly switches between Sandy's tender approaches towards Susan and the cold recapping of his romantic progress with Jonathan. Masculinity is, to say the least, double-faced.

When they first talk, Sandy and Susan explicitly address the question of honesty in party conversations, and they soon become entangled in a web of meanings related to the notion of authenticity. "People like to think they put on an act, but it's really them," Susan argues, grasping the paradox at heart of Abigail Cheever's

figure of the real phony (see chapter 3.2.): "It is an act, but the act is them." Sandy is more an authentic jerk than a real phony, however, as he openly expresses his wish to make progress quickly. When in a later scene Susan asks him to take his hand off her breast, he just answers: "But the way we are going I *should* be in the state of feeling you up by now." In marking his feelings as a question of necessity, Sandy reveals a fundamental affective deficit at the site of his core self. As Herb Goldberg would later write in *The Hazards of Being Male:* "Most men have a great investment in their ability to control feelings with a concomitant fear of letting go emotionally. The male will somehow need to relearn how to be a feeling person" (60).

As played by Jack Nicholson, Jonathan is the carnal opposite to Sandy's cerebral ways. When he learns about Sandy's progress with Susan, he starts to get interested himself and calls Susan for a date. Their first dialogue echoes the conversation between Susan and Sandy, revolving around the possibility of authenticity in male-female relationships. To Susan, however, Jonathan's bluntness seems more attractive than Sandy's uneasiness, as they soon both agree that every statement in a boy-girl-conversation usually means something else. Thus, *Carnal Knowledge* constructs an authenticity of a second order, as Jonathan and Susan share a common truth about human nature and gender, an outlook on life governed by a raw sexual desire more than by anything else. In *Carnal Knowledge*, then, inauthenticity in heterosexual relations is not a "distortion of being" but a natural state, creating not a dangerous affective deficit but an exciting affective friction. When Susan dines with both her lovers for the first time, the camera remains relentlessly on her face while she laughs herself to tears, authentically amused but also papering over the cracks in a façade she cannot help but enjoy.

"The Role We're Forced to Play": Confessions of Oppression and Men's Liberation

In the "Movie Mailbag" section of the *New York Times*, readers debated fiercely if *Carnal Knowledge* was a passionate indictment of toxic masculinity – even if the term did not yet exist – or if it merely reproduced it. Scottish actress and theater director Kristin Linklater declared that she was "deeply insulted" by the film: "[H]ad I had the liberated courage of my female convictions, I would have thrown a bomb (if I had happened to have one handy) at the celluloid." Although Linklater articulated problems with the "insensitivity that femaleness is here dealt with," her argument was less targeted at the content of the film than at its affective force. She might have maintained an "objective stance," Linklater admitted, "had not the audience backed up the film's predilections by [...] supplying jock laughter for the screen words and situations that made man's dreary conquest-urge seem sporty, funny, sexy" ("Mailbag: Cheering" 18). Two months earlier, in an article

in the same newspaper, playwright Rosalyn Drexler had similarly argued that the film seemed less "an object lesson of depersonalization punished" than it provided "immediate identification for the corrupt." Drexler then recounted how, when Jonathan in the film referred to his "fetish about giant mammies, many men in the audience laughed knowingly, expressing smug satisfaction" (D7).

In a response to Linklater's letter, *Times* reader David L. Minkow displaced her argument onto the level of narrative, claiming she had "missed the reason for the making of the film, for it is not a put-down of women, but of men." For Minkow, the film was an accurate description of a pathology at the heart of masculinity, a film about

> the male, certainly not atypical, trying to live up to an image that he has been indoctrinated with since birth. The male is to become an oppressor, a giant phallus that is to win every women it comes in contact with. The Nicholson-Garfunkel characters fail at achieving this goal, just as almost every male in this country has failed. Yet they still pursue the ideal and destroy themselves in the process. ("Letters to the Editor")

Vincent Canby made a similar argument in his review for the *New York Times:* "If anything, 'Carnal Knowledge' is exploitative of men, not, heaven knows, as sex objects, but as exploiters. It is a terrifying confession that might have been made on the analyst's couch" ("I Was" 18). To some at least, *Carnal Knowledge* was an honest assessment of self-destructive masculinity; and to Minkow, it also spoke personally:

> You see, I too have been indoctrinated and I don't want to be another powerful penis. As a result, I'm experiencing depression, added insecurity, torment and less ego gratification. Is it worth it? Damn, I hope so. Nichols and Feiffer have made a male counterpart of 'The Feminine Mystique.' The male needs to be liberated also, Miss Linklater. Liberated from the role of oppressor and exploiter. ("Letters to the Editor")

In December 1971, when Minkow wrote these lines, an emergent movement of men's liberationists mobilized a similar rhetoric of male suffering and self-flagellation. Even if the discourse of men's liberation, at least in its early days, was limited to a particular political milieu, it illustrates a historical moment in which the emergence of women's liberation provoked reactions among men. To some extent, these reactions were honest engagements with the politics of feminism, but they also inherited and actualized a midcentury discourse of spiritual crisis and the concepts of self psychology – and they would develop serious blind spots to relations of power.[90]

---

90 The following is partly based on my research for a book contribution published in German, see Kadritzke.

While in 1958 Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., had already explicitly addressed men in his call to "recover a sense of individual spontaneity" (Schlesinger, Jr.), the call for male liberation was now charged with the urge of a feminist critique of masculinity. "We identify the agents of our oppression as men," the Redstockings Manifesto had famously proclaimed in the summer of 1969 (Redstockings). And in the discourse of gay liberation, the term 'man,' Mark Greif remarks, could "display a surplus, tyrant *manliness,* a confining masculinity and domination" (269, original emphasis). If men were agents of oppression, however, and manliness a marker of confinement rather than a means of liberation, men risked losing their status as the subject of identity crisis and its imaginary overcoming, a status that had granted them access to hegemonic subject positions.

In the beginning of the 1970s, the trope of the "oppressed oppressor" in need of liberation was predominantly mobilized by white men associated with the New Left, sympathetic to the women's liberationist cause. Two months before *Carnal Knowledge* hit the screens, a group of male students in Berkeley published the first edition of *Brother,* a magazine subtitled "A Male Liberation Newspaper". On the first page, the editors enlisted 19 hypotheses about different forms of oppression men suffered from. The most influential form was "social expectations," which accounted for alienation and isolation, psychological problems, a lack of self-love and the incapability of expressing fears and emotions. "Sex role separation makes either man or woman unable to be whole and to realize all aspects of selves," the authors summarized in the seventh hypothesis ("Bay Area" 1).

Thus, men's liberation discourse reiterated some of the same rhetorical strategies used by cultural critics of the 1950s who deplored the inauthenticity, other-directedness and lack of emotional intensity within American society. This time, however, the rhetoric came bluntly gendered, and was not restricted to male voices. The press book of *Carnal Knowledge* quoted critic Rex Reed with his praise for a "towering achievement, a shattering experience that microscopically examines the male-female identity crisis so brilliantly that it is equivalent to the same tonic effect as a year on an analyst's couch" ("Carnal Knowledge press book"). The crisis of the lost self had become a "male-female identity crisis," and the crisis-ridden self of the 1950s and 1960s – implicitly white and male – was by now the straight white man in crisis.[91]

To retain the privileges associated with identity crisis discourse, then, male dominance itself was cast as an outcome of identity crisis, and the familiar vocabu-

91 The one thing that remained implicit was this subject's class position. As Barbara Ehrenreich noted, while men's liberation discourse found all men "imprisoned in the male sex role, [...] within that metaphorical prison [...] the chances of rehabilitation depended markedly on one's class of origin" (*Hearts* 134).

lary of social roles played a crucial part in this strategy. Shortly before founding *Ms.,* the first nation-wide feminist magazine, Gloria Steinem argued in the *Washington Post:* "We want to liberate men from […] inhuman roles as well" (192). There was a crucial difference, however. "With the women, there's an oppressor," a guy named Mike, one of the founders of *Brother,* told *Life* magazine, "The enemy is men. But our enemy isn't women, it's the role we're forced to play" (B. Farrell 53). In an essay originally published for the first issue of *Brother* but reprinted in the widely distributed New Left publication *Liberation*, Jack Sawyer described men's liberation as a movement that "calls for men to free themselves of the sex role stereotypes that limit their ability to be human" (32). Sawyer also reiterated the diagnosis of an affective deficit that had been part and parcel of identity crisis discourse at midcentury, only in more explicitly gendered language. There was a "severe […] restriction from conventional male sex roles in the area of affect, play, and expressivity," Sawyer argued, which came down to the fact that "men are forbidden to play and show affect," and because of that they were "prevented from really coming in touch with their own emotions" (32).

As Michael Messner argues, sex role theory provided an attractive vocabulary for men's liberationists, as the "idea that reciprocal roles […] are limiting to the full human development of both sexes allowed some men's liberationists by the mid-1970s to argue that men and women were equally oppressed by sexism." Through this procedure, "the concept of *oppression* was depoliticized and seemed to refer only to a general condition faced by everyone in a sexist society" (261, original emphasis). Just as countercultural and New Left discourse in the 1960s had broadened the meaning of terms such as alienation to encompass a wide variety of social discontent, in much of sex role theory oppression seemed to be just another name for the total system that beleaguered the individual self. The identification of a "male-female identity crisis," alluded to in the framing of *Carnal Knowledge,* slipped into a logic that pitted an oppressed male self against social forces, within a cultural context in which feminism began to be understood exactly as such a social force.

Still, applying the vocabulary of role-playing to gender identity constituted an important change and challenged the universalist rhetoric of self psychology and midcentury discourse. This challenge targeted Abraham Maslow's dictum that self-actualization "takes place via femaleness or maleness, which are prepotent to general-humanness" (*Toward* 196). In turn, as Doug Rossinow notes, a feminist politics of authenticity implied "that a more androgynous identity was the most natural vision of human nature" (*Politics* 319). This posed a problem for the affective logic of expressivity. If gender identity was itself a "distortion of being," then how were the expressions of a core self to be verified? And if sex roles were symptoms of alienation, then didn't the success of the project of developing an authentic

self depend on the shedding of this role? The liberated male, then, might not look that masculine anymore.

But even with gender trouble everywhere, a fundamental logic of countercultural whiteness remained in place. Talking about oppressive roles was, once again, a form of opposing an authentic self against distortions of being, and it worked in a way unable to account for racial difference: after all, talking about a white or a black role seemed to not make that much sense. Furthermore, this rhetoric framed the battle against these oppressive roles as a question of defiant rebellion, a sort of individual abolition of masculinity. "The choice about whether men are the enemy is up to men themselves," Sawyer concluded his essay (32), reproducing the unacknowledged white default also present in much feminist writing from the period.

Because the men's liberation movement, as a recent *VICE* article put it, "remained mostly limited to emotionally stunted white collar men who felt stuffed into the breadwinner role," it suffered from "class and race blindness" (Aronowitz). While sex role discourse, then, successfully critiqued the gendered logic underlying Charles Reich's indictment of Consciousness II blandness, "the career women with all their beauty fled, the men with all their manhood drained" (*Greening* 165), in making this gendered logic itself part of the problem, the fantasy of countercultural whiteness prevailed: the existence of a unique self set in opposition to social forces. And it prevailed by attaching itself stubbornly to the question of true emotions buried deep inside the self.

"These Persons Are in Trouble!": Phony Erections and Hard-Earned Orgasms

A wide range of critics admitted that the film spoke truth to gender trouble, and they found this truth to be buried deep inside the self. Gordon Gow lauded Mike Nichols for having "drawn the truth from this players [sic] with all the finesse of a dentist giving a quick strong tug on the tooth whose roots are deepest, and has proceeded to place the object itself under a magnifying glass" ("Review of Carnal Knowledge" 8). Even Stephen Farber, who did not praise the film much, commented that "it is one of the first films to try to uncover some of the relevant, disturbing secrets of American private life" ("A Film" D9). Winfred Blevins jubilated in the *Los Angeles Herald Examiner* that the movie was a "scrupulously honest portrayal of the sexual failure of the American male circa 1970 – his adolescent attitude toward sex, his fear of emotional commitment, and ultimately his self-castrating fears of sexual inadequacy" ("'Knowledge'" C1). *Esquire,* finally, turned Feiffer's observation about men only growing horny rather than starting to like women into existential tragedy: "The exact sexual foolishness we find amusing in a boy of fifteen can seem bathetic in a man of thirty, near-tragic in a man of

forty-five. This is why *Carnal Knowledge* is so unsettling, finally, so sad for all its funniness, so bloody sad" (Brackman, "Films, October 1971" 46).

For many reviewers, the film provided exciting affective scenarios for carving out these emotional truths; on its search for roots, it did not stumble upon social configurations but upon "disturbing secrets," personal attitudes and flights from emotion. This was much in line with the discourse on masculinity and its discontents in the early 1970s. In *The Hazards of Being Male,* Herb Goldberg would provide an astute summary of the portrait of the American male as a walking affective deficit:

> Today's man is the product of massive, defensive operations *against* feelings. [...] To survive and contain these repressed feelings he must detach himself increasingly from all relationships that might stimulate or provoke him into an uncontrollable response. He is comfortable primarily in denial. [...] Because feelings are not permitted free expression the male lives in constant reaction against himself. What he is on the outside is a facade, a defense *against* what he *really* is on the inside. *He controls himself by denying himself.* (58, original emphases)

Like *Klute,* then, *Carnal Knowledge* can be seen as a response to a new feminist challenge, albeit a different one. While *Klute* constructs two forms of pathologies of inauthenticity for its protagonists – a female flight from genuine feeling into the fake control of prostitution, and a male uptightness induced by a fear of getting in touch with feelings – the flight from feeling is inherently masculine in *Carnal Knowledge.* This diagnosis would become a central tenet of a genre of literature on men's liberation and masculinity, with varying degrees of sympathy towards feminism. A pro-feminist men's liberationist interviewed by *Life* said that "overriding characteristic of men in this society is emotional constipation," and a Chicago "men's workshop" reported: "We are working more on hugging each other" (B. Farrell 56, 59). Only some years later, Warren Farrell would argue in *The Liberated Man* (1974) with respect to the problem of emotional constipation that "Men may be even more restricted in their identity as *human* beings" (98, original emphasis). *Carnal Knowledge*'s reception as a text about the troubles of masculinity, then, testifies to the ways in which a critique of male power was displaced onto a crisis discourse on masculinity that drew on the increasing valorization of emotional expressivity in postwar culture.

In the early 1970s, Herb Goldberg would start to explicitly critique the pro-feminist wing of the male liberation movement, for it was "buying the myth that the male is culturally favored" (5). A 57-year-old college professor, in answering Goldberg's survey about what liberation meant to different men, even evoked the age-old metaphor of slavery: "My gut reaction, which is what you asked for, is that men – the famous male chauvinist pigs who neglect their wives, underpay their women employees, and rule the world – are literally slaves" (6–7). In his foreword, Gold-

berg credited both the "humanistic growth movement and the feminist movement" for having created the climate in which men can "arrive at their own realization of what is crucial to their survival and well-being" (xi). What Goldberg wanted to get away from, however, was the "tenor and mood of [...] self-accusation, self-hate, and a repetition of feminist assertions" that allegedly permeated male liberation efforts thus far.

In getting away from self-accusation, he also reconfigured countercultural whiteness, casting male guilt as an extreme internalization of a sex role that was an outcome of culture, distorting the male's true being. The suppression of emotions was identified with society in this logic, the "failure to experience or understand a range of emotion" being attributed, as Sally Robinson has argued, to a "vaguely apprehended social order that 'requires men' to block the expression of emotion" (137). For the affective logic of expressivity, authentic expression is something valuable, and to reject authentic expression can only stem from a limitation imposed from the outside. If masculinity is suffering from powerful blockages that hinder this expression, it can be imagined as a victim of social forces, and thus the discourse of men's liberation serves, in Robinson's astute words, to "[trump] women's blocked opportunities with men's blocked emotional expression" (131).

And indeed, Jonathan is headed for disaster. In contrast to Sandy, who at least momentarily achieves a certain form of sexual authenticity with his partner, his love life turns increasingly anxious and unsatisfying, a development emphasized in a scene that features a violent fight between Jonathan and his girlfriend Bobbie – and a typically expressive performance by Jack Nicholson. When Bobbie bursts into tears explaining she doesn't want a job but only him, he screams: "I'm taken! By me!" And when she gives him an ultimatum, he completely loses it, calling her a "ball-busting castrating son-of-a-cunt bitch," swirling the bed sheets around him.

Yet again, it was Nicholson's idiosyncrasies that created an experience of emotional truth for many reviewers. Winfred Blevins noted that "Nicholson renders his pathetic character with full vulnerability, emotional commitment and psychological rounding. It must have been a painful performance. Much of it is virtuosic" ("'Knowledge'" C1). *Newsweek*'s Paul Zimmerman found that Nicholson is "more than a hapless heel with his charm and his rages that batter Ann-Margret for her helplessness like torpedoes sinking a battleship" (71), while Stefan Kanfer marveled in *Time:* "Feiffer has composed a cartoon, but Nicholson has created one of the screen's few straight misogynists" ("Review of Carnal Knowledge" 55). Not unlike the appraisal of Popeye Doyle and his earthy racism in *The French Connection* (see chapter 2.3.), then, misogyny gave credence to the New Hollywood ideal of moral ambiguity and radical singularity.

The film's satirical ending constitutes a final judgment on Jonathan. While at the end of *Carnal Knowledge,* decades after they were college friends, Sandy at

least claims he is happy, Jonathan is a pathological case. In the film's last scene, he meets a sex worker who sets up a routinized verbal act to make him horny, and her speech contains a fantasy of authenticity:

> Because your knowledge of yourself is so true that it exposes the lies which every scheming one of [the other women] live by. It takes a true woman to understand the purest form of love: to love a man who denies himself to her. A man who inspires worship. Because he has no need for any woman. Because he has himself.

The scene, which ends with the prostitute announcing that "he" is finally "up in the air," is a final testament to the cultural authority of the idea of expressivity as losing control in the New Hollywood and the historical formation it was part of. Jonathan is only able to lose control through an act that he had apparently planned meticulously; authentic feeling, marked by the capability of getting an erection, is only possible in the most inauthentic of all settings. This is not a happy ending, for sure, it is an emergency call. As Glenn Bucher would raise an alarm years later in *Straight/White/Male:* "[T]hese persons are in trouble!" (7)

Jonathan's erection seems to be the complete opposite of what Goldberg would later describe as the "essence and ultimate joy of male sexuality [which] lies in the experience of total arousal, [...] desire at such a peak that no fantasies could possibly intrude and with the entry sending ecstatic waves and shivers through his entire being" (22). This is a kind of sexual peak-experience that not only every man "deserves" but also one that

> most men have experienced some time in their lives *before* they allowed their sexual spontaneity be mired in intellectualizations about 'sexuality,' derailed by abstractions about 'meaningful relationships' and 'sharing,' alienated from their own experience by a destructive emphasis on techniques, and numbed by scientific teachings about the physiology of the woman and himself. (22)

Here was a fantasy that invested heavily in notions of both untamed motion and emotional truth: a countercultural fantasy of irrational forces, to be experienced by a body rather than understood by a mind, pressing towards the outside in incoherent, incomprehensible ways – and with feminism cast as a hostile intellectualization and abstraction of sexuality, destructively emphasizing technique instead of feeling. Counter to the age-old identification of whiteness and maleness with reason, control and power, here was white masculinity appropriating the force of emotions, irrationality and the release of control, craving ecstatic waves and shivers induced by desire as such and flowing through the entire self. Goldberg wrote about men and the orgasmic experience they deserve, but the affinity be-

tween desire and madness that underlay his argument had already been put forward by self psychology and voices of the counterculture throughout the 1960s.

Chapter 4
The Countercultural Romance of Madness

> A psychotic episode is a socio-political event and not a medical event. – Mitch Snyder (qtd. in Staub, *Madness* 121)
>
> There's a fine line between the method actor and the schizophrenic. – Nicolas Cage
>
> The only performance that makes it, that really makes it, that makes it all the way, is the one that achieves madness. – Mick Jagger in *Performance*

"She'd never written a review like that in her life," producer Jonathan Taplin told Peter Biskind, referring to Pauline Kael's text on Martin Scorsese's breakthrough film *Mean Streets* (1973) ("Everyday"). The initially reserved reaction to the film, Taplin maintained, changed with Kael's *New Yorker* review: "Kael made *Mean Streets,* made Marty, no ifs, ands, or buts about it" (qtd. in Biskind 250). Whether this bold statement is an accurate reflection of the influence of Kael's review or not, it evokes almost all of the important ingredients of the New Hollywood discourse as I have laid them out in the preceding chapters: auteurism and the championing of cinematic expressivity, the affective evaluation of films, the singling out of an ambiguous and unique character authentically embodied rather than merely (role-)played by a white male actor. But Kael also hints at another pervasive trope within both the New Hollywood and 1960s countercultural discourse in general: the re-evaluation of madness as containing a truth about authentic personhood rather than signaling its limits.

In the review, Kael champions *Mean Streets* as "a true original of our period" and a "triumph of personal filmmaking," ascribing its merits to the singular vision of director Martin Scorsese. "Scorsese [...] knows the scene and knows how it all fits together; it's his, and he has the ability to put his feelings about it on the screen" ("Everyday" 160–161). Thus, it is less Scorsese's thoughts or beliefs that he managed to translate into cinematic images but his emotional truth. This endeavor succeeds, Kael argues, because Scorsese did not go for "something nearer to common life" in conceiving of the film; he did "something much tougher – descend into himself and bring up what neither he nor anyone else could have known was there" ("Everyday" 162). Kael further emphasizes the film's affective values, mentioning its "own unsettling, episodic rhythm and a high-charged emotional range that is dizzyingly sensual" ("Everyday" 157). This quality engenders a broader reflection on the role of affect in film:

> Movies generally work you up to expect the sensual intensities, but here you may be pulled into high without warning. *Violence erupts crazily, too, the way it does in life* – so unexpectedly

 https://doi.org/10.1515/9783111436661-006

> fast that you can't believe it, and over before you've been able to take it in. The whole movie has this effect; it psychs you up to accept everything it shows you. And since the story deepens as it goes along, by the end you're likely to be openmouthed, trying to rethink what you've seen. [...] [I]f this picture isn't a runaway success the reason could be that it's *so original that some people will be dumbfounded – too struck to respond.* ("Everyday" 157, emphases mine)

Anticipating the case for affect made by theorists eager to overcome notions of representation and ideology, Kael suggests that film functions first and foremost on a visceral, pre-cognitive level, with meaning only following languidly; through sudden eruptions of violence and its affective affinity to life itself, the cinematic experience produces open mouths, though only for those who are open to such a peak-experience, much less for those too square to respond intuitively.

Later in the text, Kael condenses the merits of *Mean Streets* in a sentence that points to one of the central contradictions of New Hollywood's expressive aesthetics: aspiring to transparency and authenticity while simultaneously depending on a film's recognition as a singular work of art. "The film is *stylized without seeming in any way artificial*; it is the only movie I've ever seen that achieves the effects of Expressionism without the use of distortion" ("Everyday" 160 emphasis added). In Kael's appreciation, *Mean Streets* grasps its truths by laying something bare, by losing control, but at the same time its artistic qualities testify to a creative agency completely in control. The film, then, to evoke once again Hunter Thompson's description of Gonzo journalism (see chapter 1.4.) *learns to fly while falling*, a crucial value in an era when filmmaking both emphasized and erased its own mediating function.

Already at the beginning of her review, Kael depicts the character of Johnny Boy in stark terms, hinting at a crucial new ingredient for performances of expressivity:

> He's fearless, gleefully self-destructive, cracked – moonstruck but not really crazy. His madness isn't explained (fortunately, since explaining madness is the most limiting and generally least convincing thing a movie can do). When you're growing up, if you know someone crazy-daring and half-admirable [...], you don't wonder how the beautiful nut got that way; he seems to spring up full-blown and whirling, and you watch the fireworks and feel crummily cautious in your sanity. ("Everyday" 158)

In suggesting that "explaining madness is the most limiting and generally least convincing thing a movie can do," in observing herself feeling "crummily cautious" in her "sanity," Kael actualizes a popular motif within psychological and countercultural discourses of the 1960s: the figure of the lunatic with a cause, sanctioned by an understanding of insanity as induced not by individual sickness but created by a sick society. Michael Staub termed this logic the "social diagnosis" of madness,

locating its heyday in a "moment when a significant portion of the populace [...] believed madness to be a plausible and sane reaction to insane social conditions, and that psychiatrists served principally as agents of repression" (*Madness* 2). It was a logic mobilized by the anti-psychiatry movement and enforced by the writings of psychiatrists such as Thomas Szasz or R.D. Laing. In his 1967 *The Politics of Experience,* Laing proclaimed: "Madness need not be all breakdown. It may also be break-through. It is potentially liberation and renewal as well as enslavement and existential death" (*Politics* 110).

The idea that madness potentially incited both breakdown and breakthrough, provides the thread of this chapter. I will focus, however, on narrative in which the social diagnosis contributed to a politics of male expressivity and reinforced the cultural authority of countercultural whiteness. This last journey through the New Hollywood, a shorter trip than the preceding two chapters, reaches beyond the years of its constitutive years to dive head-on into the 1970s when the crisis discourses that were still in the making in previous chapters – the urban crisis, cultural narcissism, a crisis of white masculinity – came to full fruition. There is a double movement going on in the discourses and films I trace in the following. Countercultural whiteness became linked with characters that literally went mad. At the same time, these white male characters were increasingly set in opposition to a cultural establishment imagined as populated or at least supportive of nonwhite and female subjects.

In engaging with discourses around irrationality, I am entering a better-trodden ground in the historiography of the era. The fascination with the non-rational dimensions of human experience has been studied widely – from the countercultural turn towards New Age religion to the increasing visibility and political power of evangelicalism and an emergent discourse on conspiracies in the wake of the Watergate affair, accompanied by a cycle of New Hollywood conspiracy film. (see Steven P. Miller; Kent; Melley; Stephen Paul Miller; Keathley; Andersen 173–234). Rather than attempting to do justice to this wide array of subjects associated with the semantic field of the irrational, I will carve out a thinner and more eclectic thread of madness from the historical archive, tracing an early 1960s discourse of insanity-as-truth to 1976 films about expressive subjects who cannot take it anymore and go mad for all the right (in both senses of the term) reasons. As I will argue, if whiteness and reason have historically been attached to each other, then the countercultural attack on reason constituted less an abdication than a transformation of normative whiteness.

In a first part, I will consider the discourse on madness and (in)sanity in the 1960s to trace how psychologists and countercultural authors developed a notion of insanity as a sign of health, again focusing on the relation between this development, racialized discourses of the time, and the New Hollywood. In a second part, I

discuss two films from the first half of the 1970s. While *The Exorcist* (1973) is steeped in an anxiety about feminism, social unrest, and cultural decay, using the irrational behavior of a young girl to imagine social breakdown, *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1975) is aligned more directly with the idea of madness as truth and breakthrough, once again making Jack Nicholson into an embodiment of countercultural whiteness. I will conclude this chapter, and the book, by assessing the year 1976 and its cinematic output, a year often said to have terminated the New Hollywood period for good. In 1976, three films came out that heavily invested in the fantasies I have examined throughout this book, while investing countercultural whiteness with new beliefs and desires.

4.1 "A Form of Vision": The Romance of Madness from Antipsychiatry to Method Acting

Cultural agents in a wide array of fields flirted with the irrational in the postwar era, while the countercultural arm of the New Left proclaimed wars on the rational regime of American technocracy. Both relied on a reassessment of the realm of the irrational by self psychologists and the motif of romantic madness in literature and art. This reassessment was based on the increasing cultural authority of personal experience. "The self is not definable in words," Clark Moustakas announced, "[it] can only be experienced" ("True" 12). Carl Rogers proclaimed experience to be the "highest authority" and the "touchstone of validity," heralding that it is "to experience that I must return again and again, to discover a closer approximation to truth as it is in the process of becoming in me" (23–24). In the later part of the 1960s, the idea of experiential truth had become even more widespread. Radical psychotherapist R.D. Laing boldly announced in a 1967 study that "*[o]nly* experience is evident. Experience is the *only* evidence" (*Politics* 16, original emphases). Arthur Janov similarly claimed in *The Primal Revolution* (1972) that there "is no meaning to life, only meaning to experience, which is life in process" (177). Immediacy and experience, then, were crucial motifs in the writings of self psychologists, leading to a new logic in which experience was always primary to reflection.

The investment of large parts of the counterculture of the 1960s and 1970s in the rejection of reason – in New Age religion, spiritual practices such as meditation, and political happenings such as the levitation of the Pentagon organized by the Yippies in 1967 – was sometimes held responsible for the exhaustion of

the counterculture as a political force.[92] However, to merely assess this increasing attachment of left politics and irrational forces as a wrong turn taken by historical actors of progressive and cultural movements misses the extent to which it was dependent on the discursive environment of the postwar formation as such. Just as Doug Rossinow identifies the New Left as the "evanescent leftist branch of a search for authenticity in industrial American life" (*Politics* 345), the countercultural engagement with anti-rational discourse might be understood better as the leftist branch of a much more widely shared fantasy of irrational forces, once again rooted in the crisis discourses of the 1950s and their diagnoses of affective deficits.[93]

"I Trust My Impulses": The Counterculture and the Critique of Psychiatry

For counterculture theorist Theodore Roszak, the "shaman" was "the first figure to have established himself in human society as an individual personality" (243). When Roszak wrote *The Making of a Counter Culture* in 1970, significant parts of the counterculture already found themselves on a trajectory from political to religious engagement, turning towards spiritualism and New Age, a development that proclaimed a more personal and intimate relationship to religion, anticipating and preparing the ground for the resurgence of evangelicalism later in the decade (Kent). While the allusion to the shaman comes only at the end of Roszak's book, the romance of madness already appears in its first pages. In the foreword, turning to the issue of (ir)rationality, Roszak critiqued the American technocracy:

> [T]he capacity of our emerging technocratic paradise to denature the imagination by appropriating to itself the whole meaning of Reason, Reality, Progress, and Knowledge will render it impossible for men to give any name to their bothersomely unfulfilled potentialities but that of madness. And for such madness, humanitarian therapies will be generously provided. (xiii)

Under an oppressive regime of reason, then, madness *is* the expression of the human potential; because this potential is not allowed to express itself freely, blocked by social forces, it finds as an outlet only a kind of behavior that is deemed insane by institutions. For Roszak and many others, individual cases of insanity, often expressed as an affective excess, were only a particularly stark marker of the affective deficit diagnosed in American society at large. Insanity, as Michael

---

92 For a critique of this interpretation that reassesses Arthur Janov's primal scream therapy see Williams and Edgar.

93 Frank Kelleter usefully noted that it might also be understood as an expansion of an earlier left critique of "instrumental reason" – most clearly articulated by Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno – encompass all rationality.

Staub contends, came to be "reinterpreted as an especially intense kind of sanity that was incapable of being lured or co-opted by the shams and bakeries and con games of ego and power that characterized so much of what passed for 'normal' in the 'square' world" (*Madness* 134).

This inversion, which made a 'mad' sensibility seem much closer to life and truth than 'normal' behavior and rational thinking, can be traced through the discursive fields I have examined throughout this book.[94] In a personal section of *Becoming a Person* (1961), Carl Rogers explained that he had "learned that my total organism's sensing of a situation is more trustworthy than my intellect," and that "when I have trusted some non-intellectual sensing, I have discovered wisdom in the move" (22). Abraham Maslow propagated the development of a "healthy irrationality" a year later, an irrationality which "shares our awareness of the limitations of purely abstract thinking, of verbal thinking and of analytical thinking" (*Toward* 194). Celebrating the irrational was also part and parcel of existential hip, as Norman Mailer found "the psychopath" to be the "perverted and dangerous front-runner of a new kind of personality which should become the central expression of human nature before the twentieth century is over" (Mailer, "White").

What these voices in existential philosophy and self psychology shared, then, was an understanding of insanity as "a form of natural transgression which uncovers social expectations, challenges cultural norms, and defies subtle manifestations of power and control" (Schleusener 241). This idea of natural transgression seemed naturally attractive to countercultural actors. In his book *Do It!* (1970), Jerry Rubin explained the philosophy of the Yippies to his readership: "Yippies know we're sane and everyone else is crazy, so we call ourselves 'the crazies'" (84) "The crazier the better," Abbie Hoffman proclaimed already two years earlier, "I like being crazy. Letting go. Losing control. Just doing what pops into my mind. I trust my im-

94 Naturally, the celebration of a sensibility at odds with contemporaneous notions of reason and knowledge was an integral element of American romanticism in the nineteenth century. Another important midcentury intellectual antecedent for the "social diagnosis" was the Americanization of the Frankfurt School's attack on 'instrumental reason' by intellectuals such as Erich Fromm, who wrote *The Sane Society* in 1955, or Herbert Marcuse, whose critique of the "one-dimensional society" heavily influenced the New Left. Furthermore, playwright Antonin Artaud's articulation of madness as truth left a particularly strong mark on the 1960s. In a 1925 letter to medical directors of mental asylums, Artaud proclaimed: "Madmen, above all, are individual victims of social dictatorship. In the name of individuality which specifically belongs to man, we demand the liberation of these people convicted of sensibility." This quote was used as an epigraph in Hendrik Ruitenbeek's 1972 study *Going Crazy* (10). Finally, there were important simultaneous developments within other social fields that put into question the explanatory authority of scientific knowledge or emphasized the relativity of rational thinking, e. g. Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962) or Peter Berger's and Thomas Luckman's *The Social Construction of Reality* (1966).

pulses. I find the less I try to think through a situation, the better it comes off" (62–63). In *The Greening of America*, Charles Reich described the new Consciousness III as "deeply suspicious of logic, rationality, analysis, and of principles," and believed it to be "essential to get free of what is now accepted as rational thought" (*Greening* 278).

When members of the white counterculture such as Hoffman, Rubin and Reich began to see an existential truth in irrational forces, the social diagnosis that it is a society's institutions that make individuals mad had already come a long way in mobilizing against both white supremacy and heterosexual patriarchy. In the 1960s, this critique partly adopted the new language of self psychology. In a 1961 speech, Martin Luther King., Jr., used the idea of psychological adjustment as a distortion of the true self, calling his listeners "to be maladjusted and continue in the maladjustment that you have already demonstrated, for it may well be that the salvation of our world lies in the hands of the maladjusted" (4). A year later, feminist activist Pauline Bart explained: "Before the Women's Movement, we were being driven crazy, and the helping professions, for we were all in therapy, were mainly helping us into our madness" (qtd. in Staub, *Madness* 144). Political usages of the romance of madness were sometimes influenced by the 1964 translation of Michel Foucault's *Madness and Civilization.* In the foreword to the English edition, David Cooper named madness a "lost truth" and argued that it was a "form of vision that destroys itself by its own choice of oblivion in the face of existing forms of social tactics and strategy" (vii).

The idea that society was insane, not individual people, was voiced not only by single intellectual voices. What Staub calls the "social diagnosis" also incited an organized movement, commonly referred to as the antipsychiatry movement, which actively demanded the abolition of mental asylums and reframed psychiatry as a form of social coercion. As Staub summarizes the thinking of sociologist Erving Goffman, one of the crucial influences for the movement, "psychiatrists were not healers, but rather were mechanics of coercion; their work did not enable autonomy but rather defended social norms" (*Madness* 78). In the same year as Goffman published *Asylums* (1961), a sociological study on the condition of inmates in mental health facilities, psychiatrist Thomas Szasz wrote *The Myth of Mental Illness.* Szasz had opened the essay of the same name, on which the book was based, with an ambitious argument: "My aim in this essay is to raise the question 'Is there such a thing as mental illness?' and to argue that there is not" (113).[95]

95 Szasz, whom Staub describes as "travers[ing] conventional left-right divisions" (*Madness* 92), would later support the Libertarian Party, founded in 1971, and agitate his fellow libertarians to fight against psychiatric institutions (see Staub, *Madness* 113). In 1973, he appeared on William F. Buckley, Jr.'s TV show *Firing Line.*

It was psychiatrist R.D. Laing, however, who most radically expressed the antipsychiatric sensibility. Already in 1960, he had published *The Divided Self: An Existential Study in Sanity and Madness,* arguing that the "cracked mind of the schizophrenic may *let in* light which does not enter the intact minds of sane people whose minds are closed" (*Divided* 27, original emphasis).[96] In the foreword to the 1964 Pelican edition, Laing emphasized that "our 'normal' 'adjusted' state is too often the abdication of ecstasy, the betrayal of our true potentialities, that many of us are only too successful in acquiring a false self to adapt to false realities" (*Divided* 12). Finally, in his 1967 book *The Politics of Experience,* Laing described the normal fifteen-year-old person as a "half-crazed creature, more or less adjusted to a mad world" (*Politics* 50). The book review section of the *New York Times* titled a 1970 cover story on Laing: "Must man first go mad in order to be sane?" (M. Berman BR1) In antipsychiatric discourse, psychiatry was just another part of the total system, an institution that oppressed the self and prevented the nurturing and expression of real emotions. As psychiatrist Robert Coles stated in 1967, it was morally wrong to treat an individual's "human capacity to suffer not 'illness' but feelings" (qtd. in Staub, *Madness* 63). Psychiatry, then, was the social analogue to the intellect, which itself could block the free flowing of emotions, but from inside rather than from outside of the self. [97]

This logic engendered the emergence of cultural practices as well, practices that sought to counter institutional psychiatry and were rubricated under the term radical psychiatry. Radical psychiatrists, according to practitioner Joseph Berke, were "up against a whole society that is systematically driving its members mad" (qtd. in Staub, *Madness* 99). In his essay "Radical Psychiatry," Claude Steiner invoked the broad meaning of alienation in the 1960s (see chapters 1.2. and 3.1.) to argue that "[e]very psychiatric diagnosis, except for those that are clearly organic in origin, is a form of alienation" (302). Steiner's "basic formula of radical psychiatry" thus amounted to "Liberation = Awareness + Contact," and it would lead patients to change "from an alienated person to one who is angry in the manner in which the black people and women have become angry" (305). Steiner's usage of Blacks and women as a signifier for the desired goal of radical therapy – and not as a potential target – once again illuminates a white male default, this time

96 English novelist and feminist activist Angela Carter called Laing's book "one of the most influential books of the sixties – it made madness, alienation, hating your parents [...] it made it all glamourous" (qtd. in Staub, *Madness* 64).

97 For an insightful history of the fraught relation between the antipsychiatry movement and the gay liberation movement within the context of the latter's fight against the pathologization of homosexuality by the psychiatric establishment see A. J. Lewis.

at the core of radical therapy. It was a default disguised as another call to arms in the war between the self and the system.

Eccentric Patriots and Raving Maniacs: Psychiatry and the Racial Politics of Expressivity

Interviewed by Paul Gilroy on her novel *Beloved* in 1993, Toni Morrison explained how "deliberately going mad in order, as one of the characters says in the book, 'in order not to lose your mind,'" were "strategies for survival [that] made the truly modern person" (Gilroy, "Living" 178). As mentioned above, calling out social institutions for individual cases of madness had been an integral part of African American literature and theories on Black subjectivity, from Frantz Fanon's psychoanalytical work on race to Ralph Ellison's critique of the relation between psychiatry and racism in *Invisible Man.* While the white counterculture and figures such as Szasz and Laing introduced a broader audience to the critique of psychiatry in the 1960s, Staub's "social diagnosis" was part of Black thinking long before the antipsychiatric moment took off, and long before the romance of madness became part of emergent configurations of countercultural whiteness.

From the perspective of the institutions these voices critiqued and fought against, however, the relation between blackness and madness looked quite differently. At a time when the vocabulary of self psychology made its way into countercultural discourse and from there into white middle-class vernacular, psychiatrists and psychologists continued to follow the idea of racial pathologies (see also chapter 2.3.) when treating non-white subjects and debating the problem of poor communities. As Mical Raz summarizes this double standard in postwar discourse, "critics of repressive suburban American lives did not align themselves with environmental psychology and did not compare suburban living to a form of sensory deprivation, a comparison reserved for inner-city homes" (148). The new ideal of self-actualizing, then, co-existed with rather than superseded ideas about adjustment and individual or cultural pathologies, a co-existence maintained through the distribution of subjectivities along the axis of individual uniqueness and social identities.[98]

Jonathan Metzl's study on schizophrenia as a racialized disease further illustrates the affective dissonances created by a psychiatric discourse in a period

98 This friction, yet again, also forms part of the history of cultural theory. At roughly the same time when Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari started their endeavor towards "schizoanalysis," Black men in the U.S. were increasingly diagnosed with schizophrenia, which "became a racialized disease in the 1960s in ways that preferentially selected black male bodies" (Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*; Metzl 95).

marked by a shift in the understanding of the value of affect and emotion. In Metzl's examination of the terms used to describe pathologies in Black and white patients in the Ionia State Hospital for the Criminally Insane in Michigan between 1960 and 1975, descriptions such as "flat affect" and "reclusivity" were overrepresented in documentations of white patients, whereas others such as "poor impulse control" were mostly used when documenting the behavior of Black patients (152). The expression of emotions, then, constituted a potential remedy for the former and a symptom for the latter. The labeling of schizophrenia as a "protest psychosis" in the context of inner-city riots in the 1960s, a notion that Metzl alludes to in his book title, was only the starkest illustration of this cleavage. As Naomi Murakawa summarizes the liberal discourse on race and riots in the 1960s, "By making political protest an explosive emotion that extended to violence, crime, and riots, [...] [liberals] blurred together organized civil disobedience, street crime, and riots into one mess of psychological disorder" (13–14).

Hence, the notion of a cultural pathology permeating the largely Black inner-city spaces bloomed at the same time as dissident psychiatrists such as Laing or Szasz took on mental institutions and the public image of madness.[99] This is the racial politics of the discourse on emotional expressivity: what appeared as a possible cure for an affective deficit that society allegedly suffered from could also mark an unhealthy affective excess and a political emergency, depending on the agencies attached to it. To integrate irrational forces and the romance of madness into what I have been calling countercultural whiteness, then, means to come to terms with the racial imaginary of this romance. Just as the force of fantasies of untamed motion and emotional truth, and the access to its cultural authority, depended on the positionality of the subject aspiring to it, the investment in irrationality presupposed a cultural capital created by racialized subjects but not for them. Indeed, as James Baldwin put it, a black John Wayne "would not be an eccentric patriot, but a raving maniac" (Baldwin and Peck 47–48).

Neurosis, Expressed: Method Acting in the New Hollywood

The antipsychiatric rebellion entailed the vexed question of how the sane was to be distinguished from the insane, a question that penetrated Hollywood films already before the late 1960s. As science-fiction cinema in the 1950s gave expression to the postwar agency panic, films such as *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1955)

---

99 An important exception that politicized Black political expressivity from a psychiatric perspective was *Black Rage,* a book written by Black doctors William Grier and Price Cobbs and published in 1968, which, in the words of Halliwell, "paralleled Fanon's attack on institutional racism and moved beyond discourses of victimization and inadequacy to embrace agency" (Halliwell 277).

correlated "authenticity with insanity (or perceived insanity) and phoniness with sanity, hyperrationality and the absence of emotion" (Cheever 60). Simon Schleusener names the 1962 film *Shock Corridor* as an early example of antipsychiatric critique in cinema, arguing that the film "criticizes psychiatric practice, blurs the line between madness and normality, and explicitly politicizes the context of psychiatry" (250). During the New Hollywood, finally, countercultural films like *Catch-22* (1970) or *Alice's Restaurant* (1969) revolved playfully around this dialectic of sanity and insanity, while direct cinema documentarist Frederick Wiseman's debut film *Titicut Follies* (1967) cast a more sympathetic look at the inmates of a hospital for the criminally insane.

It was not primarily through subject matter and narrative, however, that the romance of madness entered the New Hollywood; it was, I argue, through the practices and discourses attached to a new form of screen acting that created the New Hollywood 'viscerealism'. As Pauline Kael wrote in a 1971 piece on contemporary actors: "Movie acting has been loosening up, and it could be turning into a profession for smarter, more intuitive people" ("Notes" 170). Joel Dinerstein explains the broad cultural transition from what he analyzes as the logic of cool to something akin to what I have called expressivity in this book by describing a shift in acting:

> The cool of the ethical rebel loner shifted [...] to young men who revealed the tensions of inner life. It was still a mask but one the actor strategically shattered: *neurosis was no longer suppressed but expressed*, a sign of how deeply psychoanalysis had penetrated artistic and intellectual communities. (308, emphasis mine)

The shattering of the mask seems an accurate description for the New Hollywood form of method acting, an exclusive space of young white, male actors such as Jack Nicholson, Al Pacino, Robert De Niro or Dustin Hoffman. As *Newsweek* put it in its cover story about the new movies, these were men "whose ordinary faces would have condemned them to the secondary status of character actors only a decade ago" ("New Movies" 50). At roughly the same time, Theodore Roszak explicated the link between a new generation's enthusiasm for the concepts of self psychology and the new acting style, arguing that it was "easy to see how appealing such a [Gestalt therapy] style would be to a generation that had grown dubious about the reliability of speech, and had already attuned itself to 'hearing' the character hidden behind the inarticulate grunts and shrugs of a James Dean and Marlon Brando" (191).[100]

100 Similar doubts about the reliability of speech were at play in the emergence of the New Journalism movement. According to Marc Weingarten, Tom Wolfe would revise a journalistic account

The Russian theatre practitioner Konstantin Stanislavski, generally credited with inventing the "method," understood his approach to the "art of experiencing" and contrasted it with earlier ideals of acting as good craftsmanship (Enelow 16). Through Lee Strasberg's Actor Studio in New York, Stanislavski's ideas, among others his notion of an affective memory and the importance of improvisation, entered the American cultural scene. Dinerstein identifies a "triangulated postwar battle" in the realm of acting, "between the method acting of New York's Actors Studio, the Hollywood naturalistic style of Bogart or Gary Cooper, and the aristocratic British style of Laurence Olivier," with method acting coming out victorious when particularly Marlon Brando "elevated improvisation, physicality, instinct, and character immersion as superior to oratory, static choreography, and the world (the script)" (316). As Richard Pells notes about the new method acting stars, "Their emotions seemed too complex for dialogue to unravel. So the mystique of their acting lay more in what was not said, in the unearthing of torments that could never be described in words" (361).[101] Director Elia Kazan put it this way: "No one altogether directs Brando, [...] you release his instinct and give it a shove in the right direction" (qtd. in Dinerstein 312).

In her study on gender and Hollywood performance, Virginia Wexman argued that method acting presented a challenge to gender norms, as the "demeanor of the new rebel stars [...] was marked by such 'neurotic' qualities as emotional confusion, irrationality, and violent behavior, suggesting the conflicted nature of their gender identifications" (167). Taking seriously Sally Robinson's argument that what the 1970s valorization of emotion created was less a feminization of masculinity than a masculinization of emotion (132), my argument in terms of method acting goes in a different direction: in a cultural environment marked by discourses of identity crisis and diagnoses of affective deficits, confusion and irrationality became important ingredients of a new subjectifier for white masculinity: countercultural whiteness. New Hollywood method actors endowed this position with the new glamour of idiosyncrasy and translated it into affective intensities.

In the early 1970s, this new style of acting became intertwined with a particularly ethnic form of whiteness. Pauline Kael's 1973 review of *Mean Streets*, which started this chapter, proves this point. Returning to a theme she had already dis-

---

by trying "to imagine himself in the mental states of his characters – a process of intellectual 'sense memory' that he felt as akin to Method acting" (115).

101 According to Pells, in America the method seemed to work better in movies than in theater: "The impression that Method actors were all 'wild' ones was embellished by the camera," as "Method acting was made for close-ups," with the actor suggesting "depths of meaning in the way he shrugged or slouched. And the camera captured his every twitch" (360).

cussed at length in her column on actors two years earlier ("Notes"), she singles out the performance of Robert De Niro as Johnny Boy:

> While an actor like Jeff Bridges in 'The Last American Hero' hits the true note, De Niro here hits the far-out, flamboyant one and *makes his own truth.* [...] De Niro does something like what Dustin Hoffman was doing in 'Midnight Cowboy,' but wilder; *this kid doesn't just act* – he takes off into the vapors. (Kael, "Everyday" 160, emphases mine)

De Niro is not pretending, nor is his performance honest or true to some outside standard, it produces a truth of its own, and this truth relies on the racialized notion of authenticity I have discussed earlier (see chapter 3.1.). For Kael, the film achieved its realism not merely through an achievement by the performers involved but by carving out their Italian heritage:

> Italians appear to others to *accept the fact that they're doomed; they learn to be comfortable with it* – it's what gives them their warm, almost tactile glow. Their voluptuous, vacant-eyed smiles tell us that they want to get the best out of this life: they know they're going to burn in eternity, so why should they think about things that are depressing? *It's as if they were totally carnal:* everything is for their pleasure. Maybe it is this relaxed attitude that gave the Mafiosi of 'The Godfather' their charm for the American audience. ("Everyday" 157)

Kael's note on the Italian roots of the film's realism constitutes a curious variation on Mailer's "The White Negro" essay. In 1957, Mailer had written that "we might [...] be doomed to die as a cipher in some vast statistical operation," while only the "Negro" was "[k]nowing in the cells of his existence that life was war, nothing but war," which was why he was "relinquishing the pleasures of the mind for the more obligatory pleasures of the body" (Mailer, "White"). 16 years later, Kael maintained that Italians – appearing to be "totally carnal" and sharing, as deep Catholics, existential insights into the fate of man – "know they're going to burn in eternity."

If Mailer's essay and the discourse of existential hip it epitomized constituted an early form of countercultural whiteness, Kael's Italians testify to a shift within this subjectivity. For Mailer, the "Negro" served as an abstract figure, a conceptual persona who charged the subjectivity of the white hipster with affective value. In Kael's racialized fantasy, the Italian American is both: abstracted – a carnal figure with an existential knowledge of man's destiny – *and* individualized. After all, it is the idiosyncratic character of Johnny Boy that serves as a prime example of its authenticity. In contrast to Mailer's "Negro," then, Kael's Italian American is racial-

ized, but also a singular self. He is no longer a static resource for the affective authority of countercultural whiteness; he embodies it.[102]

In 1984, Foster Hirsch published a history of the Actors Studio under the title *A Method to their Madness*, knowing that madness was the crucial ingredient of method acting's appeal. Madness had become a cultural asset; in its romantic version, it was the ultimate proof of radical uniqueness and resistance to enculturation, the key tenet of countercultural whiteness: if every interference into a movement from an authentic core to the outside world could be cast as a potentially dangerous distortion, irrationality trumps rationality. Through the romantic attitude toward insanity in the 1960s, and the celebration of New Hollywood's new visceral realism through method acting, the performance of madness emerged as a crucial culmination for a politics of expressivity: if the act of expression is undirected, untamed movement, and the thing expressed emerges from a core self not distorted by outside interventions, then intellectual reflection and rational thinking are dangerous, threatening to tame movement, to distort the core self.

4.2 Exorcisms and Lobotomies: Social Breakdown and Individual Breakthrough in the Mid-1970s

As I have argued above, depending on their imagined source and the subject positions to which they were attached, madness could be desirable or dangerous. Irrational signs could testify to the existence of a core self, to some resisting entity inside the subject, a marker of authenticity and idiosyncrasy. Or they were a potential symptom of individual or cultural pathology, a distortion of a natural expression of selfhood. When *The Exorcist* came out in 1973, the visual explicitness of the story of a 12-year-old girl ostensibly possessed by the devil shocked audiences across the country. Two years later, the 1975 film version of Ken Kesey's best-selling novel *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* transported the antipsychiatric sensibility of the 1960s to a new cultural stage. The two films, I will argue, further delineate the politics of countercultural whiteness and its performances of expressivity, as they illustrate how the line between madness as breakdown and madness as breakthrough was governed by changing regimes of race and gender during the transition from the agency panic of midcentury to the panic over new agencies in the 1970s.

---

102 A year after the release of *Mean Streets*, Richard Gambino published *Blood of My Blood: The Dilemma of the Italian-Americans.* Kael's indulgence in Italian ethnicity was part of a broader "white ethnic revival" to which I will return in discussing *Rocky* in the last part of this chapter.

4.2.1 Believing in Affect: *The Exorcist* and Madness as Breakdown

A girl urinating on the floor in an upright position, a child's head making a 360-degree-spin while remaining connected to its neck, a wooden cupboard violently attacking a loving mother: these three expressive acts, all enacted by or through the paranormal power of a young girl on the verge of becoming a teenager in *The Exorcist*, were much more frightening than liberating. In William Friedkin's horror classic, the countercultural fantasy of untamed motion turns into a nightmare of transgressive, grotesque, non-human movement. The loss of control, both personal and institutional, is not repaid by a gain in authenticity or intensity but signals a literal lack of control that endangers lives. There is no affective deficit bemoaned, there is only affective excess threatening a stable social order.

Since it came out in 1973, the film produced an excess in readings and interpretations. Andrew Scahill taunts that *The Exorcist* has been viewed as

> a misogynist indictment of working mothers, an anxious response to student political protests, a historical artifact verifying the presence of capital "e" Evil, a Nixon-era loss of innocence allegory for the nation, the disillusionment of the American public with Positivism, the projection of anti-Islamic anxieties, or a Catholic call to arms against liberal humanism. (40)

While many takes on the film have their merits, I will focus instead on the interrelation between the New Hollywood and cinematic affect to examine its role within the reception of the film as well as for social configurations of race and gender.

As I will argue, despite its stark moral themes and its investment in female sexuality, *The Exorcist* is not merely lashing back against the transgressions of the 1960s. As Mark Kermode notes, the film was "championed by sometime political radicals such as Jerry Rubin, picketed by concerned pressure groups, paid for by millions of eager punters, praised by the *Catholic News* for its profound spirituality, and branded satanic by evangelist Billy Graham" (10). A *Newsweek* report found that "Young people, some of whom have experienced first-hand the 'altered consciousness' that comes with hallucinogenic drugs, can readily accept the movie's tale of demonic possession," while "Jesus freaks" celebrated "the film's frighteningly naturalist evocation of demonic power" (Woodward 28). If the film itself is invested in a logic of expressivity, then, its reception again testifies to a political landscape more polymorphous than polarized.

Vomiting Bodies, Torn Apart: The Exorcist Frenzy

The central narrative arc of the film is straightforward: the child protagonist, 12-year-old Regan, shows ever more extreme signs of irrational behavior and inexplicable symptoms. Doctors and psychologists admit their defeat, so possession by the

devil is the only remaining diagnosis, an exorcism the only therapy left. Regan's body is literally torn apart: at one point, she, while being treated by a therapist, expresses particularly aggressive and hostile behavior while at the same time the letters "HELP ME" appear on her belly – the core self and its outside expressions completely at odds with each other. In his New Hollywood study *Hollywood Incoherent*, Todd Berliner uses the mixed messages Regan sends in this scene to allocate the film to the New Hollywood canon. As "both evil and its innocent victim, both revolting and sympathetic" (135), Regan embodies, according to Berliner, the incongruence at the heart of the New Hollywood, thereby contributing to a cinematic project of daring ambition and moral ambiguity.

However, while Regan indeed is both a victim and a perpetrator here, most commentators see a clear opposition between good and evil at work, with not much space in between. *L.A. Times* reviewer Charles Champlin noted that the film denied any possibility "that what we are witnessing is anything but a titanic struggle between God and the Devil localized in the deranged and cruelly abused form of an innocent 12-year-old girl" ("Ultimate" D1). *Newsweek* interpreted the huge public attention for the film as a symptom for a "time of moral confusion among the sophisticated," in which "the film harks back to starkly fundamental questions of good and evil" (Woodward 33). Harking back to fundamental questions of good and evil, though, seemed to go against the grain of the New Hollywood sensibility.

What keeps the film within the boundaries of the New Hollywood as I have delineated them throughout this book is the opposition between the singular self and social forces to which its moral fundamentalism is connected – and the way it relies on cinematic affect as a truth machine. The film enacts its moral struggle not rhetorically but corporeally, translates it into the truth of a core self desperately fighting evil forces from interfering in its expression. If the notion of uniqueness endows a subject with cultural authority to the extent that she is perceived to contain a world of its own (see chapter 3.1.), there is indeed a whole world in Regan, but it is clearly not her own. Thus, Regan is less a singular character than a battleground between autonomous expression and interfering forces, and the devil is not a discursive end but an affective means. Thus, the scene described above neither illustrates New Hollywood's complex incongruence nor casts it out of its boundaries. Rather, it is the affective politics of expressivity caught in the act.

For filmmaker John Boorman, who would later direct the first sequel of the film, the script he had been offered to direct was nothing more than "a story about torturing a child," so he turned it down. (qtd. in Biskind 198). The script was based on the 1971 novel by William Peter Blatty, which was itself inspired by the case of an exorcism executed in 1949. After Boorman and other filmmakers had declined to direct the film, it was *French Connection* director William Friedkin

who accepted the challenge. Making use of an already existent public interest in the topic and the notoriety of Blatty's novel, he conducted intensive research on the original case, collected newspaper clippings about reports on exorcisms (see "The Exorcist clippings") and then went on to make what Kent Jones recently called a "milestone in the history of hoopla" ("Devil" 66).

In Friedkin's introduction on the latest DVD edition, the director explains how he has "always thought that a film should first of all be an emotional experience," and for countless audience members *The Exorcist* was quite that. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, "[p]sychiatrists, theater managers and law enforcement officials have all reported cases of viewers who blacked out, vomited in theaters, suffered hallucinations and apprehension, exhibited hysteria and depression" ("The Exorcist clippings"; see also Stempel 91–94). In a *Newsweek* article on the "Exorcist frenzy," a cinema manager in Berkeley explained that he has "never seen anything like it in the 24 years I've been working in movie theaters" (Woodward 29). Other media quoted priests who had been confronted by viewers and asked for an exorcism (Berliner 130). In an article for the *Saturday Review,* Ralph Greenson, after recounting the story of a psychoanalyst who bemoaned that two of his patients were triggered by the film, concluded: "In the days when we all had more trust in our government, our friends, and ourselves, *The Exorcist* would have been a bad joke. Today it is a danger" (43).

The Exorcist, then, was discussed as fiercely as a social phenomenon than as a movie. Much was made of its obscene language, as the possessed child's insults contained words that were unthinkable in American cinemas just a few years earlier. To some, the film appeared as a culmination of the waning of censorship in American movies. And then there were the images. For *Exorcist* researcher Mark Kermode, it was the first time that audiences witnessed, in a mainstream film, "the graphic desecration of everything that was considered wholesome and good about the fading American Dream – the home, the family, the church, and, most shockingly, the child" (9). Evangelist Hal Lindsey, whose 1970 bestseller *The Late Great Planet Earth* had been one of the first symptoms of a recurring interest in religious and apocalyptic topics, declared that there were "spiritual powers at work during the showing of the film" and that it was "setting the stage for the future attack of Satan" (qtd. in Woodward 28).

Indeed, *The Exorcist* seemed to hint at an emergent religious revival that was palpable in 1970s culture at large; Pauline Kael used her review of the film to note that the Church was "the only institution whose authority had survived the sixties" (qtd. in Killen 132). In the same year *The Exorcist* was released, a Southern minister explained:

> Not too long ago, the Gospel according to Billy Graham was strictly a southern product. Now that gospel of individual salvation [...] appeals to persons throughout the land who struggle with the torment of littleness, trying to gain some sense of instant worth and welcome from an indifferent civilization that is too complex for their coping. (qtd. in Schulman, *Seventies* xiv)

While Lindsey and other religious commentators were mostly concerned with the film's subject matter and its treatment of satanic possession, critics, audiences, and filmmakers were heavily invested in a debate on the affective intensity of *The Exorcist*, turning the authentic, failed or escapist nature of the film's thrills into criteria for their judgments. While in *Time* magazine, Jay Cocks noted that the film did not seem interested "to do something other than promote a few shivers" (Cocks, "Beat"), Charles Champlin of the *Los Angeles Times* called it "strong and frequently revolting stuff" and therefore "a movie landmark" ("Ultimate" D1). Vincent Canby, in the *New York Times,* lamented the apparent lack of any serious goal the filmmakers had in mind, apart from "marvel[ing] at the extent to which audiences will go to escape boredom by shock and insult" ("Blatty's" 46).

Expressive Excess: Teenage Transgressions and the Affective Deficit of Science

While for the most part *The Exorcist* takes place in Georgetown, Washington, D.C., it starts in the Middle East, in a prologue set in Iraq, full of signs and wonders. Father Merrin, who will perform the exorcism in the last part of the film, is at the center of this prologue, becoming increasingly aware of the presence of a powerful satanic force. In these first scenes, images of eerie subjectivities foreshadow the irrational and spiritual forces that will haunt the film as such: "from the blind eye of a steel worker which prefigures Regan's demonic eye-rolling to the haggard face of an old woman in a droshky which eerily resembles that of the ravaged child" (Kermode 25). In the visual economy of *The Exorcist,* the bodily distortions and mutations the innocent white girl will suffer from are tied to the racialized bodies of the Arab world.

The prologue ends with Merrin standing on a rock in the middle of the desert, opposite a stony figure apparently representing the devil himself. Nick Cull notes how the figure's raised fist "looks oddly reminiscent of the black power salute" (50). If the white cultural imagination, as Gormley elaborates, is "often a state of paranoia, anxiety and desire generated by the threat of black violence when confronted with images of blackness" (30), the prologue of *The Exorcist* only covertly evokes this threat of black violence, while using a racialized setting far off from the United States to create an atmosphere in which dangerous spiritual forces threaten the natural order of things.

In Georgetown, by contrast, these forces become much more explicitly tied to the cultural and social changes of the 1960s, first and foremost via the relation between Regan and her mother Chris. Chris is an actress, known for a film titled "Angel" but currently starring in "Crash Course," a film about campus unrest. In this film's only scene presented to the viewer of *The Exorcist,* Chris talks to protesting students through a megaphone. The allusions to political protest and countercultural attitudes have supported readings of the film as an allegory of generational conflict and "deep-seated parental anxieties about the changing nature of 'childhood'" (Kermode 27). However, they also, in a move I discussed in the context of other films, displace the notion of countercultural change from affective fuel to narrative context. Student protests are not part of social reality anymore, they are, quite literally, a studio set-up. The sentence Chris is heard speaking in her role as a professor both sympathetic to and critical of the students, "If you want to effect any change you have to do it within the system," a line that confirms the relation between institutions and individuals to be an underlying theme of *The Exorcist.*[103]

Cultural change marks Regan's home environment as well. Not only is Chris a working single mother, but she also curses her husband on the phone because he "doesn't give a shit" about his daughter. As Barbara Creed noted, there hardly seems to be a "better ground for the forces of evil to take root than the household of a family in which the father is absent and where the mother continually utters profanities" (34). Furthermore, the young girl in question, wearing a blouse and jeans, clearly evinces a tomboyish style, showing symptoms of transgression even before her possession.[104] Her mother expresses dissatisfaction with a picture of her daughter on the cover of a movie magazine because Regan looks "so mature." Thus, Regan's girlhood evokes not only innocent victimhood but also the anticipated transition to female adolescence – in a cultural context that saw the gendered conventions governing such a transition turning more loose than ever before.[105] At least implicit in *The Exorcist,* then, is a narrative of how a young

103 A more subtle allusion to a changed cultural context takes place when Father Damien Karras admits to his superior that he is doubting his faith: he does so in a bar inhabited by "hordes of tousle-haired, flowery-shirted teenagers, milling around to the sound of guitar-wailing rock music" (Kermode 33). I will return to Karras and his doubts below.

104 Tellingly, in the original case on which the novel is based, the subject was not a 12-year-old girl but a 14-year-old boy, a change already made by Blatty in his novelistic treatment of the case but corroborated by Friedkin in the adaptation.

105 Furthermore, the media in the early 1970s were full of reports on runaway teenagers. A typical *Time* report read: "[Their parents] almost uniformly describe their children as having been well-rounded, industrious, and studious until they went off to college and became captured by drugs and radicalism" (qtd. in Perlstein, *Invisible* 207).

woman wants something else than what others expect from her, and displaces this desire to a realm outside of rational limits: madness as breakthrough.

Within the film, however, this narrative is concealed, as these scenes merely prepare for the violent behavior Regan engages in later, for instance screaming "Let Jesus Fuck You!" and "Lick Me, Lick Me!" to her mother, a scene Scahill describes as "perfectly crafted for maximum perversity, transgressing no less than four social taboos in under thirty seconds: masturbation, religious desecration, incest, and lesbianism" (47). The New Hollywood in general, I have argued, can be understood as part of a reaction to the perceived agency panic in postwar America and its diagnosis of affective deficits; and in the early 1970s, there was a large amount of panic around female agency specifically. As Biskind notes, having a teenage girl jam a crucifix into her vagina was not only a "sensational and fiendishly inventive bit of sacrilege, but [...] also a powerful image of self-inflicted abortion" (223), an image certainly not far from audiences' minds in the year the Supreme Court found government restrictions on abortion to be unconstitutional in its ruling in *Roe v. Wade*.[106]

Timothy Melley suggested that agency panic in general blurs the lines between inside and outside. Because "the deepest 'inside' [...] is in some ways only another kind of 'outside' – a region outside conscious control," to locate motivation in this inside "is not *radically* different from locating it in the suprapersonal agencies (or gods) of the superstitious or in the collective networks (or conspiracies) of the paranoid" (24, original emphasis). And indeed, Regan's transgressive movements reveal that her inside is an outside, not the authentic expression of a core self but rather the effect of an agency that aggressively takes hold of this core. Regan's performances of possessedness, then, were clearly beyond the boundaries of the affective logic of expressivity. Their disturbing potential, however, lay not merely in the visceral effects of the extreme corporeal distortions Regan's body experienced but in their linkage to contemporaneous gender discourses. After all, it was possible in the early 1970s to imagine feminism and the women's liberation movements as "suprapersonal agencies" with the power to disrupt natural expressions: madness as breakdown.

If Regan's body is a site more than a source of agency, a war between different forms of knowledge is played out on its terrain. While doctors and psychologists

106 Nick Cull also links the film to the abortion debate, arguing that Regan "can be read as a projection of the guilt of a generation that had conceded that legal abortion was a necessity" (49). Abortion was more than an abstract topic during the film's production. William Friedkin's then-girlfriend Jennifer Nairn-Smith recounted how the director had forced her to have two abortions during the production of the film. "From then on, my life stopped," she told Peter Biskind (Biskind 221–222).

stubbornly cling to the idea that the girl's behavior is an expression of her subconscious belief that she is being possessed, the moving images of her behavior come as affective shocks that prove wrong any possible discursive explanation. The film's middle part is almost exclusively concerned with this clash between the aggressive confidence of science and reason on the one hand, and the affective resistance of irrational forces on the other. The medical experts unrelentingly attempt to locate the problem inside the brain and the nerves, searching for a cognitive reason for irrational behavior even when they are clearly confronted with inexplicable phenomena. After the first consultations, Chris still reassures her daughter, "You just take your pills and you'll be fine," but the stance of the experts becomes increasingly untenable as each medical hypothesis is ridiculed by another extreme incident of possessive behavior. "Pathological states can induce abnormal strength, accelerated motor performance," one doctor tries to retain his neurological hypothesis even in the face of a shaking bedroom.

The Exorcist invests quite some screen time in detailing the medical procedures. As medical and psychiatric experts prolong and impede the treatment of the possession, attempting more and more tests and experiments, the scientific violence culminates in a complicated surgical intervention that involves inserting a catheter into Regan's carotid artery. "It would be difficult," Kermode notes, "to present a more brutal, hopeless, even pornographic depiction of modern medicine" (53), and Blatty himself insists that it was primarily these scenes of medical treatment rather than Regan's bodily contortions and blasphemies that made members of the audience vomit or faint (Stempel 91). Carol Clover identified the surgery scene as an example of what she calls the "formal trial" of the female body, a "virtual sine qua non of the genre" of female possession horror films (Clover 83). For Clover, these films' underlying plot often consists in "convincing the White Science person of the necessity and indeed the superiority of Black Magic" (67). In *The Exorcist*, this plot point is visually emphasized in a scene in which Chris, dressed in black, facing a room of 13 doctors and psychiatrists, all in their white uniforms, echoes the antipsychiatric rationale, yelling: "You're not going to lock her up in an asylum!"

Regan's diagnostic journey, then, starts with medicine, continues with psychiatry, and ultimately ends with religion, as one of the doctors raises the issue of exorcism at the end of this scene. But *The Exorcist*'s anti-institutional spirit extends even to the institution of the church itself, as it is the church that is most hesitant about performing the ancient ritual. When Chris first confronts Father Karras about the possibility of an exorcism, he ensures her that these things are not happening anymore, "since we learned about mental illness, paranoia, schizophrenia" and "all those things they taught me in Harvard." Closure to the film's narrative, then, is not provided by a simple victory of religion over science but rather

when a personal belief in the existence and power of spiritual forces triumphs over a stultified and merely theoretical way of practicing religion, symbolized by the institution of the church.[107]

This triumph of the personal over the institutional is narrated via the emotional development of Father Karras, and it was already well prepared by self psychology's and the counterculture's spiritualism. Writing for *Jump Cut* shortly after its release, Bill Van Wert noted the film's attachment to contemporary phenomena related to the irrational, "the move from drugs to Jesus in the late sixties and early seventies, to the current widespread interest in witchcraft, the occult, UFO's, ESP, mind control, herbal medicines and radical therapy," arguing that exorcism might be "Catholicism's answer to radical therapy, just as confession can be seen as Catholicism's answer to traditional analysis" (4). And indeed, cultural historian Jessica Grogan summarizes the thinking of Abraham Maslow in the formula that the "fundamental unit of all religions was actually a psychological state." Although Maslow, Grogan continues, "was careful not to set religion and science in opposition, he warned that 'ultra-scientific' people would not be open to the flood of emotion characteristic of religious or peak experiences" (152–153). But openness to emotion would ultimately do the trick for the success of Regan's exorcism.

"At Absolute Rock Bottom": A Priest in Crisis and the Evangelical Turn of Countercultural Whiteness

If Regan is a subject captured by a violent affective force that defies being defined by a common emotional vocabulary, her mother expresses much more easily identifiable emotions. While Chris's confident appearance and her explicit language are part of a home environment that 'invites' the devil, her later temper tantrums, her rage against the doctors and psychologists – "All you are telling me is bullshit!" – are framed as authentic expressions of a maternal fear, and thus culturally sanctioned. Her motherly love is visceral: "You show me Regan's double, same face, same voice, everything, and I'd know it wasn't Regan. I know it in my gut," she ensures Father Karras.

Karras, by contrast, is much less expressive, and much closer to the subjectivity of the alienated white male, wooed by so many New Hollywood productions. "There's not a day when I don't feel like a fraud," he confesses to his superior in an early scene. Karras, arguably the true protagonist of *The Exorcist,* is alienated

107 In a way, this reconfiguration of religious practice might be the most explicitly countercultural gesture of *The Exorcist.* As Kurt Andersen notes about the Esalen Institute: "[It] is a mother church of a new American religion for people who think they don't like churches or religions but who still want to believe in the supernatural" (178).

from his own self in the beginning, but will soon set on a trajectory towards authenticity, a trajectory that will result in a peak-experience leading to his death. Indeed, Karras' tragic ending is not that different from similar New Hollywood destinies of hip existentialist heroes and emphatically alienated anti-heroes: Clyde Barrow killed in a violent gun shower of *Bonnie and Clyde*, Popeye Doyle shooting the wrong guy in his obsessive attempt to hunt down drug traffickers in *The French Connection*, Bobby Dupea saved from death only by a last-minute change in the screenplay of *Five Easy Pieces* (but still doomed to a lonely trip to Alaska), *Carnal Knowledge*'s Jonathan in the purgatory of inauthentic sex acts.

As a psychiatric counselor for the church, Karras is positioned at the border between reason and unreason. What is more, he finds himself in an emotionally precarious position; apart from doubting his faith, he also takes care of his sick mother. Her admission to a hospital leads to a disturbing scene in which Karras tries to reach his mother's bed as an eerie army of old women cling to him, asking for help, a scene that evokes the images of ominous Iraqi women in the prologue of the film. After her death, the mother haunts Karras' emotional arc, and during the final exorcism scene the devil will accuse Karras of having killed her, exploiting his repressed feelings of guilt. It is this confrontation with the devil that leads Karras to catharsis: regaining his faith, he invites the devil to possess him instead of Regan and jumps out of the window to meet his own death while simultaneously saving the young girl.

In the feature "Filming 'The Exorcist,'" part of the Blu-ray edition of the film, author William Blatty explains that his novel in fact amounts to a love story: "Here's a priest who gives his own life voluntarily to save the life of a little girl he has never met" ("Filming"). And director Friedkin, when announcing the final exorcism scene during his audio commentary, emphasizes how Regan's bodily deterioration mirrors Karras' emotional trajectory: "She's at absolute rock bottom, and so is Karras, *emotionally*, and what they're about to enter into together is something that will either destroy them [...] or save them" (Friedkin). In 1993, Carol Clover wrote that "[c]ertainly the novelist's (and filmmaker's) target is not the female body, but the transformation that body prompts in the male psyche" (88). Friedkin, by adding the term "emotionally," seems to corroborate this dynamic. While Regan seems devoid of singular emotions, rather offering her body as an affective force that symbolizes evil, Karras constitutes an actual subject, a man in crisis going through an emotional development, reaching his own core self.

Regarding *The Exorcist* and other 1970s films, Clover described how these two emotional narratives work together:

> Crudely put, for a space to be created in which men can weep without being labeled feminine, women must be relocated to a space where they will be made to wail uncontrollably; for men

> to be able to relinquish emotional rigidity, control, women must be relocated to a space in which they will undergo a flamboyant psychotic break; and so on. (105)

While Clover analyzes this logic as a "gendered division of narrative labor," it also illustrates the extent to which the successful attainment of the subject position of countercultural whiteness is secured by using white femininity to delineate its limits. A nightmare of female madness as breakdown prepares a male fantasy of madness as breakthrough.

As I have shown in the third chapter, authenticating white male subjectivity in the 1970s was a procedure dependent on creating the idea of individual uniqueness through emotional truth, a conflicted process mediated by encounters with female characters. Bobby Dupea struggled with an authentic way of being by navigating an environment that is culturally alienated and populated by different forms of white femininity he is not able to relate to. John Klute learned to become less uptight by falling in love with Bree Daniels. *Carnal Knowledge* articulated a whole philosophy of male sexuality through a taxonomy of behavioral attitudes vis-à-vis women. In *The Exorcist*'s more traditional set-up, Damien Karras opens up and regains his belief in the existence of irrational forces through his treatment of a possessed child that forces him to confront the relation to his own mother. Regan's possessed body, then, is the latest instance in an array of subjects that work at the reconstruction site of white masculinity in a period in which the latter explicitly came under scrutiny. And it is Karras, the exorcist of the film's title, who is the subject of this reconstructed manhood, and the latest embodiment of countercultural whiteness.

The gender politics of *The Exorcist,* then, point to a larger matter of concern related to countercultural whiteness. As a subject position that draws its cultural authority from the idea of the self as a project, countercultural whiteness constantly rests on static images of allegedly fixed subjectivities. "Whereas the female story traces a circle (she becomes again what she was when the film began)," Clover noted about the female possession film, "the male story is linear (he is at the end radically different from what he was at the beginning), public (he and the world know he has changed), and apparently permanent" (98). In other words, there is an affective engine at work in the male story that is fueled by the female story; there is a singular self that is created via its opposition to social forces, in this case signified by the specter of female agency. This is also the key dynamic on which countercultural whiteness rests. The allure of the New Hollywood cinema, as well as the politics of race and gender that were its in- and output, cast their spells with the help of a separation between affectively authenticated singular subjects and representative social subjectivities. The Depression victims of *Bonnie and Clyde*, frozen in time, the image of the 'Negro' in existential hip, the com-

placent upper-class milieu of *Five Easy Pieces*, Hollywood's stultified studio system: all these circular or static signs create the context through which countercultural whiteness travels as a constant force of reinvention, seemingly contextless.

Representations are essential for cinematic affect to do its work. On a representational level, Regan's unnatural expressions appear as an internalization of social distortions, but at the same time they create the film's cultural authority on an affective level. Regan's body, as the site of a wide variety of female transgressions – a tomboyish style, a deep voice, the usage of extreme language, the verbal or visual allusions to cunnilingus, masturbation and incest, the act of peeing while standing – constitutes an affective archive of the 1960s as it was engrained in the cultural memory of the 1970s, and *The Exorcist* turns this archive into a spectacle. Just as sex work, in *Klute*, signified one of the limits of authentic feeling, the transgressive young girl signifies one of the limits of the romance of madness and the championing of irrational forces.

The final exorcism, producing a catharsis that sees an innocent child rescued and a man-in-crisis redeemed in death, almost appears as a final countdown between Old and New Hollywood, between the power of discourse and the resistance of affect. As Karras, with the help of Father Merrin, verbally conjures the power of Christ, Regan reacts with spasms, mutations, inconceivable tongue movements. It is only when Karras succumbs to the affective transmission of diabolical forces that he rests his case, stops preaching and finds peace. Thus, *The Exorcist* might repel subtlety and ambiguity in favor of a clear opposition between good and evil; but it also displaces all these things onto the level of affect, trumping the gestures of experts and authorities with the spectacular affective scenarios of Regan's transgressive movements, worshipping the power of cinematic affect as much as the power of good and evil.

Pauline Kael, for her part, was convinced that *The Exorcist* could never be part of the New Hollywood cinema. Denying Friedkin the status of an auteur, she found him to be "a true commercial director – he confuses blatancy with power" ("Back" 62). Friedkin, in turn, found Kael to be an "overeducated fool," an image that not only clashes with Kael's own hatred for overtly 'arty' films but also with her own action (qtd. in Bramesco). Screenwriter and director Paul Schrader, in Peter Biskind's account, was impressed by her language: "The first time I met her, referring to some movie, a comedy, she said, 'The laughs are as sparse as pubic hairs on an old lady's cunt. I was shocked. I didn't know women talked like this" (qtd. in Biskind 290). Is this what Regan would have become without an exorcism? Kael's colleague Richard Schickel, in any case, once described his fellow critic as "this almost demonically possessed little woman" (qtd. in Roberts 202).

4.2.2 "Being Sane in Insane Places": *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* and Madness as Breakthrough

A year after *The Exorcist,* another panic about female agency haunted the trial of Patty Hearst, who had been kidnapped by the Symbionese Liberation Army in 1974. Two months after the abduction, Hearst publicly announced that she had joined the radical group and taken the name Tania. In the trial in 1975, questions of authentic desire and emotional truth loomed large: were her actions the outcome of an authentic will emanating from her core self – authentically expressive acts – or was she forced to join the army, even forced to state that she joined intentionally, making her actions the outcome of outside manipulation? As Scott Selisker sums up the crucial problem for those engaged in the trial and those observing it, they all "had to deal with the impossibility of seeing Hearst's volition, or lack thereof, in her actions" (141). *Time* published a cover story titled "The Battle over Patty's Brain" (qtd. in Perlstein, *Invisible* 616). Ultimately, Hearst was convicted for the criminal acts she participated in. For cultural historian William Graebner, Patty's trial ultimately buried in the public mind "the sense that anyone, least of all a psychiatrist, could know what had happened within another person's mind" (118).

In the same year, the film version of Ken Kesey's novel *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* was released in cinemas all over the country and drew much of its appeal from an insecurity about motivation and the borders of 'normal' behavior. "We're gonna study you," the head of the mental asylum announces to his new patient Randall P. McMurphy at the beginning of the film, and McMurphy agrees that "we got to get to the bottom of R. P. McMurphy." Just as in *The Exorcist,* the attempt to determine the source and the nature of an individual's behavior is a central dramatic engine for *Cuckoo's Nest.* But while Regan's body is the site of a struggle between innocent girlhood and evil external forces, Randall McMurphy is an agent in its own right: a singular self set in the battle against an institution. In fact, McMurphy appears to be the only sane person in the mental ward the film is set in, an environment that is rigid and dehumanizing.

Kesey's novel, written while the author was working at a Veterans' Hospital in California and participating in experiments with LSD, was already steeped in antipsychiatric vocabulary (Lambe 303). Martin Halliwell notes how, even if it is "often placed alongside Thomas Szasz's *The Myth of Mental Illness* (1961)," *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* "more clearly resembles [Erving Goffman's] *Asylums,*" the sociologist's portrayal of "the mental hospital as a form of institutionalized incarceration" (212–213). For Charles Reich, Kesey's novel was a "book [...] about the American working man, deprived of his virility, his manhood, and his intellect by the system we have described" (*Greening* 169).

In the early 1970s, debates about psychiatric institutions and their effect on individuals were pervasive. In January 1973, psychologist David Rosenhan published "On Being Sane in Insane Places," the findings of an experiment in which he tested psychiatric diagnoses by smuggling pseudopatients into mental health facilities who after their admission explained to be fine – but still underwent treatment. "[I]t is clear that we cannot distinguish the sane from the insane in psychiatric hospitals," the study concluded (Rosenhan 257).[108] Filmmaker Hal Ashby, whom Kesey wanted to direct the film version of his novel, was among those fascinated by the study. In June 1973, Kesey explained to Ashby that he aspired to make a film that made the audience not merely watch a film but go through an experience. "This film has to be *madness communicating,* not a film about madness," Kesey wrote, "If we don't make that attempt with our full intention we fail at the outset" ("One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest, correspondence," original emphasis). But while the romance of madness and the antipsychiatric impulse still had cultural influence by 1973, the time for experiments in large-scale cinema productions seemed to be over.

13 Years In Between: The Sexual Politics of the Ward

When the film finally came out two years later, directed not by Ashby but by Milos Forman, it was fashioned in a much more straightforward manner than Kesey had hoped for. The film eschewed the 'mad' narration by character Chief Bromden, exchanging, as Elaine Safer deplored in a 1977 comparison of book and film, "surreal descriptions for realistic presentation of patients in an institutional setting," and thereby sacrificing a narrative of "psychological growth" for a "one-dimensional level of slapstick humor" (134, 136). As Safer summarizes the effect of this change: "We are the sane observers of a 'cuckoo's nest'; we are outside, not inside, Bromden's perspective" (137). Kesey himself allegedly complained that the filmmakers had taken out the Combine (Lambe 306), and indeed: in what probably constitutes the most important change from novel to film, the total institution has become nameless.

Kesey had invented the term "Combine" to signify, in Daniel Vitkus' description, a "vast system of machines and robots, engaged in a process of converting human flesh, imagination, and individuality to a machine-world of freedomless conformity" (73). As Bromden explains the Combine's techniques of adjustment in the novel: "They put things in! They *install* things. They start as quick as they

108 In 2019, journalist Susannah Cahalan published *The Great Pretender,* a report on the Rosenhan experiment that questioned many of its findings (Cahalan).

see your gonna be big and go to working and installing their filthy machinery when you're little, and keep on and on and on till you're *fixed!*" (Kesey 209, original emphases)[109] The Combine, then, was a machine of enculturation, constituting a total institution that bundled nebulous social forces. And it was embodied by *Cuckoo's Nest* matriarch Nurse Ratched. In the novel, Bromden links the story's setting to both society at large and the figure of the powerful nurse: "The ward is a factory for the Combine. […] When a completed product goes back out into society, all fixed up good as new, better than new sometimes, it brings joy to the Big Nurse's heart" (Kesey 38).[110]

Nurse Ratched is challenged by Randall McMurphy, the new inmate of the psychiatric ward, whose insanity seems to differ from those of the other institutionalized men. While the latter show symptoms related to common types of mental illness, and often to pathologized forms of masculinity – the effeminate intellectual, the mother's boy – McMurphy arrives at the place in jeans and jacket, confident and comfortable with his own body, laughing hysterically and even kissing the driver, his craziness charged with the affective intensity of Jack Nicholson's method acting: a free individual if there ever was one. Even the medical assessment of his behavior, read aloud in a first interview with the ward supervisors, sounds more like an unsympathetic description of the new-consciousness-generation than a scientific diagnosis: "belligerent, talked when unauthorized, resentful in attitude toward work in general, lazy." In the interview, McMurphy admits that "I fight and fuck too much," and when asked about a "statutory rape" case, he excuses himself by naturalizing male desire:

> Between you and me, she might have been 15. When you get that little red beaver right up there in front of you, I don't think it's crazy at all. And I don't think you do either. No man alive could resist that.

Todd Berliner interprets this statement as another illustration of New Hollywood's daring incoherence, arguing that the inclusion of this background information "gratuitously hampers what seems the film's essential goal of enlisting sympathy

109 Several years later, New Left activist Paul Potter described the "experience of growing up" in similar words: as the "experience of having the society plant something deep down inside of you […] that is nor your own" (*A Name* 45).

110 Only a few reviews at the time noted the gender politics at play in the book and the film. Pauline Kael, in her review of the adaptation, placed Kesey's book in a "long literary tradition [of a] man's-man view of women as the castrater-lobotimizers," linking its "concept of male and female" to that of Norman Mailer's ("Bull" 131). "Those who know the book," Kael continued, "will probably feel that Nurse Ratched is more human, but those who haven't read it may be appalled at her inhumanity" ("Bull" 132).

for a nonconformist facing an unjust system" (11). In fact, though, McMurphy's confession seems quite congruent with the film's agenda, in which 'getting the girl' serves as a teleology for the incarcerated men.

From McMurphy's naturalization of his rape to the boat trip he organizes for his fellow inmates and the ultimate rebellion in the ward, men's liberation is intricately tied to a process of loosening that is rewarded with sexual contact to women. In preparation for an illegal party at the ward that will lead to a final escalation, McMurphy smuggles two girls into the asylum by bribing the night guard. One of these girls will deflower Billy, a patient who turned his mother into a powerful internal super-ego that prevents him from relating to the outside world. Billy seems cured after a sexual contact with the girl, but when Nurse Ratched comes back, she immediately reinstalls his guilt by mentioning his mother, ultimately provoking his suicide. Before succumbing to Ratched's power, Billy's final defiant act – "No, I'm not," he answers when Ratched asks him if he isn't ashamed of himself – marks the inmates as a group of involuntary celibates in need of feeling good about their desire to have sex with women.

The reception of the film casts more doubts on Berliner's argument that McMurphy's bragging about raping a minor created feelings of moral ambivalence in audiences. As was the case with *Easy Rider* and *Five Easy Pieces*, reviewers almost unanimously praised Nicholson's performance, not seeing any incoherence or hampering of sympathies in his portrayal of McMurphy. Echoing a familiar motif of the New Hollywood reception discourse, Stanley Kauffman argued that Nicholson's craft as an actor "creates a human being" ("Jack" 22), while Charles Champlin, marveling at "still another fresh and individual creation," commented that McMurphy is "crafty, clever and compassionate and he is in the end a hero because his instincts leave him no choice" ("Nicholson" W28). In a second review of the film, Champlin further delved into the logic of male expressivity and its notion of emotional truth, summarizing his appreciation of the "finest of all the fine portrayals Nicholson has already given us" by stating: "Nicholson shows us a man who can feel it all even if he can't quite think it all through" ("'Cuckoo's'" G1).

Again, the opposition between the singular self and social forces is intertwined with one between emotion and reason, and both oppositions are articulated through a stand-off between the rebellious white male and a seemingly omnipotent white woman. In his review of the film, Richard Schickel noted an important difference between novel and film, as Nurse Ratched is "a prim quite sexless nag" in the film, while in the novel "a good deal of the tension between [her and McMurphy] is oddly sexual" ("Aborted" 76). While Nurse Ratched's character was to some extent still separated from her role within the Combine in the book, then, the film version made her into a representation of the total institution as such, a shift that speaks to the emergence of the women's movement between

the publication of the novel and the release of the film. In a context in which feminism became successfully framed as a sinister force violently changing social mores and allocating cultural power, the cultural work of Nurse Ratched shifted from marking the institution-as-feminized to the woman-as-institution.[111]

It is not least the longevity of its material that makes *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* a crucial film for this book. According to critic Stanley Kauffman, "No film delay was ever luckier" than the time span between the publication of the novel in 1962 and the film version in 1975. The reason, Kauffman explained, was the emergence of New Hollywood and its star actors in between: "The decade it took to start the picture was the decade that Nicholson needed to arrive at the point where they would offer him the role of R. P. McMurphy, the swaggering, appealing, unbalanced king of the ward in an Oregon mental hospital" ("Jack" 22). This decade also witnessed the transition from a universalist crisis discourse around the anxieties of affluence and conformity, inaugurated in the 1950s, to a countercultural discourse that appropriated this crisis rhetoric, accompanied by the emergence of Black Liberationist and feminist imaginaries. This new social and cultural context could not help but shape the reception of the film in the mid-1970s. Kesey's novel tried, in the words of cultural historian Martin Halliwell, to "restore rugged masculinity from its diminished status due to the domestic softening of mid-1950s suburbia" (215). Suburbia, however, was no longer the preferred stand-in for mainstream culture in the 1970s.

Positive Resistance: A Free Spirit among Socialized Identities

As Kesey's narrator Chief Bromden explains in the novel, "[McMurphy] never gave the Combine a chance, [...] because a moving target is hard to hit" (Kesey 89). As a "moving target," McMurphy is the antidote to the Combine's attempt to immobilize individuals – and Jack Nicholson was an attractive choice for embodying this character. In the film version – which, for Alexander Horwath, "successfully reinvented and commodified Nicholson's original anti-hero character in terms of a 'positive resistance' and in accordance with new needs for identification," – McMurphy was even more charged with the affective authority to overcome a system appa-

111 These changes in discourses of gender were already palpable in the reception history of the novel. In 1970, Richard D. Maxwell shifted his analysis of Kesey's book from a consideration of the alleged sexism of the novel to issues of masculinity, arguing that Kesey put the blame not on women but on "the male who is allowing the female and the corporation to chip away at his masculinity." In a familiar reiteration of the discourse of a crisis of masculinity, Maxwell concludes: "Kesey is telling us that once a certain amount of masculinity in the form of authority and individuality is yielded, it is difficult to regain. Perhaps men have given away too much" (144).

rently immune to change ("Walking" 102). When he requests the daily schedule to be altered so he can watch the World Series, arguing that "a little change never hurt," Nurse Ratched explains that even the slightest change would disturb some of the inmates.

The New Hollywood emerged in a period that has been analyzed as an important moment within the history of capitalism, a transition from a Fordist to a post-Fordist order that saw management and economic literature starting to embrace countercultural values.[112] Timothy Leary defined a counterculture by its "embrace [of] the ancient axiom that the only true constant is change itself" ("Foreword" ix), and it is this demand of change for its own sake that, in the words of Thomas Sutherland, is "inextricably capitalist in its orientation, and as such, cannot be meaningfully understood as a structural externality to the capitalist processes that it strives to interrupt" (Sutherland). In the context of the New Hollywood, Drehli Robnik argued that cinema played an important role within the emergence of post-Fordism, which he defines as a "system of production based on the 'social capital' of affective labor, tacit knowledge and undisciplined communication" (339).[113]

And indeed, in the *New York Times* review of *Cuckoo's Nest*, Vincent Canby situated McMurphy within an emergent tradition of a new type of leadership:

> You gather together at random any 12 men, and one of them will eventually surface as the group's Randle Patrick McMurphy, the organizer, the spokesman, the leading hell-raiser and free spirit, the man who accepts nothing at face value and who likes to shake up the system, sometimes just because it's there. ("Nicholson" 51)

In Canby's description, the natural organizer and spokesman of a group is a "hell-raiser and free spirit," leading not so much through wisdom, knowledge and reason but by affective authority. Robnik might have written about *Cuckoo's Nest* when he described war films such as *The Dirty Dozen* (1967) and *Kelly's Heroes* (1970): "They are not about making misfits fit, but about misfits refitting and retooling the machinery" (343).

Deploying a similar approach, Simon Schleusener analyzes Kesey's novel and other texts around madness alongside the writings of Michel Foucault as a critique

112 See Frank; Boltanski and Chiapello; Heath and Potter.

113 Jeff Menne follows this trace in his study *Post-Fordist Cinema.* Through reading New Hollywood films in line with the emergence of management theory – which shared with auteur theory a championing of a "smaller-scale, more flexible system of labor" and an attack on the large corporation – Menne examines how "the film directors who previously looked like Hollywood outsiders assume a privileged role in the corporation's renegotiation of its inside and outside" ("Post-Fordist" 6)

of disciplinary societies and their techniques of normalization. Schleusener argues that "the mental institution in *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* eventually serves as a micro-model for what Foucault terms 'disciplinary society'" (242), bringing the novel's anti-disciplinary approach in dialogue with the emergence of neoliberalism (Milton Friedman's *Capitalism and Freedom* was published in the same year as Kesey's novel). Schleusener thus restates a familiar critique of countercultural values as complicit in the creation of what Thomas Frank termed 'hip capitalism' (Frank). However, this narrative of complicity is rarely studied in relation to questions of race or understood as part of a white cultural imagination.

Situating *Cuckoo's Nest* only within an anti-disciplinary genre and its respective form of governmentality misses its investments in a politics of expressive white subjectivity. *Cuckoo's Nest*, in fact, is very much implicated in the transformation I trace throughout this book: the shift from a universalist discourse around identity crisis at large, which itself fed an emergent countercultural politics, to a discourse around specific identities, which nourished a cultural and political fight against normative defaults at the heart of something like 'identity at large'. Antiracist and feminist discloses and practices at the time implicitly or explicitly critiqued a countercultural politics based on the opposition between an abstract self and nebulous social forces. At the same time, these cultural and social movements created cultural images that were soon delegitimized as political actors and framed as the new dominant culture: the specters of Black Power and feminism. While Schleusener mentions Kesey's occupation with masculinity in passing, he largely ignores the racialized and gendered premise at the heart of the novel: the malevolent matriarch leads a crew of nurses called the "black boys" to see over inmates who, in turn, are all white men, with the notable exception of narrator Chief Bromden.

Cuckoo's Nest's cultural imaginary is even harder to ignore when considering the film version. Kesey, in fact, had endowed his nonwhite characters with a history of racial oppression, a dimension absent in the film. In the novel, Chief Bromden's madness is tied to the displacement of his tribe and the death of his father, both associated with the building of a dam on the land of the tribe by the government, so that the "Chief's loss of sanity is directly related to his tribe's loss of identity" (Vitkus 74); meanwhile one of the "black boys" who work as nurses in the asylum is introduced as having witnessed his mother being raped by white men (Kesey 28). The system, then, is implicated with racism, and not separable from its colonial history.[114] The film, however, not only does away with the Combine

114 The "black boys," Kesey suggests, have been recruited by Nurse Ratched for their hostile emo-

but also with these allusions to the violent experiences of some of the inmates.[115] Instead, abstracted from their literary biographies, as representations rather than singular forces, they seem inherently antagonistic to McMurphy's desire for freedom – this is their explicit function within the narrative. The Black guards and the matriarch of the ward in *Cuckoo's Nest* are not righteously mad but form part of the institution and the establishment.

While eschewing the background information on racialized subjects might be explained by ignorance or as a matter of priorities, I argue it is fundamental to the film's racial project. If countercultural whiteness is a subject position defined against the influence of social forces, racialized subjectivities give fuel to this defiance by offering a cultural reservoir of rebellion and affect (see chapters 2.1. and 3.1.). As individuals, however, they are not defined against but associated with the social. While *Bonnie and Clyde* imagined the poor white and Black farmers as struggling against economic forces, all other New Hollywood films considered within this book reserved the position of the beleaguered self for white men, with nonwhite and/or female subjects increasingly imagined as doing the beleaguering. If *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*'s take on the disciplinary society might well feel dated, the film version of the mid-1970s suggests how the anti-establishment ethos of the 1960s and the subject position of countercultural whiteness, charged with affective fuel by the New Hollywood generation of method actors, retained their cultural agency.

While Kesey imagined the ultimate opposition to be between the individual and the institution writ large, viewers of the film version would see a much more specific setting: a group of victimized white men, controlled by an omnipotent, 'manly' woman, with the help of Black assistants. Only two subjects stood out as characters in their own right: Randall McMurphy as the newest occupier of the subject position of countercultural whiteness, and Chief Bromden, whose function only becomes clear in the final part of the film.

---

tions against the system. "When she finally gets the three she wants [...] she's damn positive they hate enough to be capable" (Kesey 127–128).

115 For Lambe, the film's message is that "women and African Americans are inherently antagonistic to the freedom pursued by McMurphy, even if they have intelligible reasons (sexism, racism) for playing this role" (313). However, there is nothing in the film that supports the second part of this observation.

Excess of Individuality: Jack Nicholson and the Survival of Countercultural Whiteness

Two psychiatric techniques determine the film's last part: electroshock therapy and lobotomy, the former illustrating the defiance of the individual against the force of the system and the latter the system's ultimate invincibility. After McMurphy has actively resisted one of the nurses in a small rebellion instigated by a fight for a cigarette, he is placed on an operation table. In one of the most explicit scenes of the film in terms of institutional violence, Nicholson's face, pressed between the devices that will ultimately attack McMurphy with electric shocks, fills the screen for some horrifying seconds. Shortly after, *Cuckoo's Nest* jumps forward to the consequences. McMurphy comes out of the operation room, seemingly absent-minded, his eyeballs showing no signs of mental reactions.

However, this affective scenario allows the film to further celebrate the resilience of countercultural whiteness, as McMurphy continues to resist enculturation. When McMurphy bursts into laughter, his tragic condition is revealed to be a conscious and ironic performance, and the film indulges in what Selisker describes as "some unfathomable excess of McMurphy's individuality" that "exceeds the institution's power to subdue him" (70). McMurphy is back to his normal craziness, then, cheered on by his fellow inmates, and Nicholson's expressive acting once again marks the radical singularity of the white male anti-hero. From George Hanson's Nic-Nic-Nic performance in *Easy Rider* to Bobby Dupea's sudden outbursts of emotions in *Five Easy Pieces* to the defiant insanity that only a mad society would pathologize, Nicholson performs an expression so singular it can only be understood as coming from something deep inside, flowing toward the outside without any interference by alien forces, the ultimate proof of the existence of an authentic core always beyond the institution's grasp.

But after the ultimate escalation of the party, and after Billy's suicide, McMurphy is defeated at last: a lobotomy succeeds where electroshock therapy had failed. Lobotomy serves as the final symbol for the system's penetration of the individual mind, but the period between the novel's publication year and the time of the film's release saw the resurgence of a public debate about psychosurgical practices such as lobotomy. As Harriet Washington reports, the National Institutes of Mental Health and the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration granted $600,000 for brain research on urban rioters (287).[116] Just as in the context of the war on crime

116 In a 1967 paper published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, the authors argued for more studies on the "violence-prone individual," using the riots in Newark and Detroit as examples. The "real lesson of urban rioting," they proclaimed, "is that, besides the need to study the social fabric that creates the riot atmosphere, we need intensive research and clinical studies of the individuals committing the violence" (qtd. in Johnson 112). Jenell Johnson notes how studies

and *The French Connection*, then, the political imaginary that pitted the self against the system – which translated aesthetically into a white male rebellion against this system – coexisted with a growing state apparatus that specifically targeted non-white populations.

Thus, at the end of the film, the rebel hero is braindead, sedated and immobilized by the system. And ultimately, he is killed by Chief Bromden in what Pauline Kael has called the film's "climactic Indian-white love death" ("Bull" 134). In the novel, Bromden uses the complete absence of individuality in braindead McMurphy to legitimate his act, explaining that McMurphy himself would never have "left something like that sit there in the day room with his name tacked on it for twenty or thirty years so the Big Nurse could use it as an example of what can happen if you buck the system" (Kesey 308). After Bromden has killed McMurphy, he breaks a window and flees toward freedom, and countercultural death is again linked with aesthetic liberation. The Native American survives the film's fade to black, but lobotomized countercultural whiteness survived as well. In 1976, Travis Bickle would walk the streets of New York, undeadly. When Paul Schrader, who wrote the screenplay for *Taxi Driver*, was asked about his protagonist, he answered: "It's me, without any brains" (qtd. in R. Thompson 10–11).

4.3 The Writing on the Wall of 1976: Three Showdowns and an Open Ending

In 1976, everything did not come together, but sometimes things coalesce to give the impression of a culmination, a writing on the wall so bold that what heretofore has looked like a loosely dispersed network suddenly seems impenetrable. It was the year the United States celebrated the Bicentennial, haunted by the question of how "the country [would] come together to honor the nation's past [...] when American history was being reinterpreted in terms of violence, oppression, and exploitation" (Zaretsky 147). It was the year *Newsweek* announced the "Year of the Evangelical" in a cover story, and Milton Friedman won the Nobel prize for economics. It was the year Jimmy Carter, "combining the Protestant ethic with the therapeutic turn" (Steven P. Miller 43), successfully ran for president. During his campaign, he told a voter who wanted to know about his political identity: "I don't like to categorize, I don't see myself as liberal or conservative or the like" (qtd. in Perlstein, *Invisible* 610).

---

like these led to an increasing anxiety about the return of psychosurgical practices that culminated in Senate Hearings on the subject in 1973 (106–131).

In 1976, Ronald Reagan, challenging President Ford for the Republican nomination, evoked the racist image of the "welfare queen" for the first time in a speech, giving (in)human contours to the imaginary connection between blackness and welfare dependency.[117] It was seven years after the *Newsweek* report on the "forgotten majority" quoted a construction foreman saying that the "welfare people get out of taxes, and so do the rich" ("The Troubled American" 27). In his piece on the white working-class, which informed Richard Nixon's political strategy in the early 1970s, Pete Hamill described what he saw as their perspective on African Americans: "Most of them have only a passing acquaintance with blacks, and very few have any blacks friends. So they see blacks in terms of militants with Afros and shades, or crushed people on welfare" (14).[118] In the political lexicon of the 1970s, then, "white men were 'workers' [...] and black people and women were others – nonworker, welfare recipients, or worse" (Cowie, *Stayin'* 77).

In 1976, Donald Warren published his report on *The Radical Center,* inventing the term "Middle American Radical" (MAR) to identify a social group which he anticipated to become a "potentially decisive force" (Warren). As Warren noted, the political perspective of this group "does not fit readily the traditional molds of liberal and conservative ideologies," it rather considered "ideology itself as a component in a chain of thinking in response to institutional forces on the individual" (1). The MAR, according to Warren, felt that the "burden falls on his shoulders to carry out the 'social experiment' rather than on the affluent suburbanite or on the welfare poor" (3).

In 1976, Ralph Turner published a paper on "The Real Self" in the *American Journal of Sociology,* identifying the "impulse locus" as one of two different attitudes toward the self that individuals would take on. Under the impulse locus, Turner argued, "the true self is revealed only when inhibitions are lowered or abandoned" (993). For "impulsives," which he distinguished from "institutionals," the true self "consists of deep, unsocialized, inner impulses." Bringing the affective logic of expressivity to its irrational conclusion, he added: "Mad desire and errant fancy are exquisite expressions of the self" (992).

In 1976, Charles Reich published his autobiography *The Sorcerer of Bolinas Reef.* Remembering his years at Berkeley, when he started to work on *The Greening of America,* he ruminated once more on alienation:

---

117 Rick Perlstein notes how Reagan had already alluded to the "woman in Chicago" in his radio broadcasts of the previous year, frequently exaggerating the scope of the welfare fraud conducted by Linda Taylor and claiming it was a typical case, when in fact, as Perlstein notes, "using Taylor to cast aspersions on welfare as such was like citing the exploits of a notorious bank robber in order to argue we shouldn't have banks" (*Invisible* 604).

118 On the influence of Hamill's piece on Nixon's strategy see Cowie, "Nixon's" 261.

> I finally saw alienation as a fundamental form of tyranny, comparable to fascism and totalitarianism. [...] An alienated society is no less a political tyranny because the oppression is found within each individual, rather than coming from a single source such as an army or a dictator. Self-oppression is merely a more advanced form of tyranny than totalitarianism. (*Sorcerer* 191)

In 1976, Tom Wolfe published his essay on the "Me-Decade" in *New York* magazine, closing the first wave of diagnoses of cultural narcissism within American society and inventing a label still popular as code for the 1970s. As a particularly horrifying embodiment of narcissism, Wolfe painted the image of a businesswoman with a "seductive physical presence," who enjoyed business meetings only because they had the "subplot [...] 'The Men Get Turned On by Me'" (T. Wolfe, "'Me' Decade"). Attributing narcissism to sexual and economic liberation," Wolfe prepared the ground for Christopher Lasch's *The Culture of Narcissism* (1978), which would, in Imogen Tyler's words, "pathologize the identity-claims of these groups at the very historical moment when they have acquired an unprecedented political visibility" (355).

In 1976, *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest* won the Oscar in all five main categories, the first time since 1934, upsetting Ken Kesey, who noted that none of the winners had "thanked me for writing the book" and complained that the filmmakers "took out the Combine—the conspiracy that is America" (Ledbetter 26).

In 1976, Pauline Kael published *Reeling,* a collection of essays and reviews, noting that "these years may be the closest our movies have come to the tangled, bitter flowering of American letters in the 1850s" (*Reeling* xiv).

In 1976, the Hollywood Renaissance experienced a last reprise. Another possessed female teenager in *Carrie,* another example of unnatural female expressivity: "cause a girl enough pain, repress enough of her rage, and – no matter how fundamentally decent she may be – she perforce becomes a witch" (Clover 71). Another man on the run in *Marathon Man,* uncovering a conspiracy and offering Dustin Hoffman a way to go all the way with method-acting.[119] Another cop vigilante in *The Enforcer,* the third installment of the *Dirty Harry* series, where Harry Callahan has to deal not only with a new series of killings but also with the "mayor's intention that [the police] department be brought more into line with the mainstream of 20th-century thought." After a police technocrat has specified this mainstream thought as the "broaden[ing] [of] the areas of participation for women in the police force," Harry scorns: "Well, that sounds very stylish."

---

119 After having stayed up for three days to achieve "emotional verisimilitude," his co-star Laurence Olivier, the old guard, purportedly told Hoffman: "My dear boy, why don't you just try acting?" (Simkins)

In 1976, another forgotten female director, Elaine May, directed her third feature film, continuing her examination of white masculinity as the privilege of inauthenticity, but shedding the comedic tone of her earlier outings *A New Leaf* (1971) and *The Heartbreak Kid* (1972). In *Mikey and Nicky,* two old friends skelter through the night, one of them afraid he is about to be killed by mobsters. Just like Sandy and Jonathan in *Carnal Knowledge,* Mikey and Nicky are old school friends engaged in games of sexual prowess; they hunt through a bleak cityscape, filmed with a hand-held camera that exploits urban authenticity; they delve in Freudian mother-hang-ups, just like Wyatt in *Easy Rider*'s graveyard sequence and Father Kurras in *The Exorcist.* They are a last couple on the run on the mean streets of Philadelphia, and Peter Falk and John Cassavetes method-mumble their way through the film, as sheer failure, with all pathos gone. The film suggests that their idiosyncrasies are barely concealing an empty gesture of white male transgression, maintaining a fantasy of independence while remaining oh-so dependent on each other. As good a choice as *Jaws* (1975), *Star Wars* (1977) or *Heaven's Gate* (1980) to signal the end of an era, *Mikey and Nicky* comes closest to a feminist reckoning with the legacy of the New Hollywood: there is no romance left in countercultural whiteness, and expressivity finds no other outlet than straight misogyny and racism.

There are three other films that left their mark on 1976, films that not only speak to the matters of concern examined in this book but escalate them. They might stand for different configurations of countercultural whiteness at mid-decade: the long shadow of existentialism, the white ethnic revival, and the enduring appeal of madness as breakdown. In this final section, I set on a last journey through the New Hollywood, with three showdowns, featuring an underground man, a great white hope and a mad prophet.

Showdown #1: The Underground Man vs. The Scum of the Streets

One of the three journalists who had lunch together in 1967, and in the beginning of this book, becomes a leading film critic over the following years. One night she meets a film enthusiast studying at UCLA, and she gets him a job at the *Los Angeles Free Press.* The aspiring critic loses the job after writing a bad review on *Easy Rider* and puts all his anxiety and anger into a screenplay about a taxi driver in New York. The script evolves into one of the last, and one of the most lasting, testaments of the New Hollywood (Biskind 290).

According to Lawrence Webb, in the mid-1970s it was already "a consensus that the city was a problem to be solved, implicitly preparing the ground of austerity measures and restructuring by the financial elite after the fiscal crisis" (85–86). And New York was a particularly pressing problem to be solved. In October 1975,

two months after *Taxi Driver* had finished shooting in the city, the cover page of the *New York Daily News* read: "FORD TO CITY: DROP DEAD," a gruesome interpretation of President Ford's rejection of federal help to ease the city's fiscal crisis. In the next year, then, the infamous Travis Bickle rides through a moribund city. His movements are circular, and in the service of others; the countercultural fantasy of untamed motion has lost its force. "Popeye Doyle stops for no one; the doors to Travis's cab are open to anyone" (A. Simon 487).

Taxi Driver, Richard Cuskelly wrote in the *L.A. Herald Examiner,* was "essentially a contest between an alienated man and an alienating environment," and lead actor Robert De Niro was "completely absorbed in the man's alienation" ("'Taxi Driver'" 1, 5). De Niro, Judith Crist noted, "controls his body like a moving sculpture," only to then describe a performance of losing control: "Once, soothing with frustration, he takes a swig from a beer can and his head snaps into a quick, complex spasm of thwarted rage" ("Mean" 42). This moving sculpture directs its complex spasm of thwarted rage, in a voice-over in the film, at "all the animals that come out at night: whores, skunk pussies, buggers, queens, fairies, dopers, junkies, sick, venal," in short, as Jeff Menne notes, "from the city as it would appear from a conservative standpoint in the wake of the movements (Black Power, feminism, gay rights, and the New Left in its militant phase)" ("Post-Fordist" 76). Fantasizing about his own solution to the urban crisis, Travis promises that "someday a rain will come and wash all this scum off the streets."

To Jay Gould Boyum, writing for the *Wall Street Journal*, Travis was "the type of unhinged loner who in recent years has violently inserted himself into our history," a revenant of Meursault, the protagonist of Albert Camus' *The Stranger* (1942). "And if in his deeply unsettling film," Boyum continued, "Martin Scorsese hasn't quite managed to create our own American version of Camus' classic existential statement, he has at least given to Camus' absurd universe [...] a terrible and chilling relevance" (11).[120] In an extensive interview with *Film Comment* after the release of the film, Paul Schrader, the former film critic who had written the screenplay for *Taxi Driver*, confirmed that he had intended to transport the European existential hero to America. He also claimed that Bickle was "me without any brains," as Schrader saw in himself the "same need to escape, to break through [...] a real need to triumph over the system" (R. Thompson 10–11, 14).

120 French existentialist philosophy might not have been the first thing to come to the minds of reviewers if the film had remained true to its original screenplay, in which all the characters Travis was supposed to kill were black. Director Martin Scorsese had changed this peculiar detail, afraid of making too explicit a statement, and writer Paul Schrader ultimately relented (Cowie, *Stayin'* 440).

Inspired by the case of Arthur Bremer, who had shot George Wallace in 1972 during the latter's campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination, it itself inspired John Hinckley's assassination attempt on Ronald Reagan in 1981.[121] In the film, Travis cancels his plan to shoot Senator and presidential candidate Charles Palantine, redirecting his lethal rage against a pimp and the owners of a brothel to rescue the underage sex worker Iris in the film's violent catharsis. In *Taxi Driver*'s notorious epilogue, Travis survives the massacre, and the film makes clear that 'society' is considering him a hero: the local press celebrates his violent acts and Iris' father thanks him, telling him his daughter is now safe in Pittsburgh.[122] In the *Los Angeles Times*, Charles Champlin found it "unclear" if *Taxi Driver* was actually saying that violence was "a right rite of passage to maturity and mental health" or if it was "suggesting that society in its willful blindness is doomed to reinfect itself endlessly" ("Time Bomb" 28). In the *New York Times*, Roger Greenspun, reiterating a classical New Hollywood argument, found value in this lack of clearness, as he enjoyed "being bothered by an ambiguity that can't be suppressed the way the moving camera can be controlled" (49).

In a review titled "Underground Man," referring to the famous Dostoevsky character, Pauline Kael noted that the film didn't "operate on the level of moral judgment of what Travis does." Rather, "by drawing us into his vortex it makes us understand the psychic discharge of the quiet boys who go berserk" ("Underground"). Reviewers and audiences were drawn into this vortex and collected anecdotal evidence of the film's affective impact. "The capacity crowd seemed not just responsive, but wildly participatory," Thomas Thompson observed in the *Los Angeles Times*, and recounted: "When the DiNiro [sic] character first assumed a menacing karate stance early in the film, many yelled support. [...] Indeed, when the taxi driver began his slaughter in the warehouse, the theater erupted in applause and cheering" (C7).[123]

---

121 After his arrest, Hinckley said he had wanted to reenact the scene in which Travis attempts to assassinate a Democratic candidate at a rally. His goal was to impress Jodie Foster, who had played the prostitute in *Taxi Driver*. See F. Krämer 159–167 for an analysis of how the news coverage of the event invested in motifs of evangelicalism and the crisis of masculinity.

122 Considering the conclusion of *Klute* (see chapter 3.3.), Pennsylvania generally seemed to function as a safe harbor for former New York sex workers during the New Hollywood.

123 This was only one of countless reports of enthusiastic audience responses to vigilante violence in 1970s films. In 1973, the *L.A. Herald Examiner* reported that a line of the ad campaign for *Walking Tall* – "When was the last time you stood up and applauded a movie?" – quite accurately anticipated audience reactions, according to exhibitors around the country ("Walking Tall"). Arthur Knight recounted a preview screening of *Death Wish* (1974), in which the audience was "vociferously in favor of Bronson's [...] simplistic solution to crime in the streets" ("Films" 25).

Producer Michael Phillips found the film to be a paradox, as it "appeals both to the intellectuals and the drive-in crowds" ("Phillips" 40). Both Schrader and Scorsese found themselves on the intellectual side, and they made a case for seeing *Taxi Driver* as an indictment of violence – and Travis Bickle as a pathological case. Stuart Byron, in a *Film Comment* analysis a year after the film's release, would have none of that. To most of the film's audience, Byron suspected, this was "the story of a man driven mad by the realities of urban life, and who therefore reacts in an understandably violent way" (37).

In a more recent essay on the New Hollywood, Jonathan Rosenbaum contends that in *Taxi Driver* the "relatively socialized contexts of most of [New Hollywood's] influences become privatized into the alienation of a single individual" (150). This process of privatization, however, translates to an absorption of the socialized contexts into Travis' vortex rather than to a displacement, as they constitute the material out of which the film builds its affective scenarios, including its final catharsis. It is a process that feeds on several dynamics I have identified as integral to the New Hollywood in general: the culturalization of class, the idea of emotional blockages in men, and the figure of the singular self at odds with a world in crisis.

In a key scene, presidential candidate Palantine boards Travis' cab, and the liberal politician is unable to communicate with the taxi driver; when Travis comments that someone should just clean up the streets and flush all the scum down the toilet, Palantine has not much to answer. Drawing a sharp divide between a political establishment and the common folk, represented by an alienated Travis Bickle, *Taxi Driver*, as Jefferson Cowie notes, is not interested in class as a political or economic category, making Travis "a strange new anti-hero in a strange new cultural class war" (*Stayin'* 333). Furthermore, Travis' love interest Betsy, who ultimately rejects him, works for Palantine's campaign. Hence, the politician is not only out of touch, he gets the attention of the woman Travis woos but will never have. Once again, female agency is tied to the idea of the establishment, tightening the bond between the allied forces that besiege the alienated white male. And *Taxi Driver,* Joseph Darda argues, "can't decide whether to attribute Travis's homicidal rage to the trauma of war or to the trauma of women in the 1970s" (136).

In its narrative structure, *Taxi Driver* indulges in the notion of male emotional constipation that gave the affective deficit its distinguished shape in the 1970s. As discussed here in the context of *Klute* and *Carnal Knowledge* and analyzed in more detail by Sally Robinson, this crisis discourse tied the increasingly common idea that men were not allowed to express their emotions to an aesthetics of blockage and release that followed the "dominant model of (male) sexual pleasure as based on building tension and the relief of discharge" (Robinson 12). And indeed, for Pauline Kael, the film was about "the absence of sex – bottled-up, impacted energy and

emotion, with a blood-splattering release" ("Underground"). Kael cited the "White Negro" and Norman Mailer's suggestion that "when a killer takes his revenge on the institutions that he feels are oppressing him his eruption of violence can have a positive effect on him," arguing that *Taxi Driver* takes this element and "puts it in the center of the viewer's consciousness" ("Underground"). About *Bonnie and Clyde,* Kael had written that violence was its meaning (see chapter 2.2.). On *Taxi Driver,* she wrote: "Violence is Travis's only means of expressing himself. And, given his ascetic loneliness, it's the only real orgasm he can have" ("Underground").

Thus, nine years after *Bonnie and Clyde*, another New Hollywood classic's violent conclusion, similarly stylized to the extreme, was likened to male orgasm. Back then, it was the ultimate-love death of the romantic gangsters acting on behalf of a disenfranchised common folk, the logical end point of a countercultural fantasy of untamed motion. Now, the eruption of violence is in the name of a revenge on the institutions, the ultimate release of bottled-up energies, a common man going mad in the wake of urban crisis, arrogant politicians and unavailable women. Bonnie and Clyde were killed by the system, Travis Bickle kills. But he cannot kill the system, only its representatives, and they look quite different now. "I'm hip," Travis tells the pimp in one scene, before the showdown. "You don't look hip," the pimp answers. Hip has become a watchword for a new dangerously dominant culture.

Reacting against film critics who panned the film for its violence, Paul Schrader defended himself in a letter to the *Los Angeles Times:*

> 'Taxi Driver' has met with success not because it panders to the violence audience [...] but because it is an effective metaphor for the victimization everyone feels. And for the way we perpetuate our own victimization and then grow angry and violent as a result. ("Correspondence" O2)

To radically contextualize *Taxi Driver* would mean to examine the politics of its "effective metaphor," to ask who is included in "everyone's victimization," who is invited to the "we" and who is not – because the "we" and the "everyone" can never be metaphors, they are always manners of counting. In this case, they offer the subject position of countercultural whiteness another cozy place to hide. But *Taxi Driver* testifies not only to a universalist configuration of countercultural whiteness but also situates it in a very particular emergent discourse. As Darda traces the development of Martin Scorsese's films: "With *Mean Streets*, Scorsese turned the first-generation immigrant's tale of flight into the second generation's dead end. With *Taxi Driver*, he shackled a former marine to that dead end, Americanizing the white ethnic and ethnicizing the Vietnam vet" (136). The film thus stands in direct connection to another 1976 classic.

Showdown #2: The Great White Hope vs. Black Uncle Sam

For Lawrence Grossberg, movies like *Rocky* fueled the shift in popular images of white ethnicity, creating an identity that was "increasingly represented as both underdog and transgressive" (*Under* 64). The film makes clear from the start that "at the bicentennial, after civil rights and feminism, the white ethnic, the Italian American, dangles from the nation's lowest rung" (Darda 141). Rocky Balboa, in fact, would become the new definition of the underdog: the guy who never had a chance and still took it, the fighter who has had his days but gave it one last shot – and an embodiment of the white working-class rebelling against a system that allows a Black boxing champion to represent the nation as a whole. As the first part of what would become a long series of films, *Rocky* redirects fantasies of untamed motion into a teleology of getting back in shape for individual achievement, redirects fantasies of authenticity and emotional truth into a white ethnic identity, and redirects the romance of madness into a stubborn belief of winning against all odds.

For Joseph Darda, *Rocky* and its success at the box office mark a culmination of the New Hollywood era. He notes how Stallone "carried on the tradition of auteurism" by writing, directing and starring in his film, but with a changed tone: "It was feel-good rather than irreverent. Stallone distanced himself from the existentialism of the other young filmmakers" (Darda 140). Similarly, Lawrence Webb argues that *Rocky* is far more conventional in storytelling and far more transparent in its message than most films of the New Hollywood, remaining "fundamentally split between the urban realist tendencies that characterised certain strands of early 1970s cinema and an individualist, rise-to-success plot that would become commonplace in 1980s Hollywood" (60).

In fact, the film virtually enacts the transition from the former to the latter in a famous scene that starts in a setting of urban crisis and ends by transcending it. In the scene, part of a sequence that shows Rocky preparing for his fight against champion Apollo Creed, Rocky gets up in the early morning hours to start a run that leads him from his working-class neighborhood to the top of the steps of the Philadelphia Museum of Art.[124] *Rocky*'s fantasy of untamed motion contains the idea that "[c]lass is neither community nor culture nor occupation nor power but a mere affect that the select few, the chosen ones, can drop" (Cowie,

124 In another 1976 film, *Marathon Man,* running signaled physical exhaustion as a condition of successful closure. As Webb notes, both films were not only "focused on the motif of running and movement through urban space" (62) but also two of the first films to employ the new Steadicam technique, a device which, according to Webb, "provided a way of absorbing and smoothing out some of the more disruptive elements of the first wave of New Hollywood" (64), enabling dynamism while ensuring stability.

Stayin' 317). Hence, when Rocky raises his arms after having arrived at the top of the steps, he claims victory over the city in general, and his own milieu in particular. Just like Bobby Dupea leaving the highway while playing the piano on the back of a truck in *Five Easy Pieces*, he transcends his class background, in affect.

Like few films before, *Rocky* epitomizes what in the 1970s was understood as a revival in ethnic whiteness, a phenomenon I already hinted at in the beginning of this chapter in the context of Pauline Kael's review of *Mean Streets.* The white ethnic revival saw, as Matthew Jacobson summarizes it, "[w]orking-class whites who had never exactly lost their ethnic identifications [...] [mobilize] on the basis of [a] new public language of group cohesion, collective destiny, and, often, group rights under siege" (6). In 1972, Michael Novak published *The Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics*, accusing WASP Americans of being, among other things, "notoriously sterile for the emotions, the instincts, the imagination." "Ethnics," in contrast, had a "far more 'pagan' attitude toward life" and their "passions are kindled by nature." Novak identified an affective deficit in enlightenment as such, as its rationality "creates a windswept vacuum in the soul," and thus there is "nothing but liberation from roots, which is to say rootlessness" (37, 123, 57).[125]

In terms of affect and subjectivity, then, the white ethnic identity performed a crucial double duty, offering itself as a harborer of racial authenticity while still holding on to its whiteness. As Richard Moss puts it, for its proponents the revival was "both a means of rejecting a common white identity and claiming a stake in it" (xv; see also Jacobson; Sugrue and Skrentny).[126] When locating this revival in cinema, however, the question becomes not one of actual identities, or about which audiences craved what, but of the identity politics entailed in it. Even if *Rocky* "easily lent itself to white ethnics who wanted a crack at redemption after feeling themselves to have been sacrificed to the cause of racial justice" (Cowie, *Stayin'* 328), I am interested in the film's function within a white cultural imagination. From this perspective, the discourse of white ethnic revival that *Rocky* is invested in allowed to reduce the affective deficit of dominant whiteness, and to appropri-

125 The year of *Rocky* also witnessed the publication and enormous success of Alex Haley's *Roots,* a novelistic genealogy of the author's family that goes back to an enslaved ancestor in the 18th century. Despite its embeddedness in the "Black Atlantic" experience, the book was "celebrated for its ability to speak for all Americans," and Haley was appointed to the White House Bicentennial Advisory Council (Zaretsky 156).

126 Moss cites other films that had shaped this resurgence, with *The Godfather* as a prime example: "Corleone's promise of swift, efficient justice paralleled that of other 1970s movie characters, such as Buford Pusser of *Walking Tall* and Paul Kersey of *Death Wish*, and reinforced the notion of ethnic toughness and impatience with the conventions of liberal society" (150). Francis Ford Coppola had famously rejected Robert Redford for the main role in *The Godfather* in favor of Al Pacino who "wears the mark of Sicily on his face" (qtd. in Schulman, *Seventies* 83).

ate countercultural whiteness and its politics of expressivity more directly than through phantasmatic investments in blackness.

Blackness, in turn, became increasingly tied to fantasies of dependency in the 1970s, when public debates on welfare and state subsidies for minorities abounded. *Rocky* came out in the year that saw the first Supreme Court decision about affirmative action. In *Regents of the Univ. of Cal. v. Bakke,* the Supreme Court ruled that "institutions could not exclude individuals solely on the basis of race, but race and ethnicity could be considered in a broader assessment of admission qualifications" (Schulman, *Seventies* 70), paving the way for programs of affirmative action to counterbalance legacies of disenfranchisement of Black Americans. *Rocky,* as Darda remarks, "inverts the civil rights narrative of structural Black disadvantage" (140). When Rocky discovers that his stuff has been removed from his locker – now inhabited by the photos and clothes of a Black newcomer – the scene "might ring bells for white workers who fear that despite seniority their jobs may be in jeopardy to the supposed threat of affirmative action" (Gallantz). Jefferson Cowie called *Rocky* a "cinematic version of the *Bakke* case" (*Stayin'* 326), and for Justin Gomer it was with this film that Hollywood movies "decoded the colorblind dog whistles of busing and affirmative action, linking them directly to racialized bodies on-screen" (4). In effect, then, the white ethnicity discourse, and films like *Rocky,* were not only able to forego investments in blackness but also to actively interconnect the authority of countercultural whiteness with more explicitly racist discourses and images, ensuring, in Michael Gallantz' words, that "whites are purified of the racial fantasies which in the film appear as 'realities'" (Gallantz). Webb notes the distortions within this realism when he observes that the film is "notably based around a white protagonist in a period where both boxing and the inner city had become to a large extent African-American" (66).

But Rocky's Black opponent, with his "sharp suits, downtown office space, and an immaculately managed media profile" (Webb 66), is identified with big business and the establishment, creating an alliance of elites and minorities that always looks down on Rocky: from high up the stairs, from the TV screens hanging at bar ceilings, from up in the ring when Rocky makes his appearance in the arena before the big fight. As Jefferson Cowie notes, "the film combines white blue-collar renewal with what borders on revenge against the success and power of black people" (*Stayin'* 329). In fact, Creed is not only at the top of the boxing hierarchy, he occupies a representative position for the nation as such – mobilizing a fantasy of 'taking back control' lurking behind the narrative. When Creed parades as George Washington and Uncle Sam at the occasion of America's 200-year anniversary, Gallantz argues, the "defense of the genuine values of the American Dream falls upon Rocky, who is not only a 'working class hero' but a

Great White Hope, redeeming the spirit of a land of opportunity in the face of Creed's cynical manipulation of its symbols" (Gallantz).

The "Great White Hope," then, emerges not from a position of power but from the space of self-ascribed exclusion. Richard Moss argues that the ethnic revival not only underscored the differences between ethnic and mainstream whites but also set out to "prove, paradoxically, that their marginality made them more worthy Americans than members of a liberal establishment who had rejected true American values" (xv). This, I contend, is not a paradox. Rather, the revival fed on a decades-long investment in rebellion and marginality I have identified with the subject position of countercultural whiteness, which took different forms and shapes over the years while never losing its power of attraction. In fact, these changes in the form and shape of countercultural whiteness can be understood by interrogating the white ethnic revival. In *The Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics*, Michael Novak articulated a critique of the universalism entailed in discourses of selfhood and authenticity. "Good words like 'honesty' and 'authenticity,'" Novak argued,

> become lost in the libidinal jungles of competing desires. To *which* layer of the self ought one to be honest? *Which* feeling is the authentic I? To *which* presentation of the many-mirrored self should I be sincere? The pursuit of the true, the authentic, the sincere, the real *me* is fraudulent from the beginning if there is no such self waiting to be 'liberated.' The pursuit of isolated authenticity is stupid if a human is not a private but a social animal, not primarily an individual but primarily a member of communities. (Novak 169, original emphases)

If authenticity in the 1950s and 1960s became a way to propose selfhood as a heroic project, Novak reframed the concept again: as an individual quality that was predicated on belonging, in this case to a white ethnic group. *Rocky* fed on this new identity politics, teaching "white ethnics that they didn't have to forfeit their Irish, Italian, or Polish heritage, that they didn't have to assimilate into white Anglo-Saxon Protestant America". Furthermore, without "contain[ing] a single race-conscious line of dialogue," it presented to its audience "the stark contrast between a black champion who refuses to train or take his opponent seriously and mocks iconic American symbols, and a blue-collar white challenger who literally puts his blood, sweat, and tears into his one 'shot'" (Gomer 79–80). The film thus mediated countercultural whiteness, making it less universally white and more specifically white. In a context marked by the increasing visibility of subjects that had heretofore been excluded from the national center of attention, countercultural whiteness shed its universalist disguise to adopt a marginal identity itself. The center of attention, in turn, was now populated by new agencies: they inhabited the inner cities, they were the champions, and they were behind the scenes and on the screens of national television.

Showdown #3: The Mad Prophet vs. The Great American Bitch

In *Network,* news anchorman Howard Beale, after being fired from his television channel because of declining ratings, decides to use his last appearance on air to finally tell the truth and drop all masks. This makes him so popular that the network gives him another shot, and his own show. In the film's most famous scene, Beale goes on a rant about the generally "bad state of things," about economic crisis, about "punks going wild in the street," before finally turning directly to his listeners in the studio and in front of the TV sets, agitating them to go to the window and shout: "I'm mad as hell and I'm not going to take it anymore!" Beale's call was answered by the TV audience within the narrative of the film, but also by Americans in the outside world, as the mad-as-hell call became "a common, only partly parodic slogan in the year of the Bicentennial" (Borstelmann 11).

While Beale is mostly depressed and angry in this scene, he literally becomes insane over the course of the film. "[E]ither he's having a breakdown or he's in a state of religious exaltation," Pauline Kael described the film's investment in the romance of madness in her *New Yorker* review ("Hot Air"). Peter Finch, who played Beale, saw the light in the darkness of his character as well: "He doesn't really goes insane, you see: He goes sane" (qtd. in Mann 32).[127] A similar spiritual authority Finch would attribute, in several press appointments after the release of the film, to the person who had created *Network.* Screenwriter Paddy Chayefsky possessed, according to Finch, "something which I called divine madness" ("Network Press Kit").

Chayefsky was a popular screenwriter and playwright at the time, and Itzkoff describes the "classic formulation of the Chayefsky hero" as someone fluent in the affective logic of expressivity, a man who "has been held back for too long and who explodes with emotion when pushed to his breaking point" (12). In the mid-1970s, Chayefsky set out on a mission to finally "say something universal and definitive, to make the lasting statement that the compass of his career had always pointed to" (Itzkoff 3). And the statement lasted. "The screen seems to be plastered with bumper stickers," Kael commented on the film, not yet knowing that the production company had actually produced bumper stickers as a merchandise tool, exploiting the mad-as-hell slogan ("Hot Air" 177). As the *Los Angeles Times* quoted Richard Kahn, vice president of advertising and publicity at MGM: "Originally we printed up to 25,000 of the bumper stickers, [...] [w]e're now up to 80,000. This thing has taken on a dimension beyond the movie" (Grant F17).

---

127 According to *Network* chronicler Dave Itzkoff, Finch had become deeply attached to his character's sense of prophetic urgency, allegedly telling his wife one morning that he felt "like I've had some experience, I can't explain it. [...] Like Daniel and the burning bush" (Itzkoff 108).

Using a familiar anti-psychiatric vocabulary for his description of the film, Richard Cuskelly of the *L.A. Herald Examiner* found *Network* to be a "crazed movie in pursuit of nothing less than our national sanity," directed at "people who have forgotten how potent movies can be" ("'Network'" 1, 6). And indeed, *Network* reminded the public of cinema's potency. On college campuses, leaflets were distributed that announced collective window-shouting-events on a particular hour of the night (Schulman, *Seventies* 51). An article in the *Los Angeles Times* on alternative candidates for the upcoming election cycle was titled "We're Mad As Hell and We're Not Going to Take It Anymore"; and *Time* magazine described failed businessman Anthony Kritisis, who had took a hostage for three days, as someone who "was mad as hell, and he decided not to take it anymore" (qtd. in Itzkoff 195).

In 1979, conservative businessman Howard Jarvis started his anti-tax campaign in California, using the mad-as-hell slogan to agitate citizens in favor of Proposition 13, which would become an important success and set an example for anti-tax activism around the country.[128] As Jarvis wrote in the beginning of his book *I'm Mad As Hell: The Story of the American Tax Revolt* (1980), commenting on the case of a woman who allegedly died from a heart attack while pleading in court about property taxes on her home: "For me, the words 'I'm mad as hell' are more than a national saying, more than the title of this book; they express exactly how I feel and exactly how I felt about the woman who died at the County building, as well as countless other victims of exorbitant taxes" (Jarvis and Pack 1). As Simon Hall argues, Jarvis' tax revolt "dramatized an overweening big government, with briefcase-toting bureaucrats imposing crippling regulations on business and telling ordinary working Americans how to live," thereby confirming "the New Right portrait of a government out of touch" (*American* 115).

As I have argued throughout this book, the sketch for this portrait had long been in the making, and not necessarily by proponents of the New Right. In the *UCLA Daily Bruin,* Adam Parfrey identified as the most important theme of *Network* "that the individual is destroyed through a system dedicated to conformity and standardization" (12). Other reviewers took *Network*'s analysis seriously as well. Stephen Farber objected to criticism against the film's cultural pessimism by falling back on personal experience: "when I see the college students in my apartment building sitting zombie-like in front of the tube at all hours of the day and night, I can understand Chayefsky's fears" ("See It" 93).

128 As historian Bruce Schulman argues, "The early tax revolt possessed no clear conservative pedigree and few close links to the emerging New Right." However, by the late 1970s, a "new generation of tax protesters had emerged," and Howard Jarvis was their leading proponent (*Seventies* 208).

Within the narrative of the film, the Lord of the Zombies is network executive Diane Christensen, a cold-blooded career-woman if there ever was one. Natasha Zaretsky calls Diana a "textbook case" of narcissism in 1970s public discourse: "in her inability to feel empathy and forge authentic emotional ties, in her command over the language of psychology without any true self-knowledge, and in her impoverished personal life" (185). Just like Bree Daniels in *Klute,* Diana encounters an opportunity to engage in real feelings, but this time the narcissist bungles it. Diana becomes romantically involved with Beale's colleague and old friend Max Schumacher, and *Network* parallels the slow mental breakdown of Beale with Diana's ongoing flight from feelings, which climaxes in a fierce indictment of her inhumanity, declaimed with righteous anger by Schumacher:

> There's nothing left in you that I can live with! You're one of Howard's humanoids, and, if I stay with you, I'll be destroyed. [...] You are television incarnate, Diana, indifferent to suffering, insensitive to joy. [...] You are madness, Diana, virulent madness, and what you touch dies with you.

Network satirized television but it also drew the portrait of a lady as a dangerous embodiment of inauthenticity. Diana's complete lack of emotional truth and her pathological superficiality are signs of social breakdown rather than expressions of a radical uniqueness.[129] In *Saturday Review,* Judith Crist characterized Diana as "the woman of self-styled 'masculine temperament,' a driven careerist existing only in her work, unable to feel, only to 'handle,' emotion, her self-absorption total" ("Day" 46). A review in the *Motion Picture Production Digest* described her as "the prototype of many female executives in television who have clawed their way to the top" (Gertner 45). In terms of sexuality, just like Bree Daniels at the beginning of *Klute,* Diane is very much in control, sitting on top and consummating early; Gordon Gow evoked this scene to call her a "female chauvinist sow" ("Review of Network" 31), a deliberate inversion of the figure of the male chauvinist pig, which itself was in the middle of a transformation, traced by historian Julie Willett: "Beginning as an epithet designed to put men in their place, the label soon became a badge of honor – a brand that the resurgent Right embraced" (2).

On top of everything, Diana not only incarnates all the evils feminism has brought into the world, but she also works with Black Liberationists in her hunt for ratings – co-producing a show with a political group called the Ecumenical Lib-

129 "Your character has no vulnerability, and if you try to sneak any in, I'll cut it out," director Sidney Lumet remembered telling actress Faye Dunaway before the shooting (Must 8). The press kit for the film quoted Dunaway describing her role as a "woman who seemingly has everything but truly has nothing. She is a woman without a center" ("Network press kit").

eration Front, led by self-absorbed Black Liberationist Laureen Hobbs, who looks very much like Angela Davis. Just like *Rocky,* then, *Network* replenishes the motif of the establishment with components formerly thought to be excluded from it, investing in what Eric Lott has termed the story of an "imagined conspiracy of white liberals and black 'extremists'" (*Love* 12) Summarizing the film's political imaginary, Kathleen Fitzpatrick observes that while "Diana becomes emblematic of the havoc the women's movement has wreaked on culture; Laureen Hobbs and the Ecumenical Liberation Army represent the twin horrors of racial and economic revolutionaries" (38).

Of course it's all a media satire, but the trick was to exploit existing gender and race discourses to endow it with affective fuel, "hierarchizing not forms of mediation but aspects of human difference" (Fitzpatrick 38). The strategy to "use a woman's drive toward fame or success as the embodiment of the sickness in the society" had already been recognized by Pauline Kael in her *New Yorker* review. "What's implicit is that if she could love she wouldn't need anything more," Kael wrote. "You couldn't get by with this bulling if a man were television incarnate" ("Hot Air" 185).[130] One of the few reviewers critical of *Network* at the time of its release, Kael recorded her very personal affective responses, countering the strategies of *Network* with her own subversive reception. "She puts us on the side of the humanoids," Kael noted about Diana ("Hot Air" 182). And when "Schumacher tells Diana Christensen that she can feel nothing, while he's O.K. because he can feel pleasure and pain and love, you want to kick him" ("Hot Air" 180).

The next spring, Faye Dunaway won an Oscar for her portrayal of Diana, and last year's winner Louise Fletcher, Nurse Ratched of *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest,* handed the award to her.[131] As Deborah Rosenfelt noted about the ceremony, "Twice in a row the Academy Award for best actress has gone to women portraying contemporary versions of a venerable stereotype in our culture: the Great

130 Paddy Chayefsky disagreed. After having been called a "bigot" by a women's liberationist, Chayefsky defended the portrayal of Diana in a discussion with New York students: "The feminist issue was calculatedly avoided throughout. I wrote that part as a man. If you don't like her, she's me. But man or woman in the same part would have acted the same" (Batchelor 9). The producers' recommendations on press covering and publicity, however, reveals that debates about the film's gender politics were quite expected. "If the sparks fly, be sure they are covered editorially!", one document read. Advice included inviting responses from women's liberation groups, or featuring a feminine "second opinion" after the film was first evaluated by a male broadcaster or critic ("Network, publicity and promotion").

131 In her review on *Cuckoo's Nest*, Kael described Nurse Ratched's status as "the company woman incarnate," foreshadowing *Network*'s portrayal of Diana as "television incarnate" ("Bull" 132).

American Bitch" (D7). About the films themselves, Rosenfelt noted a similar simplistic outlook. Both, she wrote, "have in common [...] an appealing, if hardly sophisticated, vision of individual resistance against a despotic system" (D7). There is another irony to this award. After all, this was the same actress that, as glamourous bank robber Bonnie Parker, had linked an emergent countercultural chic to a new film aesthetics later to be named the New Hollywood. Over the course of the following nine years, then, the fashion icon of the radical left had become, in a way, the narcissistic career woman that worked together with armed Black Liberationists for her personal success – embodying all that had gone wrong with the counterculture and feminism.

Howard Beale's call to arms, the ultimate act of heroic resistance against a despotic system, is often used as a shorthand to the 1970s, a symbol for a time when "America" was "going mad" because of a variety of economic and cultural crises.[132] But what is America? In one of Beale's rants, the mad prophet describes it as "a nation of two hundred odd million transistorized, deodorized, whiter-than-white, steel-belted bodies, totally unnecessary as human beings and as replaceable as piston road." *Network,* then, relies on the familiar image of a society that is implicitly white and suffering from an affective deficit, an image that excludes non-white subjectivities from the crisis-laden community, and from the cure to the crisis. If the conformist and consumerist network is embodied in a narcissistic woman, resistance against it is coded masculine. And if it feeds on the cultural authority of minorities while "deodorizing" the white majority, countercultural whiteness might be the only subject position left to defy its power.

Coda: Unholy Alliances and a New Status Quo

While it is tempting to lump together the films that make up this book's three showdowns, with its white male rebels behind and in front of the camera, it would oversimplify matters to find all this book is concerned with neatly merging in these three cases. All these films work on different affective registers, employ distinct generic traditions and speak to different audiences. *Taxi Driver*'s aspiration to place the viewer inside its protagonist's head is certainly closest to New Hollywood's pathos of immediacy; *Rocky* invests in the gritty realism of New Hollywood's urban thrillers but exploits it for a much more straightforward and optimistic narrative; and *Network*'s satirical outlook and almost old-fashioned style of acting make it a rather unexpected case to conclude a study on the New Hollywood.

---

132 See for example the title and beginning of Dominic Sandbrook's *Mad as Hell: The Crisis of the 1970s and the Rise of the Populist Right.*

And still, as I have argued throughout this last section, all three films are implicated in the affective politics of expressivity, and all share an investment in what I have described throughout this book as countercultural whiteness. They mobilize an anti-institutional ethos, they revolve around idiosyncratic subjects facing a powerful establishment; they create their own version of an authentic singular self defying attempts of enculturation, at war with the social forces of a crisis-ridden world that is corrupt, in decay, false, superficial, or conformist. And they all paint the cultural environment they are up against as inhabited by nonwhite and female subjects that in some form or another beleaguer the white male protagonists. This is part of the story of the New Hollywood: its emergence stands at the transition between the two historical conjunctures I laid out above – the historical moment when the affective energy of the counterculture was said to coagulate into a static historical context, while at the same time countercultural whiteness held on to its cultural authority, attracting subjectivities at odds with this new context.

In their own ways, then, all three films speak to what Donald Warren analyzed as the political attitude of the Middle American Radical, who "consistently sees an unholy alliance growing between the liberal and minority establishment at his expense" (3). Big business celebrates and pampers an arrogant Black boxer, a narcissistic career-woman joins forces with a Black Liberationist to produce a television show for the masses, and the confident woman who rejects Travis Bickle passionately endorses an arrogant liberal politician Travis Bickle plans to assassinate. As Sally Robinson argued, the idea of rebellion by white men against forces that deprive them of power presupposes that "the status quo is embodied [...] in the minority," so that the "the very idea of the normative, the majority, is itself under attack and in need of ‚liberation'" (7) Part of the cultural work of these films, then, is the construction of this imagination.

In writing this book, I tentatively tried to complement narratives of backlash and polarization with an alternative historical narrative: a split between different discursive and affective components of an assemblage called the counterculture and other cultural motifs associated with the 1960s. While these cultural motifs – sexuality, protest, music – turned into symbols of 1970s decadence and decay – prostitution, crime, drugs – in the historical background, the countercultural ethos with its romance of resistance against social forces held on to its affective force. These components were reallocated to specific racialized and gendered subjectivities. Countercultural fantasies, including the subject position of countercultural whiteness, shed their ties to the discourses, practices and subjectivities associated with the social movements of the 1960s. This split facilitated the creation of what Lauren Berlant has called the "scandal of ex-privilege," a scandal enacted by

those who "sense that they now have *identities,* when it used to be just other people who had them" (*Queen* 2, original emphasis).

To imagine the "contradictions between human potentiality and oppressive actuality" as the underlying dynamic beneath any political struggle, as New Left activist Gregory Calvert had in 1967 (126), is not a politics in itself. Rather, it describes positions on a cultural battlefield that are vulnerable to a wide array of politics. If in the 1960s countercultural agents could present themselves as a hip community of "social progressives opposed to the conservative squares, who guarded the status quo" (Dinerstein 228), this formula switched its political prefixes with no difficulty over the following years. Stanton Evans' judgment, articulated in 1969, that the "new left has nothing to do with freedom" but is "in fact a totalitarian movement of rather menacing persuasion" (159) has become a widely popular idea ever since, and not only in right-wing circles.

As stated at the beginning of this book, the New Hollywood is less its topic than its point of entry into a context. "The context is the beginning and the end of our researches," writes Lawrence Grossberg, and "[t]he trajectory from the beginning to the end provides the measure of our success at mapping and arriving at a better description/understanding of the context" (*Cultural Studies* 54). This has been my aim: to describe a context anew, which is in this case a particular cultural and historical formation of the 1960s and 1970s that continues to exert political pressure on our present. And, by extension, to make a case for studying a politics of affect by finding ways to articulate affective regimes to the racialized and gendered reproduction of power.

If the New Right, as one of its key players Richard Viguerie argued, did not "start winning majorities in elections until we got down to gut level issues" (qtd. in Cowie, *Stayin'* 227), then to counter this politics means neither to reject nor to celebrate "the gut," but to take it seriously as an object of analysis – as a site of affect production and political interpellation. Through its reliance on an affective politics of expressivity, the New Hollywood was implicated in the production of the gut as a site of truth, lending affective credence to the crisis discourses permeating its historical context – the discourse on the lost self as well as on urban crime, the anxiety around cultural narcissism as well as around the emotionally wounded American male.

In his 1992 study on postmodern culture and conservatism, Lawrence Grossberg defined the Foucauldian concept of "truth effects" as describing "the inclusion and exclusion of discursive statements from those sites at which they might have particular effects" (*We Gotta* 101). In this sense, I have tried to displace the notion of affective truth to reach the truth-affects produced by the New Hollywood, helped to come in into being by a combination of the specific discursive-affective material these films were built of and the self-descriptions of the New Hollywood as a

new affective regime of cinema. The much-noted political ambiguity of the New Hollywood period, then, rests not in its indecisiveness, in its incoherence or its pathos of failure, but in its productive construction of countercultural fantasies endlessly open for reinterpretations. This, I propose, might be a way of looking at political shifts over the last decade that differs from narratives of polarization, backlash or appropriation.

Stuart Hall described this perspective on political change in his 1979 essay "The Great Moving Right Show":

> Finally [...] there is the evidence of just how ideological transformations and political restructuring of this order is actually accomplished. It works on the ground of already constituted social practices and lived ideologies. It wins space there by constantly drawing on these elements which have secured over time a traditional resonance and left their traces in popular inventories. At the same time, it changes the field of struggle by changing the place, the position, the relative weight, of the condensations within any one discourse and constructing them according to an alternative logic. (185–186)

Instead of identifying specific elements that were appropriated or lashed back against, it is this work of cultural translation I sought to carve out. If politics today is about "changing the affective landscape and articulating it politically" (Grossberg, "Pessimism" 878), then looking to the past means to complement the question of what prevented the New Left from triumphing – in *Easy Rider*'s terms: why did 'we' "blow it" – with an interrogation of how cultural ideas were mediated through affective scenarios, whereto and how they travelled, if only to be able to construct political vehicles less prone to enter dangerous places.

"The politics of any surge depends on where it might go. What happens. How it plays itself out and in whose hands" (Stewart 15). If we understand countercultural whiteness and the affective politics of expressivity as such surges, they have come a long way – played out in many different games, molded by many different hands. Expressing a desire not to be governed, they fed on an existing reservoir of beliefs and affects, learned to fly as they were falling, holding on to control through affective performances of losing it.

Films

Across 110th Street. Directed by Barry Shear, United Artists, 1972.
Bonnie and Clyde. Directed by Arthur Penn, Warner Bros./Seven Arts, 1967.
Carnal Knowledge. Directed by Mike Nichols, AVCO Embassy Pictures, 1971.
Deliverance. Directed by John Boorman, Warner Bros., 1972.
Easy Rider. Directed by Dennis Hopper, Columbia, 1969.
Five Easy Pieces. Directed by Bob Rafelson, Columbia, 1970.
Klute. Directed by Alan J. Pakula, Warner Bros., 1971.
Mean Streets. Directed by Martin Scorsese, Warner Bros., 1973.
Mikey and Nicky. Directed by May Elaine, Paramount, 1976.
Network. Directed by Sidney Lumet, MGM, 1976.
One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest. Directed by Milos Forman, United Artists, 1975.
Rocky. Directed by John G. Avildsen, United Artists, 1976.
Taxi Driver. Directed by Martin Scorsese, Columbia, 1976.
The Exorcist. Directed by William Friedkin, Warner Bros., 1973.
The French Connection. Directed by William Friedkin, Twentieth Century Fox, 1971.
The Getaway. Directed by Sam Peckinpah, National General Pictures, 1972.
The Rain People. Directed by Francis Ford Coppola, Warner Bros./Seven Arts, 1969.
Wanda. Directed by Barbara Loden, Bardene International, 1970.

Works Cited

"Across 110th Street Review." *Variety*, Dec. 1972, p. 6.

Adams, Marjory. "Jack Nicholson––Talking and Talked About." *Easy Rider*, edited by Nancy Hardin and Marilyn Schlossberg, Signet, 1970, pp. 19 – 21.

Address by Martin Luther King Jr. TWU's 11th Constitutional Convention, 1961. 5 Oct. 1961, https://www.twu.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/MLK_ConventionSpeech.pdf.

Ahmed, Sara. "Declarations of Whiteness: The Non-Performativity of Anti-Racism." *Borderlands*, vol. 3, no. 2, 2004, http://www.borderlands.net.au/vol3no2_2004/ahmed_declarations.htm.

Ahmed, Sara. *The Cultural Politics of Emotion.* Edinburgh University Press, 2004.

Alpert, Hollis. "Crime Wave." *Saturday Review*, 5 Aug. 1967, p. 40.

Alpert, Hollis. "The Case of Crowther." *Saturday Review*, 23 Sept. 1967, p. 111.

Alpert, Hollis. "The Homeless Hero." *Saturday Review*, 26 Sept. 1970, pp. 40 – 41.

Anatomy of a Chase. Directed by Michael Arick, French Connection: Brennpunkt Brooklyn, Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment, 2009, Blu-Ray.

Andersen, Kurt. *Fantasyland: How America Went Haywire.* Random House, 2017.

Anthias, Floya. "Thinking through the Lens of Translocational Positionality: An Intersectionality Frame for Understanding Identity and Belonging." *Translocations: Migration and Social Change*, vol. 4, Jan. 2008, pp. 5 – 20.

Arnold, Gary. "'Across 110th Street': Cinematic Dreg." *Washington Post*, Dec. 1972, p. 4.

Arnold, Gary. "'Five Easy Pieces': Film." *Washington Post*, 31 Oct. 1970, pp. 1, 6.

Aronowitz, Nona Willis. "The 'Men's Liberation' Movement Time Forgot." *Vice*, 2019. https://www.vice.com/en_uk/article/eve7zk/the-mens-liberation-movement-time-forgot. Last accessed: 16 July 2024.

Auslander, Philip. *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture.* Routledge, 2008.

Baldwin, James. *Notes of a Native Son.* Corgi, 1965.

Baldwin, James. "The Black Boy Looks at the White Boy: Norman Mailer by James Baldwin." *Esquire*, 1 May 1961, pp. 102 – 06.

Baldwin, James. *The Fire Next Time.* Vintage, 1992.

Baldwin, James, and Raoul Peck. *I Am Not Your Negro.* Penguin Classics, 2017.

Barber, David. *A Hard Rain Fell: SDS and Why It Failed.* University Press of Mississippi, 2010.

Barnes, Hazel E. *An Existentialist Ethics.* Alfred E. Knopf, 1967.

Barrett, Lisa Feldman. *How Emotions Are Made: The Secret Life of the Brain.* Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017.

Barrett, William. *Irrational Man: A Study in Existential Philosophy.* Heinemann, 1961.

Batchelor, Ruth. "'Network' Nucleus Vocal in New York." *Los Angeles Free Press*, 19 Nov. 1976, pp. 9, 12.

Batdorff, Emersen. "Review of Klutegree." *The Plain Dealer*, 24 June 1971, p. 2.

Baumann, Shyon. *Hollywood Highbrow: From Entertainment to Art.* Princeton University Press, 2007.

Baumbach, Jonathan. "Medium and Message." *Partisan Review*, vol. 40, no. 3, Summer 1973, pp. 445 – 454.

"Bay Area Regional Conference." *Brother*, vol. 1, no. 1, Apr. 1971, p. 1.

Berg, Ulla D., and Ana Y. Ramos-Zayas. "Racializing Affect: A Theoretical Proposition." *Current Anthropology*, vol. 56, no. 5, 2015, pp. 654 – 77.

Berlant, Lauren. *Cruel Optimism.* Duke University Press, 2011.

Berlant, Lauren. *The Queen of America Goes to Washington City: Essays on Sex and Citizenship.* Duke University Press, 1997.

Berliner, Todd. *Hollywood Incoherent: Narration in Seventies Cinema.* University of Texas Press, 2010.

Berman, Marshall. "Must Man First Go Mad in Order to Be Sane?" *The New York Times Book Review*, 22 Feb. 1970.

Berman, William C. *America's Right Turn: From Nixon to Bush.* Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994.

Binkley, Sam. *Getting Loose: Lifestyle Consumption in the 1970s.* Duke University Press, 2007.

Biskind, Peter. *Easy Riders, Raging Bulls: How the Sex "N" Drugs "N" Rock "N" Roll Generation Saved Hollywood.* Bloomsbury, 1998.

Blevins, Winfred. "Cruising with 'Easy Rider.'" *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*, 10 Aug. 1969, pp. 1, 4.

Blevins, Winfred. "'Knowledge': Brilliantly Executed." *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*, 2 July 1971, p. 1.

Blevins, Winfred. "Wanda's Story – Sensitive, Tender." *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*, 3 Apr. 1971, p. 7.

Bogle, Donald. *Toms, Coons, Mulattoes, Mammies, and Bucks: An Interpretive History of Blacks in American Films.* Updated and Expanded 5th Edition, Continuum, 2016.

Boltanski, Luc, and Eve Chiapello. *The New Spirit of Capitalism.* Verso, 2007.

Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo. *Racism without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in the United States.* Second Edition, Rowman & Littlefield, 2006.

Borstelmann, Thomas. *The 1970s: A New Global History from Civil Rights to Economic Inequality.* Princeton University Press, 2011.

Boyer, Jay. *Bob Rafelson: Hollywood Maverick.* Twayne, 1996.

Boyum, Joy Gould. "On Film: Alienation in a Garish City." *Wall Street Journal*, 9 Feb. 1976, p. 11.

Brackman, Jacob. "Films." *Esquire*, Sept. 1969, pp. 12, 16, 18.

Brackman, Jacob. "Films." *Esquire*, Nov. 1970, pp. 68, 70, 76.

Brackman, Jacob. "Films." *Esquire*, Oct. 1971, pp. 45 – 46.

Bramesco, Charles. "William Friedkin: 'You Don't Know a Damn Thing, and Neither Do I.'" *The Guardian*, 24 Apr. 2018, https://www.theguardian.com/film/2018/apr/24/william-friedkin-interview-exorcist-director-you-dont-know-a-damn-thing-and-neither-do-i. Last Accessed: 16 July 2024.

Brennan, Mary C. *Turning Right in the Sixties: The Conservative Capture of the GOP.* University of North Carolina Press, 1995.

Brown, Claude. "Who's Got Soul?" *Esquire*, 1 Apr. 1968, pp. 88 – 89, 160.

Bucher, Glenn R., editor. *Straight/White/Male.* Fortress Press, 1976.

Buckland, Warren. "The Film Editors Who Invented the Hollywood Renaissance: Ralph Rosenblum, Sam O'Steen and Dede Allen's Bonnie and Clyde (1967)." *The Hollywood Renaissance: Revisiting American Cinema's Most Celebrated Era*, edited by Yannis Tzioumakis and Peter Krämer, Bloomsbury, 2018, pp. 19 – 34.

Buckley, Jr., William F., editor. *Did You Ever See a Dream Walking? American Conservative Thought in the Twentieth Century.* The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1970.

Bugental, J. F. T. *The Search for Authenticity: An Existential-Analytic Approach to Psychotherapy.* Enlarged Edition, Irvington, 1981.

Burke, Tom. "Will Easy Do It for Dennis Hopper?" *Easy Rider*, edited by Nancy Hardin and Marilyn Schlossberg, Signet, 1970, pp. 12 – 18.

Burns, Margie. "Easy Rider and Deliverance: The Death of the Sixties." *University of Hartford Studies in Literature*, vol. 22, no. 2 – 3, 1990, pp. 44 – 58.

Byrne, Bridget. "Klute: Superb Fonda Picture." *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*, 24 June 1971.

Byron, Stuart. "The Industry: Second Annual Grosses Gloss." *Film Comment*, vol. 13, no. 2, Apr. 1977, pp. 35 – 37.

Cacho, Lisa Marie. *Social Death: Racialized Rightlessness and the Criminalization of the Unprotected.* New York University Press, 2012.

Cagin, Seth, and Philip Dray. *Hollywood Films of the Seventies: Sex, Drugs, Violence, Rock "n" Roll & Politics.* Harper & Row, 1984.

Cahalan, Susannah. *The Great Pretender: The Undercover Mission That Changed Our Understanding of Madness.* Grand Central, 2019.

Calvert, Gregory. "In White America: Radical Consciousness and Social Change." *"Takin' It to the Streets": A Sixties Reader*, edited by Alexander Bloom and Wini Breines, Oxford University Press, 1995, pp. 126 – 31.

Campbell, Gregg M. "Chopin and Tammy Wynette: Heroines and Archetypes in 'Five Easy Pieces.'" *Literature/Film Quarterly*, vol. 2, no. 3, Summer 1974, pp. 275 – 83.

Canby, Vincent. "Blatty's 'The Exorcist' Comes to the Screen." *New York Times*, 27 Dec. 1973, p. 46.

Canby, Vincent. "I Was So Sorry To See It End." *New York Times*, 4 July 1971, pp. 1, 18.

Canby, Vincent. "New York's Woes Are Good Box Office." *New York Times*, 10 Nov. 1974, pp. 1, 19.

Canby, Vincent. "Nicholson, the Free Spirit of 'Cuckoo.'" *New York Times*, 20 Nov. 1975, p. 51.

Canby, Vincent. "Thief and Wife in 'Getaway.'" *New York Times*, 20 Dec. 1972, p. 53.

Canby, Vincent. "Wanda's a Wow, So's THX." *New York Times*, 21 Mar. 1971, pp. 1, 11.

Carmichael, Stokely. "Black Power." *The Dialectics of Liberation*, edited by David Cooper, Verso, 2015, pp. 150 – 74.

"Carnal Knowledge Press Book". Core Collection, Margaret Herrick Library.

Carroll, Hamilton. *Affirmative Reaction: New Formations of White Masculinity.* Duke University Press, 2011.

Carter, Dan T. *The Politics of Rage: George Wallace, the Origins of the New Conservatism, and the Transformation of American Politics.* Simon & Schuster, 1995.

Casper, Drew. *Hollywood Film 1963 – 1976: Years of Revolution and Reaction.* Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.

Champlin, Charles. "'Cuckoo's Nest' Revisited." *Los Angeles Times*, 21 Nov. 1975, p. 1.

Champlin, Charles. "High Adventure in 'Connection.'" *Los Angeles Times*, 3 Nov. 1971, pp. 1, 13.

Champlin, Charles. "Jane Fonda in Sex, Suspense Thriller." *Los Angeles Times*, 24 June 1971, pp. 1, 21.

Champlin, Charles. "Low-Cost, High-Importance Bike Film." *Los Angeles Times*, 10 Aug. 1969, pp. 1, 16, 21.

Champlin, Charles. "Nicholson Hatches Gold Ego in 'Nest.'" *Los Angeles Times*, 16 Nov. 1975, pp. 1, 28.

Champlin, Charles. "Time Bomb Ticks Toward Bloodbath in 'Taxi Driver.'" *Los Angeles Times*, 22 Feb. 1976, p. 28.

Champlin, Charles. "Ultimate Power Struggle in 'Exorcist.'" *Los Angeles Times*, 26 Dec. 1973, pp. 1, 24.

Changas, Estelle. "Review of Wanda." *Film Comment*, vol. 25, no. 1, Autumn 1971, pp. 49 – 51.

Chase, Chris. "Everyone's Reading It, Billy's Filming It." *New York Times*, 27 Aug. 1972, pp. 1, 9.

Cheever, Abigail. *Real Phonies: Cultures of Authenticity in Post-World War II America.* University of Georgia Press, 2010.

Citron, Rodger D. "Charles Reich's Journey From the Yale Law Journal to the New York Times Best-Seller List: The Personal History of The Greening of America." *New York Law School Review*, vol. 52, no. 3, Aug. 2007, pp. 387 – 416.

Clein, Harry. "Portrait of the Young Director as Instant Auteur." *Coast Agent*, 1971, pp. 14 – 15.

Clover, Carol J. *Men, Women, and Chainsaws: Gender in the Modern Horror Film.* Princeton Classics Edition, Princeton University Press, 2015.

Cocks, Jay. "Beat the Devil." *Time*, 14 Jan. 1974.

Cocks, Jay. "Chasing 'Frog 1.'" *Time*, 1 Nov. 1971, p. 54.
Cocks, Jay. "Cinema: Cold Flash." *Time*, 8 Jan. 1973, p. 33.
Cocks, Jay. "Unfocused Wandering." *Time*, 22 Mar. 1971.
Cohen, Rich. "The Rise and Fall of Rolling Stone." *The Atlantic*, Dec. 2017, https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/12/rolling-stone-jann-wenner/544107/. Last Accessed: 16 July 2024.
Cook, Bruce. "Review of Klute." *The Nation*, no date. Core Collection, Margaret Herrick Library.
Corkin, Stanley. *Starring New York: Filming the Grime and the Glamour of the Long 1970s.* Oxford University Press, 2011.
Corliss, Richard. "Movies in Brief." *National Review*, 30 Jan. 1968, p. 96.
Cotkin, George. *Existential America.* Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005.
Cowie, Jefferson. "Nixon's Class Struggle: Romancing the New Right Worker, 1969–1973." *Labor History*, vol. 43, no. 3, 2002, pp. 257–83.
Cowie, Jefferson. *Stayin' Alive: The 1970s and the Last Days of the Working Class.* The New Press, 2010.
Creed, Barbara. *The Monstrous-Feminine: Film, Feminism, Psychoanalysis.* Routledge, 1993.
Crist, Judith. "Mean Cruising." *Saturday Review*, 6 Mar. 1976, pp. 42–43.
Crist, Judith. "Nobody Loves a Blob." *New York*, 1 Mar. 1971, pp. 56–57.
Crist, Judith. "The Day TV Went Mad." *Saturday Review*, 13 Nov. 1976, pp. 44–46.
Crowther, Bosley. "'Bonnie and Clyde' Arrives; Careers of Murderers Pictured as Farce." *New York Times*, 14 Aug. 1967, p. 36.
Crowther, Bosley. "Run, Bonnie and Clyde." *New York Times*, 3 Sept. 1967, pp. 1, 10.
Cruz, Cynthia. *The Melancholia of Class: A Manifesto for the Working Class.* Repeater, 2021.
Cull, Nick. "The Exorcist." *History Today*, vol. 50, no. 5, May 2000, pp. 46–51.
Cuordileone, K. A. *Manhood and American Political Culture in the Cold War.* Routledge, 2005.
Cushman, Philip. *Constructing the Self, Constructing America: A Cultural History of Psychotherapy.* Da Capo Press, 1995.
Cuskelly, Richard. "'Network' Crackles." *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*, 14 Nov. 1976, pp. 1, 6.
Cuskelly, Richard. "'Taxi Driver'––A Life on the Edge." *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*, 22 Feb. 1976, pp. 1, 5.
D'Amico, Debby. "To My White Working-Class Sisters." *"Takin' It to the Streets": A Sixties Reader*, edited by Alexander Bloom and Wini Breines, Oxford University Press, 1995, pp. 520–25.
Darda, Joseph. *How White Men Won the Culture Wars: A History of Veteran America.* University of California Press, 2021.
Dawson, Nick, editor. *Dennis Hopper: Interviews.* University Press of Mississippi, 2012.
Deleuze, Gilles. *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image.* Translated by Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam, University of Minnesota Press, 1986.
Deleuze, Gilles, and Félix Guattari. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia.* Translated by Brian Massumi, University of Minnesota Press, 1987.
Deleuze, Gilles, and Félix Guattari. *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia.* Translated by Robert Hurley et al., Viking, 1977.
Didion, Joan. *The White Album.* Simon and Schuster, 1979.
Dinerstein, Joel. *The Origins of Cool in Postwar America.* University of Chicago Press, 2017.
Drake, Brian Allen. *Loving Nature, Fearing the State: Environmentalism and Antigovernment Politics Before Reagan.* University of Washington Press, 2013.
Drexler, Rosalyn. "Do Men Really Hate Women?" *New York Times*, 5 Sept. 1971, pp. 1, 7.
Dussere, Erik. *America Is Elsewhere: The Noir Tradition in the Age of Consumer Culture.* Oxford University Press, 2013.

"Easy Rider Production Notes." Core Collection, Margaret Herrick Library.
Ebert, Roger. "Easy Rider." *Chicago Sun Times*, 28 Sept. 1969, https://www.rogerebert.com/reviews/easy-rider-1969. Last Accessed: 16 July 2024.
Ebert, Roger. "Interview with Warren Beatty." *Chicago Sun-Times*, 24 Sept. 1967, pp. 16 – 17.
Ebert, Roger. *The Great Movies II.* Broadway Books, 2005.
Edsall, Thomas Byrne, and Mary D. Edsall. *Chain Reaction: The Impact of Race, Rights, and Taxes on American Politics.* Norton, 1991.
Ehrenreich, Barbara. *Fear of Falling: The Inner Life of the Middle Class.* Harper Perennial, 1989.
Ehrenreich, Barbara. *The Hearts of Men: American Dreams and the Flight from Commitment.* Anchor, 1983.
Ehrenreich, John, and Barbara Ehrenreich. "The Professional-Managerial Class." *Between Labor and Capital*, edited by Pat Walker, South End Press, 1979.
Ellison, Ralph. "Some Questions and Some Answers." *The Collected Essays of Ralph Ellison*, edited by John F. Callahan, Revised and Updated, The Modern Library, 2003, pp. 291 – 301.
Elsaesser, Thomas. "American Auteur Cinema: The Last – or First – Great Picture Show." *The Last Great American Picture Show: New Hollywood Cinema in the 1970s*, edited by Alexander Horwath et al., Amsterdam University Press, 2004, pp. 37 – 69.
Elsaesser, Thomas. "The Pathos of Failure: American Films in the 1970s – Notes on the Unmotivated Hero (1975)." *The Last Great American Picture Show: New Hollywood Cinema in the 1970s*, edited by Alexander Horwath et al., Amsterdam University Press, 2004, pp. 279 – 92.
Enelow, Shonni. *Method Acting and Its Discontents: On American Psycho-Drama.* Northwestern University Press, 2015.
Epps, Garrett. "Does Popeye Doyle Teach Us How to Be a Fascist?" *New York Times*, May 1972, p. 15.
Evans, M. Stanton. *The Liberal Establishment.* The Devin-Adair Company, 1965.
Evans, Stanton. "The New Totalitarians." *Intercollegiate Review*, vol. 5, no. 3, Spring 1969, pp. 159 – 165.
Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skin, White Masks.* Grove Press, 2008.
Farber, Stephen. "A Cops and Crooks Movie That Doesn't Cop Out." *New York Times*, 21 Nov. 1971, pp. 15, 17.
Farber, Stephen. "A Film That Forgets Sex Can Be Fun." *New York Times*, 1 Aug. 1971, p. 9.
Farber, Stephen. "Easy Pieces." *Sight and Sound*, vol. 40, no. 3, Summer 1971, pp. 128 – 32.
Farber, Stephen. "End of the Road?" *Film Quarterly*, vol. 23, no. 2, Winter/1970 1969, pp. 3 – 16.
Farber, Stephen. "See It Now – It Won't Be on ABC." *New West*, 8 Nov. 1976, pp. 93 – 95.
Farland, Maria. "'Total System, Total Solution, Total Apocalypse': Sex Oppression, Systems of Property, and 1970s Women's Liberation Fiction." *The Yale Journal of Criticism*, vol. 18, no. 2, 2005, pp. 381 – 407.
Farrell, Barry. "You've Come A Long Way, Buddy: The Repentant Chauvinists of Men's Lib Join the Battle Against Sexism." *Life*, 27 Aug. 1971, pp. 52 – 59.
Farrell, Warren. *The Liberated Man: Beyond Masculinity: Freeing Men and Their Relationships with Women.* Random House, 1974.
Felski, Rita. *Doing Time: Feminist Theory and Postmodern Culture.* New York University Press, 2000.
Felski, Rita. *The Limits of Critique.* University of Chicago Press, 2015.
"Filming 'The Exorcist'." *Der Exorzist: Extended Director's Cut & Original Kinofassung*, Warner Bros Entertainment Inc. 2010, Blu-Ray.
Fisher, Craig. "Review of Wanda." *Hollywood Reporter*, 31 Mar. 1971.
Fitzpatrick, Kathleen. "Network: The Other Cold War." *Film & History*, vol. 31, no. 2, 2001, pp. 33 – 39.

Formisano, Ronald. *Boston Against Busing: Race, Class, and Ethnicity in the 1960s and 1970s.* University of North Carolina Press, 1991.

Foucault, Michel. *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason.* Routledge, 1967.

Frank, Thomas. *The Conquest of Cool: Business Culture, Counterculture, and the Rise of Hip Consumerism.* University of Chicago Press, 1998.

Friedan, Betty. *The Feminine Mystique.* W. W. Norton, 2001.

Friedkin, William. Audio Commentary. *Der Exorzist: Extended Director's Cut & Original Kinofassung*, Warner Bros Entertainment Inc. 2010, Blu-Ray.

Fromm, Erich. *The Sane Society.* Rinehart, 1955.

Gallantz, Michael. "Critical Dialogue: Rocky's Racism." *Jump Cut*, no. 18, Aug. 1978, pp. 33 – 34.

Gates, Racquel J. *Double Negative: The Black Image and Popular Culture.* Duke University Press, 2018.

Gertner, Richard. "Chayefsky's 'Network': Smash Movie With Something to Say." *Motion Picture Production Digest*, 10 Nov. 1976, pp. 45 – 46.

Gilbert, James. *Men in the Middle: Searching for Masculinity in the 1950s.* University of Chicago Press, 2005.

Gilliatt, Penelope. "Study of an American Black Sheep." *The New Yorker*, 19 Sept. 1970, pp. 101 – 103.

Gilliatt, Penelope. "The Party." *The New Yorker*, 19 Aug. 1967, pp. 77 – 79.

Gilroy, Paul. "Living Memory: A Meeting with Toni Morrison." *Small Acts: Thoughts on the Politics of Black Cultures*, Serpent's Tail, 1993, pp. 175 – 82.

Gilroy, Paul. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness.* Verso Books, 1993.

Gleason, Philip. "Identifying Identity: A Semantic History." *The Journal of American History*, vol. 69, no. 4, 1983, pp. 910 – 31.

Gleiberman, Owen. "'Bonnie and Clyde' at 50: A Revolutionary Film That Now Looks Like the Last Work of Hollywood Classicism." *Variety*, 13 Aug. 2017, https://variety.com/2017/film/columns/bonnie-and-clyde-warren-beatty-faye-dunaway-50-year-anniversary-1202525866/. Last Accessed: 16 July 2024.

Godfrey, Nicholas. *The Limits of Auteurism: Case Studies in the Critically Constructed New Hollywood.* Rutgers University Press, 2018.

Goffman, Erving. *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life.* Doubleday, 1959.

Goldberg, Herb. *The Hazards of Being Male: Surviving the Myth of Masculine Privilege.* Nash, 1975.

Goldwater, Barry. *Address Accepting the Presidential Nomination at the Republican National Convention in San Francisco.* 16 July 1964, https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/216657. Last Accessed: 16 July 2024.

Gomer, Justin. *White Balance: How Hollywood Shaped Colorblind Ideology and Undermined Civil Rights.* Illustrated Edition, The University of North Carolina Press, 2020.

Gordon, Lewis R. "Existential Dynamics of Theorizing Black Invisibility." *Existence in Black: An Anthology of Black Existential Philosophy*, edited by Lewis R. Gordon, Routledge, 1997, pp. 69 – 79.

Gormley, Paul. *The New Brutality Film: Race and Affect in Contemporary Hollywood Cinema.* Intellect, 2005.

Gottschalk, Jr., Earl C. "Goodbye, Hollywood: More Movie Makers Do Filming in Sticks for Realism, Savings." *Wall Street Journal*, 25 July 1972, pp. 1, 25.

Gow, Gordon. "Review of Carnal Knowledge." *Films and Filming*, Dec. 1971, p. 8.

Gow, Gordon. "Review of Network." *Films and Filming*, Jan. 1977, p. 31.

Gow, Gordon. "Review of Wanda." *Films and Filming*, no date. Core Collection, Margaret Herrick Library

Graebner, William. *Patty's Got a Gun: Patricia Hearst in 1970s America.* University of Chicago Press, 2008.

Grant, Lee. "'Mad As Hell' in Beverly Hills." *Los Angeles Times*, 17 Nov. 1976, p. 17.

Greenfield, Concetta. "Five Easy Pieces and The Greening of America." *Journal of Popular Culture*, vol. 6, no. 2, Fall 1972, pp. 279 – 91.

Greenson, Ralph R. "A Psychoanalyst's Indictment of 'The Exorcist.'" *Saturday Review/World*, 15 June 1974, pp. 41 – 43.

Greenspun, Roger. "Films: Day of Wrath." *Penthouse*, May 1976, pp. 48 – 49.

Greenspun, Roger. "'Klute': Thriller With Jane Fonda and Donald Sutherland." *New York Times*, 24 June 1971, p. 35.

Greenspun, Roger. "Racial Violence Is the Theme of 'Across 110th Street.'" *New York Times*, Dec. 1972, p. 53.

Greenspun, Roger. "Rafelson's 'Five Easy Pieces' Bows." *New York Times*, 12 Sept. 1970, p. 26.

Greenspun, Roger. "Screen: Young Wife Fulfills Herself as a Robber." *New York Times*, 1 Mar. 1971, p. 22.

Greif, Mark. *The Age of the Crisis of Man: Thought and Fiction in America, 1933 – 1973.* Princeton University Press, 2015.

Grogan, Jessica. *Encountering America: Humanistic Psychology, Sixties Culture, and the Shaping of the Modern Self.* Harper Perennial, 2013.

Grossberg, Lawrence. *Cultural Studies in the Future Tense.* Duke University Press, 2010.

Grossberg, Lawrence. "Pessimism of the Will, Optimism of the Intellect: Endings and Beginnings." *Cultural Studies*, vol. 32, no. 6, 2018, pp. 855 – 88.

Grossberg, Lawrence. *Under the Cover of Chaos: Trump and the Battle for the American Right.* Pluto Press, 2018.

Grossberg, Lawrence. *We All Want to Change the World: The Paradox of the U.S. Left. A Polemic.* Lawrence & Wishart, 2015.

Grossberg, Lawrence. *We Gotta Get Out of This Place: Popular Conservatism and Postmodern Culture.* Routledge, 1992.

Hale, Grace Elizabeth. *A Nation of Outsiders: How the White Middle Class Fell in Love With Rebellion in Postwar America.* Oxford University Press, 2011.

Hale, Grace Elizabeth. "The Romance of Rebellion." *The Port Huron Statement: Sources and Legacies of the New Left's Founding Manifestos*, edited by Richard Flacks and Nelson Lichtenstein, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015, pp. 65 – 80.

Hall, Simon. *American Patriotism, American Protest: Social Movements Since the Sixties.* University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011.

Hall, Simon. "Protest Movements in the 1970s: The Long 1960s." *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 43, no. 4, 2008, pp. 655 – 72.

Hall, Stuart. "The Great Moving Right Show (1979)." *Stuart Hall, Selected Political Writings: The Great Moving Right Show and Other Essays*, edited by Sally Davison et al., Lawrence & Wishart, 2017, pp. 172 – 86.

Halliwell, Martin. *Therapeutic Revolutions: Medicine, Psychiatry, and American Culture, 1945 – 1970.* Rutgers University Press, 2013.

Hamill, Pete. "The Revolt of the White Lower-Middle Class." *The White Majority: Between Poverty and Affluence*, edited by Louise Kapp Howe, Vintage, 1970, pp. 10 – 22.

Hamilton, Jack. *Just Around Midnight: Rock and Roll and the Racial Imagination.* Harvard University Press, 2016.

Hamowy, Ronald. "Left and Right Meet." *The New Republic*, 12 Mar. 1966, pp. 14–16.
Hansberry, Lorraine. "The Negro Writer and His Roots: Toward a New Romanticism." *The Black Scholar*, vol. 12, no. 2, Apr. 1981, pp. 2–12.
Harris, Mark. *Pictures at a Revolution: Five Movies and the Birth of the New Hollywood.* Penguin, 2008.
Hartman, Andrew. *A War for the Soul of America: A History of the Culture Wars.* University of Chicago Press, 2015.
Haskell, Molly. *From Reverence to Rape: The Treatment of Women in the Movies.* Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1974.
Haskell, Molly. "The Mad Housewives of the Neo-Woman's Film: The Age of Ambivalence Revisited." *When the Movies Mattered: The New Hollywood Revisited*, edited by Jonathan Kirshner and Jon Lewis, Cornell University Press, 2019, pp. 18–35.
Hayden, Tom. "The Politics of 'The Movement.'" *Dissent*, vol. 13, Feb. 1966, pp. 75–87.
Heath, Joseph, and Andrew Potter. *Nation of Rebels: Why Counterculture Became Consumer Culture.* HarperBusiness, 2004.
Hentoff, Nat. "Bob Dylan, the Wanderer." *The New Yorker*, 24 Oct. 1964, https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1964/10/24/the-crackin-shakin-breakin-sounds. Last Accessed: 16 July 2024.
Hill, Lee. *Easy Rider.* British Film Institute, 1996.
Hinton, Elizabeth. *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Making of Mass Incarceration in America.* Harvard University Press, 2016.
Hodgdon, Tim. *Manhood in the Age of Aquarius: Masculinity in Two Countercultural Communities, 1965–1983.* Columbia University Press, 2008.
Hoelscher, Jean. "Review of 'The Enforcer.'" *Hollywood Reporter*, Dec. 1976, pp. 3, 21.
Hoffman, Abbie. *Revolution for the Hell of It.* The Dial Press, 1968.
hooks, bell. *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center.* South End Press, 1984.
Hopper, Dennis. "Into the Issue of the Good Old Time Movie Versus the Good Old Time." *Easy Rider*, edited by Nancy Hardin and Marilyn Schlossberg, Signet Books, 1969, pp. 7–11.
Horowitz, Daniel. *Betty Friedan and the Making of the Feminine Mystique: The American Left, the Cold War and Modern Feminism.* Revised, University of Massachusetts Press, 2000.
Horowitz, Daniel. *The Anxieties of Affluence: Critiques of American Consumer Culture, 1939–1979.* University of Massachusetts Press, 2004.
Horwath, Alexander. "A Walking Contradiction (Partly Truth and Partly Fiction)." *The Last Great American Picture Show: New Hollywood Cinema in the 1970s*, edited by Alexander Horwath et al., Amsterdam University Press, 2004, pp. 83–106.
Horwath, Alexander. "The Impure Cinema: New Hollywood 1967–1976." *The Last Great American Picture Show: New Hollywood Cinema in the 1970s*, edited by Alexander Horwath et al., Amsterdam University Press, 2004, pp. 9–18.
Horwath, Alexander, Thomas Elsaesser, and Noel King, editors. *The Last Great American Picture Show: New Hollywood Cinema in the 1970s.* Amsterdam University Press, 2004.
Huber, Patrick. "A Short History of Redneck: The Fashioning of a Southern White Masculine Identity." *Southern Cultures*, vol. 1, no. 2, Dec. 1995, pp. 145–166.
Hughes, Richard L. "Burning Birth Certificates and Atomic Tupperware Parties: Creating the Antiabortion Movement in the Shadow of the Vietnam War." *Historian*, vol. 68, no. 3, 2006, pp. 541–558.
Illouz, Eva. *Cold Intimacies: The Making of Emotional Capitalism.* Polity, 2007.
Itzkoff, Dave. *Mad As Hell: The Making of Network and the Fateful Vision of the Angriest Man in Movies.* Times Books, 2014.

Jackson, Lauren Michele. *White Negroes: When Cornrows Were in Vogue... and Other Thoughts on Cultural Appropriation.* Beacon Press, 2019.

Jacobson, Matthew Frye. *Roots Too: White Ethnic Revival in Post-Civil Rights America.* Harvard University Press, 2009.

James, Jeremy. "Unpublished review sent to Sam Peckinpah." Folder 37.f-399, Sam Peckinpah Papers, Special Collections, Margaret Herrick Library.

Jameson, Fredric. "Totality as Conspiracy." *The Geopolitical Aesthetic: Cinema and Space in the World System*, Indiana University Press, 1995, pp. 9 – 85.

Janov, Arthur. *The Primal Revolution: Toward a Real World.* Simon & Schuster, 1972.

Jarvis, Howard, and Robert Pack. *I'm Mad as Hell: The Story of the Great American Tax Revolt.* Berkley Books, 1980.

Jenkins, Philip. *Decade of Nightmares: The End of the Sixties and the Making of Eighties America.* Oxford University Press, 2006.

Jennings, C. Robert. "Oscars and the Generation Gap." *Los Angeles Times*, 7 Apr. 1968, pp. 9, 12, 14.

Johnson, Jenell. *American Lobotomy: A Rhetorical History.* University of Michigan Press, 2014.

Jones, Kent. "Five Easy Pieces: The Solitude." *America Lost and Found: The BBS Story (Booklet of Blu-Ray-Edition)*, The Criterion Collection, 2010, pp. 31 – 39.

Jones, Kent . "The Devil in the Details." *Film Comment*, vol. 46, no. 5, Oct. 2010, p. 66.

Kadritzke, Till. "Bewegte Männer: Men's Liberation und autonome Männergruppen in den USA und Deutschland, 1970 – 1995." *Feminismus in historischer Perspektive*, edited by Feminismus Seminar, Transcript, 2014, pp. 221 – 52.

Kael, Pauline. "Back at the Ouija Board." *The New Yorker*, 7 Jan. 1974, pp. 59 – 62.

Kael, Pauline. "Bonnie and Clyde." *The New Yorker*, Oct. 1967, https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1967/10/21/bonnie-and-clyde. Last Accessed: 16 July 2024.

Kael, Pauline. "Eric Rohmer's Refinement." *The New Yorker*, 20 Mar. 1971, pp. 136 – 40.

Kael, Pauline. "Everyday Inferno." *The New Yorker*, 8 Oct. 1973, pp. 157 – 62.

Kael, Pauline . "Hot Air." *The New Yorker*, 6 Dec. 1976, pp. 177 – 85.

Kael, Pauline . "Notes on New Actors, New Movies." *The New Yorker*, 4 Dec. 1971, pp. 168 – 173.

Kael, Pauline. *Reeling: Film Writings 1972 to 1975.* Little Brown, 1976.

Kael, Pauline. "Review of Carnal Knowledge." *The New Yorker*, 3 July 1971, pp. 43 – 44.

Kael, Pauline. "Review of The Getaway." *The New Yorker*, 23 Dec. 1972.

Kael, Pauline. "Sam Peckinpah's Obsession." *The New Yorker*, 29 Jan. 1972, pp. 80 – 85.

Kael, Pauline. "The Bull Goose Loony." *The New Yorker*, 1 Dec. 1975, pp. 131 – 36.

Kael, Pauline. "The French Connection: Urban Gothic." *The New Yorker*, 30 Oct. 1971, pp. 113 – 16.

Kael, Pauline. "Underground Man." *New Yorker*, 9 Feb. 1976, https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1976/02/09/underground-man. Last Accessed: 16 July 2024.

Kanfer, Stefan. "Review of Carnal Knowledge." *Time*, 5 July 1971, pp. 54 – 55.

Kanfer, Stefan. "The Shock of Freedom in Films." *Time*, vol. 90, no. 23, Dec. 1967, https://time.com/archive/6595035/hollywood-the-shock-of-freedom-in-films. Last Accessed: 16 July 2024

Kaplan, Sam. "Correspondence... The New Left, Anarchy, and Marxism." *Intercollegiate Review*, vol. 3, no. 3, Feb. 1967, pp. 141 – 42.

Kauffman, Stanley. "Five Easy Pieces." *The New Republic*, 26 Sept. 1970, pp. 21, 33.

Kauffman, Stanley. "Jack High." *The New Republic*, 13 Dec. 1975, pp. 22 – 23.

Kauffman, Stanley. "Review of *The Getaway.*" *The New Republic*, no date. Core Collection, Margaret Herrick Library.

Kauffman, Stanley. "Stanley Kauffman on Films." *The New Republic*, 27 Sept. 1980.

Kauffman, Stanley. "Stanley Kauffman on Films." *The New Republic*, 27 Mar. 1971, pp. 24, 37.
Keathley, Christian. "Trapped in the Affection Image: Hollywood's Post-Traumatic Cycle." *The Last Great American Picture Show: New Hollywood Cinema in the 1970s*, edited by Alexander Horwath et al., Amsterdam University Press, 2004, pp. 293 – 308.
Kelleter, Frank, editor. "Five Ways of Looking at Popular Seriality." *Media of Serial Narrative*, Ohio State University Press, 2017, pp. 7 – 34.
Kelleter, Frank. *Serial Agencies: The Wire and Its Readers.* John Hunt, 2014.
Kennedy, Barbara M. *Deleuze and Cinema: The Aesthetics of Sensation.* Edinburgh University Press, 2000.
Kent, Stephen A. *From Slogans to Mantras: Social Protest and Religious Conversion in the Late Vietnam War Era.* Syracuse University Press, 2001.
Kerby, Bill. "Another, More Flattering 'Bonnie and Clyde' Look." *Los Angeles Free Press*, 1 Sept. 1967.
Kermode, Mark. *The Exorcist.* Second Edition, British Film Institute, 2003.
Kesey, Ken. *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest.* Viking, 1964.
Killen, Andreas. *1973 Nervous Breakdown: Watergate, Warhol, and the Birth of Post-Sixties America.* Bloomsbury, 2007.
King, Geoff. *New Hollywood Cinema: An Introduction.* I.B. Tauris, 2002.
King, Richard H. *Race, Culture, and the Intellectuals, 1940 – 1970.* Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2004.
Kirshner, Jonathan. *Hollywood's Last Golden Age: Politics, Society, and the Seventies Film in America.* Cornell University Press, 2012.
Kirshner, Jonathan. "'Jason's No Businessman ... I Think He's an Artist': BBS and the New Hollywood Dream." *When the Movies Mattered: The New Hollywood Revisited*, edited by Jonathan Kirshner and Jon Lewis, Cornell University Press, 2019, pp. 51 – 68.
Kirshner, Jonathan, and Jon Lewis. "Introduction: The New Hollywood Revisited." *When the Movies Mattered: The New Hollywood Revisited*, edited by Jonathan Kirshner and Jon Lewis, Cornell University Press, 2019.
Kirshner, Jonathan, and Jon Lewis. *When the Movies Mattered: The New Hollywood Revisited.* Cornell University Press, 2019.
Klatch, Rebecca E. *A Generation Divided: The New Left, the New Right, and the 1960s.* University of California Press, 1999.
Kluge, P. F. "Detective Egan's New Assignment." *Life*, 10 Dec. 1971, pp. 85 – 88.
Knadler, Stephen P. *The Fugitive Race: Minority Writers Resisting Whiteness.* University Press of Mississippi, 2002.
Knight, Arthur. "Films." *Playgirl*, Nov. 1974, p. 25.
Knight, Arthur. "SR Goes to the Movies." *Saturday Review*, 6 Nov. 1971, p. 70.
Kolker, Robert. *A Cinema of Loneliness.* 4th Revised Edition, Oxford University Press, 2011.
Krämer, Felix. *Moral Leaders: Medien, Gender und Glaube in den USA der 1970er und 1980er Jahre.* Transcript, 2015.
Krämer, Peter. *The New Hollywood: From Bonnie and Clyde to Star Wars.* Wallflower Press, 2005.
Kripal, Jeffrey J. *Esalen: America and the Religion of No Religion.* University of Chicago Press, 2007.
Laderman, David. *Driving Visions: Exploring the Road Movie.* University of Texas Press, 2002.
Laing, R. D. *The Divided Self.* Pelican Books, 1964.
Laing, R. D . *The Politics of Experience.* Pantheon, 1967.
Lambe, Jennifer. "Memory Politics: Psychiatric Critique, Cultural Protest, and One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest." *Literature and Medicine*, vol. 37, no. 2, Fall 2019, pp. 298 – 324.

Lasch, Christopher. *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations.* Norton, 1978.

Lassiter, Matthew D. "Political History beyond the Red-Blue Divide." *The Journal of American History*, vol. 98, no. 3, Dec. 2011, pp. 760–764.

Latour, Bruno. *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory.* Oxford University Press, 2005.

Leary, Timothy. "Foreword." *Counterculture Through the Ages: From Abraham to Acid House*, edited by Ken Goffman and Dan Joy, Villard, 2004, pp. ix–xiv.

Leary, Timothy. *Turn On, Tune In, Drop Out.* Ronin, 1999.

Ledbetter, Les. "Kesey, at Oregon Farm, Mulls Over Screen Rights." *New York Times*, 31 Mar. 1976, p. 26.

Léger, Nathalie. *Suite for Barbara Loden.* Translated by Natasha Lehrer and Cécile Menon, Dorothy, 2016.

Leggett, B. J. "Convergence and Divergence in the Movie Review: Bonnie and Clyde." *Film Criticism*, vol. 30, no. 2, Winter 2005, pp. 1–23.

Lehmann, Hauke. *Affect Poetics of the New Hollywood: Suspense, Paranoia, and Melancholy.* De Gruyter, 2019.

Lelyveld, Joseph. "Detective Lays His Ouster to Movie Role." *New York Times*, 4 Dec. 1971, pp. 33, 63.

Leong, Ian, et al. "Mad Love, Mobile Homes, and Dysfunctional Dicks: On the Road with Bonnie and Clyde." *The Road Movie Book*, edited by Steven Cohan and Ina Rae Hark, Routledge, 1997, pp. 70–89.

"Letters." *Time*, 15 Dec. 1967, p. 11.

"Letters to the Editor." *New York Times*, 5 Dec. 1971.

Lewis, Abram J. "'We Are Certain of Our Own Insanity': Antipsychiatry and the Gay Liberation Movement, 1968–1980." *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, vol. 25, no. 1, 2016, pp. 83–113.

Lewis, Grover. "Sam Peckinpah in Mexico." *Rolling Stone*, 12 Oct. 1972, https://www.rollingstone.com/movies/movie-features/sam-peckinpah-in-mexico-229831Datum/. Last Accessed: 16 July 2024.

Lewis, Penny. *Hardhats, Hippies, and Hawks: The Vietnam Antiwar Movement as Myth and Memory.* Cornell University Press, 2013.

Lizzi, Maria C. "'My Heart Is as Black as Yours': White Backlash, Racial Identity, and Italian American Stereotypes in New York City's 1969 Mayoral Campaign." *Journal of American Ethnic History*, vol. 27, no. 3, 2008, pp. 43–80.

Lokke, Geoffrey. "Cuckolds, Cucks, and Their Transgressions." *Porn Studies*, vol. 6, no. 2, 2019, pp. 212–27.

Lott, Eric. *Black Mirror: The Cultural Contradictions of American Racism.* Harvard University Press, 2017.

Lott, Eric. *Love & Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class.* Oxford University Press, 2013.

Lowndes, Joseph E. *From the New Deal to the New Right: Race and the Southern Origins of Modern Conservatism.* Yale University Press, 2008.

Luhr, Eileen. *Witnessing Suburbia: Conservatives and Christian Youth Culture.* University of California Press, 2009.

Lunbeck, Elizabeth. *The Americanization of Narcissism.* Harvard University Press, 2014.

Madsen, Axel. *The New Hollywood: American Movies in the '70s.* Thomas Y. Crowell, 1975.

Mailer, Norman. *Advertisements for Myself.* Putnam, 1959.

Mailer, Norman. "The White Negro: Superficial Reflections on the Hipster." *Dissent*, Fall 1957, pp. 276–93.

Mann, Roderick. "New Yorkers in Control of 'Network' Craziness." *Los Angeles Times*, 30 May 1976, p. 32.

Mask, Mia. "1971: Movies and the Exploitation of Excess." *American Cinema of the 1970s: Themes and Variations*, edited by Lester D. Friedman, Rutgers University Press, 2007, pp. 48 – 70.

Maslow, Abraham H. "Self-Actualizing People: A Study of Psychological Health (1950)." *Dominance, Self-Esteem, Self-Actualization: Germinal Papers of A. H. Maslow*, edited by Richard J. Lowry, Brooks/Cole, 1973, pp. 177 – 201.

Maslow, Abraham H. *Toward a Psychology of Being.* 1864. Martino, 2010.

Mattson, Kevin. *Rebels All! A Short History of the Conservative Mind in Postwar America.* Rutgers University Press, 2008.

Maxwell, Richard D. "The Abdication of Masculinity in One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest (1970)." *A Casebook on Ken Kesey's One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*, edited by George J. Seamless, University of New Mexico Press, 1992, pp. 135 – 44.

McCann, Sean, and Michael Szalay. "Do You Believe in Magic? Literary Thinking after the New Left." *The Yale Journal of Criticism*, vol. 18, no. 2, 2005, pp. 435 – 68.

McCourt, Kate. "Who Was Barbara Loden? 'Wanda' and the Life of an Actual Woman." *Propeller Mag*, Fall 2012, https://www.propellermag.com/Fall2012/McCourtLodenFall12.html. Last Accessed: 16 July 2024.

Meade, Marion. "Lights! Camera! Women!" *New York Times*, 25 Apr. 1971, p. 11.

Medovoi, Leerom. *Rebels: Youth and the Cold War Origins of Identity.* Duke University Press Books, 2005.

Medovoi, Leerom. "The Race War Within: The Biopolitics of the Long Cold War." *American Literature and Culture in an Age of Cold War: A Critical Reassessment*, edited by Steven Belletto and Daniel Grausam, University of Iowa Press, 2012, pp. 163 – 86.

Mekas, Jonas. "The Changing Language of Cinema (1962)." *Movie Journal: The Rise of the New American Cinema, 1959 – 1971*, Second Edition, Columbia University Press, 2016, pp. 54 – 56.

Melley, Timothy. *Empire of Conspiracy: The Culture of Paranoia in Postwar America.* Cornell University Press, 1999.

Menne, Jeff. "Post-Fordist Cinema: Hollywood Auteurs and the Corporate Counterculture." *Post-Fordist Cinema*, Columbia University Press, 2019.

Menne, Jeff. "The Cinema of Defection: Auteur Theory and Institutional Life." *Representations*, vol. 114, no. 1, Spring 2011, pp. 36 – 64.

Messner, Michael A. "The Limits of 'The Male Sex Role': An Analysis of the Men's Liberation and Men's Rights Movements' Discourse." *Gender and Society*, vol. 12, no. 3, June 1998, pp. 255 – 76.

Metzl, Jonathan. *The Protest Psychosis: How Schizophrenia Became a Black Disease.* Beacon Press, 2009.

Millar, Jeff. "Review of The Getaway." *The Houston Chronicle*, no date. Core Collection, Margaret Herrick Library.

Miller, Jr., Francis. "Easy Rider: How Can You Be Free…?" *The Great Speckled Bird*, vol. 2, no. 29, 29 Sept. 1969, pp. 16 – 18.

Miller, Stephen Paul. *The Seventies Now: Culture as Surveillance.* Duke University Press, 1999.

Miller, Steven P. *The Age of Evangelicalism: America's Born-Again Years.* Oxford University Press, 2014.

Mills, Katie. *The Road Story and the Rebel: Moving Through Film, Fiction, and Television.* Southern Illinois University Press, 2006.

Milne, Tom. "Easy Rider." *Sight & Sound*, vol. 38, no. 4, Fall 1969, p. 211.

Morey, Maribel. *White Philanthropy: Carnegie Corporation's An American Dilemma and the Making of a White World Order.* The University of North Carolina Press, 2021.

Morgenstern, Joseph. "The Thin Red Line." *Newsweek*, 28 Aug. 1967, pp. 83–84.
Morgenstern, Joseph. "Two for a Tommy Gun." *Newsweek*, 21 Aug. 1967, p. 65.
Morrison, Toni. *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination.* Vintage, 1992.
Moss, Richard. *Creating the New Right Ethnic in 1970s America: The Intersection of Anger and Nostalgia.* Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2017.
Moustakas, Clark E., editor. *The Self: Explorations in Personal Growth.* Harper & Row, 1956.
Moustakas, Clark E. "True Experience and the Self." *The Self: Explorations in Personal Growth*, edited by Clark E. Moustakas, Harper & Row, 1956, pp. 3–14.
"Movie Mailbag: Cheering On Those 'Desparate Characters.'" *New York Times*, 14 Nov. 1971, p. 18.
"Movie Mailbag: Nichols, Feiffer––Right or Wrong?" *New York Times*, 3 Oct. 1971, p. 11.
Murakawa, Naomi. *The First Civil Right: How Liberals Built Prison America.* Oxford University Press, 2014.
Murray, Douglas. *Neoconservatism: Why We Need It.* Encounter Books, 2006.
Murray, William. "Playboy Interview: Sam Peckinpah." *Playboy*, Aug. 1972, pp. 65–74, 192.
Must, Michael. "Network Encore? I'm Glad as Hell." *Village Voice*, 28 Apr. 2007, p. 8.
Nadel, Alan. *Flatlining on the Field of Dreams: Cultural Narratives in the Films of President Reagan's America.* Rutgers University Press, 1997.
"Network Press Kit." Core Collection, Margaret Herrick Library
"Network, Publicity and Promotion." Gift of Steve Hausman. Core Collection, Margaret Herrick Library.
Newman, David, and Robert Benton. "The New Sentimentality." *Esquire*, July 1964, pp. 25–31.
Novak, Michael. *The Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics: Politics and Culture in the Seventies.* Macmillan, 1973.
Nystrom, Derek. *Hard Hats, Rednecks, and Macho Men: Class in 1970s American Cinema.* Oxford University Press, 2009.
Nystrom, Derek. "The New Hollywood." *The Wiley-Blackwell History of American Film*, edited by Cynthia Lucia et al., vol. 3, Blackwell, 2011, pp. 409–434.
Parfrey, Adam. "Lumet's 'Network': It's Mad As Hell." *UCLA Daily Bruin*, 22 Nov. 1976, p. 12.
Pells, Richard. *Modernist America: Art, Music, Movies, and the Globalization of American Culture.* Yale University Press, 2011.
Perls, Frederick S., et al. *Gestalt Therapy: Excitement and Growth in the Human Personality.* The Julian Press, 1951.
Perlstein, Rick. *Before the Storm: Barry Goldwater and the Unmaking of the American Consensus.* 2009th ed., Nation Books, 2001.
Perlstein, Rick. *The Invisible Bridge: The Fall of Nixon and the Rise of Reagan.* Simon and Schuster, 2014.
"Phillips Brings 'Taxi' Overseas." *Hollywood Reporter*, 11 May 1976, pp. 26, 40.
Phillips, McCandlish. "Barbara Loden Speaks of the World of 'Wanda.'" *New York Times*, 11 Mar. 1971, p. 32.
Phillips-Fein, Kim. *Fear City: New York's Fiscal Crisis and the Rise of Austerity Politics.* First Edition, Metropolitan Books, 2017.
"'Pieces' Is So 'Easy' to Love." *New York Times*, 11 Oct. 1970, pp. 13, 28.
Pirie, David. "Five Easy Pieces." *Monthly Film Bulletin*, Jan. 1971, p. 72.
Pisters, Patricia. *The Matrix of Visual Culture: Working with Deleuze in Film Theory.* Stanford University Press, 2003.
Potter, Paul. *A Name for Ourselves.* Little, Brown and Company, 1971.

Potter, Paul. *Naming the System.* 17 Apr. 1965, https://disruptnow.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/naming-the-system.pdf. Last Accessed: 16 July 2024.

Prince, Stephen. "The Hemorrhaging of American Cinema: Bonnie and Clyde's Legacy of Cinematic Violence." *Arthur Penn's Bonnie and Clyde*, edited by Lester D. Friedman, Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp. 127–47.

Quinn, Eithne. *A Piece of the Action: Race and Labor in Post–Civil Rights Hollywood*., Columbia University Press, 2019.

Rafelson, Bob. Audio Commentary. *Five Easy Pieces*, part of *America Lost and Found: The BBS Story.* The Criterion Collection 2010, Blu-Ray.

Ramaeker, Paul. "Realism, Revisionism and Visual Style: The French Connection and the New Hollywood Policier." *New Review of Film and Television Studies*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2010, pp. 144–63.

Raz, Mical. *What's Wrong with the Poor?: Psychiatry, Race, and the War on Poverty.* University of North Carolina Press, 2013.

Redstockings. *Redstockings Manifesto.* 7 July 1969, https://www.redstockings.org/index.php/rs-manifesto. Last Accessed: 16 July 2024.

Reed, Rex. "Altman's Latest Is Just T*R*A*S*H." *Daily News*, 25 June 1971, p. 31.

Reed, Rex. "On Location: Steve, Ali Down in Dumps." *Los Angeles Times*, 6 May 1972, p. 6.

Reed, Rex. "Watch Out for Barbara's 'Wanda.'" *Los Angeles Times*, 21 Feb. 1971, p. 52.

Reich, Charles. *The Greening of America.* Bantam Books, 1970.

Reich, Charles. *The Sorcerer of Bolinas Reef.* Random House, 1976.

"Review of Carnal Knowledge." *Playboy*, Sept. 1971.

"Review of Easy Rider." *Time*, 25 July 1969, pp. 62–64.

"Review of *The Getaway.*" *Crawdaddy*, no date. Core Collection, Margaret Herrick Library.

Roberts, Jerry. *The Complete History of American Film Criticism.* Santa Monica Press, 2010.

Robinson, Sally. *Marked Men: White Masculinity in Crisis.* Columbia University Press, 2000.

Robnik, Drehli. "Allegories of Post-Fordism in 1970s New Hollywood: Countercultural Combat Films, Conspiracy Thrillers as Genre-Recycling." *The Last Great American Picture Show: New Hollywood in the 1970s*, edited by Thomas Elsaesser et al., Amsterdam University Press, 2004, pp. 333–58.

Rogers, Carl R. *On Becoming a Person.* Robinson, 1961.

Rose, Jacqueline. *States of Fantasy.* Oxford University Press, 1996.

Rosenbaum, Jonathan. "New Hollywood and the Sixties Melting Pot." *The Last Great American Picture Show: New Hollywood CInema in the 1970s*, edited by Alexander Horwath et al., Amsterdam University Press, 2004, pp. 131–52.

Rosenbaum, Ron. "The Creative Mind; Acting: The Method and Mystique of Jack Nicholson." *The New York Times Magazine*, 13 July 1986, https://www.nytimes.com/1986/07/13/magazine/the-creative-mind-acting-the-method-and-mystique-of-jack-nicholson.html. Last Accessed: 16 July 2024.

Rosenfelt, Deborah. "Of Oscars and Outrage." *Los Angeles Times*, 1 Apr. 1977, p. 7.

Rosenhan, David L. "On Being Sane in Insane Places." *Science*, vol. 179, no. 4070, Jan. 1973, pp. 250–58.

Ross, Andrew. "Hip, and the Long Front of Color." *Intellectuals and Popular Culture*, Routledge, 1989, pp. 65–101.

Rossinow, Doug. *The Politics of Authenticity: Liberalism, Christianity, and the New Left in America.* Columbia University Press, 1998.

Rossinow, Doug. "'The Revolution Is about Our Lives': The New Left's Counterculture." *Imagine Nation: The American Counterculture of the 1960s & '70s*, edited by Peter Braunstein and Michael William Doyle, Routledge, 2002, pp. 99–124.

Roszak, Theodore. *The Making of a Counter Culture: Reflections on the Technocratic Society and Its Youthful Opposition.* Anchor Books, 1969.

Rothbard, Murray. "The Cry for Power: Black, White, and 'Polish.'" *Left and Right: A Journal of Libertarian Thought*, vol. 2, no. 3, Autumn 1966, pp. 11–14.

Rothbard, Murray. "The General Line." *Left and Right: A Journal of Libertarian Thought*, vol. 1, no. 1, Spring 1965, p. 3.

Rothbard, Murray. "Why Be Libertarian?" *Left and Right: A Journal of Libertarian Thought*, vol. 2, no. 3, Autumn 1966, pp. 5–10.

Rowley, Hazel. *Richard Wright: The Life and Times.* University of Chicago Press, 2001.

Rubin, Jerry. *Do It: Scenarios of the Revolution.* Ballantine Books, 1970.

Ruitenbeek, Hendrik Marinus. *Going Crazy: The Radical Therapy of R. D. Laing and Others.* Bantam Books, 1972.

Safer, Elaine B. "'It's the Truth Even If It Didn't Happen': Ken Kesey's 'One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest.'" *Literature/Film Quarterly*, vol. 5, no. 2, Spring 1977, pp. 132–141.

Salinger, J. D. *The Catcher in the Rye.* Penguin Books, 1962.

Sandbrook, Dominic. *Mad as Hell: The Crisis of the 1970s and the Rise of the Populist Right.* Anchor, 2011.

Sarris, Andrew. "Bonnie and Clyde Review." *Village Voice*, vol. XII, no. 45, 24 Aug. 1967, https://www.villagevoice.com/2010/03/08/bonnie-and-clyde-needlessly-attacked-by-hypocritical-times-critic Datum/. Last Accessed: 16 July 2024.

Sarris, Andrew. *The American Cinema: Directors and Directions, 1929–1968.* Dutton, 1968.

Sassons, Rick. "The Ballad of Sam Peckinpah." *Filmmakers Newsletter*, Mar. 1973, pp. 28–30.

Satter, Beryl. "The Left: How Did the 'Discharge' of Negative Emotions Become a Substitute for Cultural Critique?" *Rethinking Therapeutic Culture*, edited by Timothy Aubry and Trysh Travis, University of Chicago Press, 2015, pp. 119–31.

Savran, David. *Taking It Like a Man: White Masculinity, Masochism, and Contemporary American Culture.* Princeton University Press, 1998.

Sawyer, Tom. "On Male Liberation." *Liberation*, vol. 15, no. 6/7/8, Oct. 1970, pp. 32–33.

Scahill, Andrew. "Demons Are a Girl's Best Friend: Queering the Revolting Child in The Exorcist." *Red Feather Journal*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2010, pp. 39–55.

Schäfer, Axel R. *Countercultural Conservatives: American Evangelicalism from the Postwar Revival to the New Christian Right.* University of Wisconsin Press, 2011.

Schickel, Richard. "A Real Look at a Tough Cop." *Life*, 19 Nov. 1971, p. 13.

Schickel, Richard. "Aborted Flight." *Time*, 1 Dec. 1975, p. 76.

Schickel, Richard. "The View from Mr. Nichols's Bridge." *Life*, 6 Aug. 1971, p. 12.

Schickel, Richard. "White Water, Black Doings." *Life*, 13 Aug. 1972, p. 8.

Schjeldahl, Peter. "This Is the 'Pieces' That Jack Built." *New York Times*, 27 Sept. 1970, p. 13.

Schlesinger, Jr., Arthur. "The Crisis of American Masculinity." *Esquire*, 1 Nov. 1958, https://classic.esquire.com/article/1958/11/1/the-crisis-of-american-masculinity. Last Accessed: 16 July 2024.

Schleusener, Simon. "The Cinema of Insanity: Psychiatry, Popular Culture, and the Flexibilization of Normality." *Revisiting the Sixties: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on America's Longest Decade*, edited by Laura Bieger and Christian Lammert, Campus, 2013, pp. 237–60.

Schrader, Paul. "Correspondence: To 'Taxi Driver' Hackers." *Los Angeles Times*, 18 Apr. 1976, p. 2.

Schrader, Paul. "Sam Peckinpah Going to Mexico." *Cinema*, vol. 5, no. 3, 1969, pp. 18–25.

Schroeder, Andrew. "The Movement Inside: BBS Films and the Cultural Left in the New Hollywood." *The World the Sixties Made: Politics and Culture in Recent America*, edited by Van Gosse and Richard Moser, Temple University Press, 2003, pp. 114 – 37.

Schulman, Bruce J. "Post-1968 U.S. History: Neo-Consensus History for the Age of Polarization." *Reviews in American History*, vol. 47, no. 3, Sept. 2019, pp. 479 – 99.

Schulman, Bruce J. *The Seventies: The Great Shift in American Culture, Society, and Politics.* Simon and Schuster, 2001.

Schultz, Kevin M. *Buckley and Mailer: The Difficult Friendship That Shaped the Sixties.* W. W. Norton & Company, 2015.

Schutz, William C. *Joy: Expanding Human Awareness.* Grove Press, 1967.

SDS. *Port Huron Statement.* 1962, http://www2.iath.virginia.edu/sixties/HTML_docs/Resources/Primary/Manifestos/SDS_Port_Huron.html. Last Accessed: 16 July 2024.

Selisker, Scott. *Human Programming: Brainwashing, Automatons, and American Unfreedom.* University of Minnesota Press, 2016.

Shambu, Girish. "For a New Cinephilia." *Film Quarterly*, vol. 72, no. 3, 2019, pp. 32 – 34.

Sharples Jr., Win. "Sam Peckinpah's 'The Getaway': Multiple Betrayers and 'The Showdown.'" *Filmmakers Newsletter*, Mar. 1973, pp. 31 – 33.

Shaviro, Steven. *The Cinematic Body.* University of Minnesota Press, 1993.

Shedlin, Michael. "Police Oscar: The French Connection – and an Interview with William Friedkin." *Film Quarterly*, vol. 25, no. 4, Summer 1972, pp. 2 – 9.

Simkins, Michael. "Method Acting Can Go Too Far – Just Ask Dustin Hoffman." *The Guardian*, 2016. *www.theguardian.com*, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/mar/31/method-acting-dustin-hoffman-meryl-streep. Last Accessed: 16 July 2024.

Simon, Art. "'One Big Lousy X': The Cinema of Urban Crisis." *The Wiley-Blackwell History of American Film, 1946 to 1975*, edited by Cynthia Lucia et al., vol. 3, Wiley-Blackwell, 2012, pp. 470 – 89.

Simon, John. *Movies Into Film: Film Criticism, 1967 – 1970.* The Dial Press, 1971.

Simon, Jonathan. *Governing Through Crime: How the War on Crime Transformed American Democracy and Created a Culture of Fear.* Oxford University Press, 2007.

Siskel, Gene. "Savage Messiah." *Chicago Tribune*, 19 Dec. 1972, p. 5.

Smith, Julie. "Janis Joplin and the Saturday Night Swindle." *Chicago Tribune*, 12 July 1970, p. 2.

Squirrell, Tim. "Linguistic Data Analysis of 3 Billion Reddit Comments Shows the Alt-Right Is Getting Stronger." *Quartz. qz.com*, https://qz.com/1056319/what-is-the-alt-right-a-linguistic-data-analysis-of-3-billion-reddit-comments-shows-a-disparate-group-that-is-quickly-uniting/. Last Accessed: 16 July 2024.

Staub, Michael E. *Madness Is Civilization: When the Diagnosis Was Social, 1948 – 1980.* University of Chicago Press, 2011.

Staub, Michael E. "Setting Up the Seventies: Black Panthers, New Journalism, and the Rewriting of the Sixties." *The Seventies: The Age of Glitter in Popular Culture*, edited by Shelton Waldrep, Routledge, 2000, pp. 19 – 40.

Steinem, Gloria. "'Women's Liberation' Aims to Free Men, Too." *Washington Post*, 7 June 1970, pp. 192 – 193.

Steiner, Claude. *Readings in Radical Psychiatry.* Grove Press, 1975.

Stempel, Tom. *American Audiences on Movies and Moviegoing.* University Press of Kentucky, 2001.

Stewart, Kathleen. *Ordinary Affects.* Duke University Press, 2007.

Stowe, David Ware. *No Sympathy for the Devil: Christian Pop Music and the Transformation of American Evangelicalism.* University of North Carolina Press, 2011.

Stratton, W. K., and Jan Reid, editors. *Splendor in the Short Grass: The Grover Lewis Reader.* University of Texas Press, 2005.

Sugrue, Thomas J. *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit.* Updated Edition, Princeton University Press, 2015.

Sugrue, Thomas J., and John D. Skrentny. "The White Ethnic Strategy." *Rightward Bound*, edited by Bruce J. Schulman and Julian E. Zelizer, Harvard University Press, 2008, pp. 171 – 92.

Sutherland, Thomas. "Counterculture, Capitalism, and the Constancy of Change." *M/C Journal*, vol. 17, no. 6, 2014, http://journal.media-culture.org.au/index.php/mcjournal/article/view/891. Last Accessed: 16 July 2024.

Szalay, Michael. *Hip Figures: A Literary History of the Democratic Party.* Stanford University Press, 2012.

Szasz, Thomas S. "The Myth of Mental Illness." *American Psychologist*, vol. 15, no. 2, 1960, pp. 113 – 18.

Taubin, Amy. "Wanda: A Miracle." *The Criterion Collection*, 19 Mar. 2019, https://www.criterion.com/current/posts/6251-wanda-a-miracle. Last Accessed: 16 July 2024.

Taylor, Douglas. "Three Lean Cats in a Hall of Mirrors: James Baldwin, Norman Mailer, and Eldridge Cleaver on Race and Masculinity." *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, vol. 52, no. 1, Spring 2010, pp. 70 – 101.

"The Exorcist clippings 1972 – 1974." Linwood G. Dunn Papers, folder 9.f-147, Special Collections, Margaret Herrick Library.

"The Getaway Editing Notes." Folder 36.f-384 Sam Peckinpah Papers, Special Collections, Margaret Herrick Library

"The Getaway Press Quotes." Core Collection, Margaret Herrick Library.

"The Getaway Production Notes." Core Collection, Margaret Herrick Library.

"The Getaway, script 1971 – 1972." Folder 33.f-363, Sam Peckinpah Papers, Special Collections, Margaret Herrick Library.

"The New Movies." *Newsweek*, 7 Dec. 1970, pp. 42 – 54.

"The Troubled American: A Special Report on the White Majority." *Newsweek*, 6 Oct. 1969, pp. 20 – 43.

Thomas, Kevin. "'110th Street' Self-Destructs." *Los Angeles Times*, 15 Dec. 1972, p. 25.

Thomas, Kevin. "Ali and Steve in 'Getaway.'" *Los Angeles Times*, Dec. 1972, pp. 1, 23.

Thomas, Kevin. "'Easy Rider's' Lawyer: Nicholson Leaves Obscurity in Dust." *Los Angeles Times*, Aug. 1969, p. 1.

Thomas, Kevin. "Miss Loden's Wanda: 'It's Very Much Me.'" *Los Angeles Times*, 8 Apr. 1971, pp. 1, 17.

Thompson, Richard. "Screenwriter: Interview with Taxi Driver's Paul Schrader." *Film Comment*, vol. 12, no. 2, Apr. 1976, pp. 6 – 19.

Thompson, Thomas. "An Outburst of Gratuitous Movie Gore." *Los Angeles Times*, 11 Mar. 1976, p. 7.

Toch, Hans. "Last Word on the Hippies." *The Nation*, vol. 205, no. 19, 4 Dec. 1967, pp. 582 – 88.

Tochterman, Brian L. *The Dying City: Postwar New York and the Ideology of Fear.* Illustrated Edition, The University of North Carolina Press, 2017.

Toland, John. "Sad Ballad of the Real Bonnie and Clyde." *New York Times Magazine*, 18 Feb. 1968, pp. 26 – 29, 82 – 86.

Trilling, Lionel. *Sincerity and Authenticity.* Harvard University Press, 1972.

Tuccille, Jerome. *The Gospel According to Ayn Rand.* ASJA Press, 2007.

Turner, Ralph H. "The Real Self: From Institution to Impulse." *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 81, no. 5, 1976, pp. 989 – 1016.

Tyler, Imogen. "From 'The Me Decade' to 'The Me Millennium': The Cultural History of Narcissism." *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, vol. 10, no. 3, 2007, pp. 343 – 63.

Tzioumakis, Yannis, and Peter Krämer, editors. *The Hollywood Renaissance: Revisiting American Cinema's Most Celebrated Era.* Bloomsbury, 2018.

Van Wert, Bill. "The Exorcist: Radical Therapy." *Jump Cut*, vol. 1, 1974, pp. 4 – 5.

Vitkus, Daniel J. "Madness and Misogyny in Ken Kesey's One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest." *Alif: Journal of Comparative Poetics*, no. 14, 1994, pp. 64 – 90.

Wake, Sandra, and Nicola Hayden, editors. *The Bonnie and Clyde Book.* Simon and Schuster, 1972.

Wald, Elijah. *Dylan Goes Electric!: Newport, Seeger, Dylan, and the Night That Split the Sixties.* HarperCollins, 2016.

Walker, Beverly. *Jack Nicholson: Anatomy of an Actor.* Phaidon, 2014.

"Walking Tall." Core Collection, Margaret Herrick Library.

Warren, Donald I. *The Radical Center: Middle Americans and the Politics of Alienation.* University of Notre Dame Press, 1976.

Washington, Harriet A. *Medical Apartheid: The Dark History of Medical Experimentation on Black Americans from Colonial Times to the Present.* Harlem Moon, 2006.

Webb, Lawrence. *The Cinema of Urban Crisis: Seventies Film and the Reinvention of the City.* Amsterdam University Press, 2014.

Weddle, David. *"If They Move . . . Kill' Em!": The Life and Times of Sam Peckinpah.* Grove Press, 2016.

Weingarten, Marc. *The Gang That Wouldn't Write Straight: Wolfe, Thompson, Didion, Capote & the New Journalism Revolution.* Three Rivers Press, 2005.

Weinman, Sarah. "The True Crime Story Behind a 1970 Cult Feminist Film Classic." *Topic*, no. 4, Oct. 2017. *www.topic.com*, https://www.topic.com/the-true-crime-story-behind-a-1970-cult-feminist-film-classic.

Wexman, Virginia Wright. *Creating the Couple: Love, Marriage, and Hollywood Performance.* Princeton University Press, 1993.

Wheelock, John Hall. "Some Thoughts on Poetry." *Poets of Today VII*, Scribner's Sons, 1960, pp. 13 – 32.

Wickberg, Daniel. "What Is the History of Sensibilities? On Cultural Histories, Old and New." *The American Historical Review*, vol. 112, no. 3, 2007, pp. 661 – 84.

Willett, Julie. *The Male Chauvinist Pig: A History.* The University of North Carolina Press, 2021.

"William F. Buckley, Jr.: Conservatism Can Be Fun." *Time*, 3 Nov. 1967, pp. 70 – 80.

Williams, Paul, and Brian Edgar. "The Primal Is the Political: Psychotherapy, Engagement, and Narcissism in the 1970s." *American Quarterly*, vol. 70, no. 1, Mar. 2018, pp. 79 – 100.

Willis, Sharon. *The Poitier Effect: Racial Melodrama and Fantasies of Reconciliation.* University Of Minnesota Press, 2015.

Wilson, Christopher P. *Cop Knowledge: Police Power and Cultural Narrative in Twentieth-Century America.* University of Chicago Press, 2000.

Winant, Howard. "Behind Blue Eyes: Whiteness and Contemporary US Racial Politics." *New Left Review*, no. 225, Oct. 1997, https://newleftreview.org/issues/I225/articles/howard-winant-behind-blue-eyes-whiteness-and-contemporary-us-racial-politics. Last Accessed: 16 July 2024.

Wolf, William. "New Films." *Cue*, 3 July 1971.

Wolf, William. "On Location in Harlem––Black and White." *Los Angeles Times*, 9 July 1972, p. 24.

Wolfe, Bernard. "Ecstatic in Blackface: The Negro as a Song-and-Dance Man." *The Scene Before You: A New Approach to American Culture*, Rinehart and Company, 1955.

Wolfe, Tom. "The 'Me' Decade and the Third Great Awakening." *New York*, 23 Aug. 1976, http://nymag.com/news/features/45938/. Last Accessed: 16 July 2024.

Wolfe, Tom. "The New Journalism." *The New Journalism*, edited by Tom Wolfe and E.W. Johnson, Harper & Row, 1973, pp. 3 – 52.

Woodward, Kenneth L. "The Exorcism Frenzy." *Newsweek*, 11 Feb. 1974, pp. 28 – 33.

Zaretsky, Natasha. *No Direction Home: The American Family and the Fear of National Decline, 1968 – 1980.* University of North Carolina Press, 2007.

Zimmer, Thomas. "Reflections on the Challenges of Writing a (Pre-)History of the 'Polarized' Present." *Modern American History*, vol. 2, no. 3, Nov. 2019, pp. 403 – 08.

Zimmerman, Paul. "Review of Carnal Knowledge." *Newsweek*, 5 July 1971, p. 71.

Zirakzadeh, Cyrus Ernesto. "Political Prophecy in Contemporary American Literature: The Left-Conservative Vision of Norman Mailer." *The Review of Politics*, vol. 69, 2007, pp. 625 – 49.

Index

 https://doi.org/10.1515/9783111436661-009