kind of "family," the members of which share some but by no means all properties. Yet, Wittgenstein says, we all know what a game is and have no difficulty in recognizing something as one without benefit of a definition. So what is the point of pursuing it? His followers not long afterward applied this strategy to art, where similar reasoning suggested that artworks form a family rather than a homogeneous class, that there are thus no properties common and peculiar to works of arts, and that anyway we all know which are the works of art without benefit of such a definition. The upshot, these philosophers argued, is that the long search for definitions was misguided.

It is against this background that Warhol's *Brillo Box* seems to have something significant to say. A photograph of Warhol among his boxes looks indiscernible from a photograph of a stockroom clerk among the boxes in the supermarket. With what license can we pretend to tell the work of art from the mere utilitarian object? One is made of plywood, the other of cardboard, but can the difference between art and reality rest on a difference that could have gone the other way? In the end, there seems to be a "family resemblance" far more marked between *Brillo Box* and a Brillo box than between the former and, say, any paradigm work of art you choose—the *Night Watch,* say—which in fact seems to have exactly as many resemblances to the Brillo carton as to *Brillo Box*. After all, experts in the art world at the time were quite ready to consign Warhol's Brillo boxes to some less exalted category than sculpture, making them subject to customs duties when a gallery sought to import them into Canada. The point is that the difference between art and reality is not like the difference between camels and dromedaries, where we can count humps. Something cannot be a camel that looks like a dromedary, but something can be an artwork that looks just like a real thing. What makes the one art may be something quite invisible, perhaps how it arrived in the world and what someone intended it to be.

Brillo Box does for art what *Empire* does for film. It forces reflection on what makes it art, when that is not something that is obvious, just as the film demonstrates how little is required for something to be a film. To see *Empire* as film is to shelve as inessential a lot of what theorists have supposed central to film, all of which Warhol unerringly subtracted.

To be sure, Warhol made his point in a clearly negative way. He did not tell us what art was. But by his framing the question, those whose business it is to provide positive philosophical theories could at last address the subject. It is difficult to pretend that Warhol's intention was to clear the underbrush and make room for a finally adequate theory of art. In some ways it is perhaps inscrutable what his intentions ever were. Warhol's name is associated with frivolity, glamour, publicity, and making it big. The awesomeness of his achievement is that under the guise of the simple son of the fairy tale, seemingly no match for his daunting siblings, Warhol made the most profound conceptual discoveries, and produced examples of pure art that appear uncannily to look like examples of pure reality.

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ARTHUR C. DANTO

POPULAR CULTURE. The term *popular culture* can refer broadly to common aesthetic or life practices, in both the statistical and qualitative senses. But theorists have used the term more precisely to designate a particular form of common culture that arises only in the modern period. Popular culture in this account is distinct from both folk culture and high culture: unlike the former, it is mass-produced; unlike the latter, it is mass-consumed.

Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, western European societies experienced a particularly intense social reorganization. Vast numbers of the former peasantry now concentrated in dense cities to work in newly developing mass-production industries. Industrialization and the rise of organized capitalism restructured virtually every sphere of life: new concepts of uniform time, the mixing of previously dispersed local cultures, and the dehumanizing life of factory work all contributed to a homogenization of experience, producing a sense of shared fate across wide territories. At the same time, mounting social density and the vastly higher division of labor in capitalism increased social differentiation, giving rise particularly to vibrant middle classes. The demands of complex administration in capitalist industry and in the state contributed to widespread literacy in these new groups. These changes had profound implications for political as well as cultural life.

A decisive shift in the sources of power occurred with the simultaneous concentration and differentiation of society. The notion of the popular as distinct from the folk and elite implies not just large numbers of ordinary people, but large numbers organized as the people. The French Revolution marks the people's emergence as a political and cultural force. Earlier, power flowed down from the heavens through the monarch and its agent, the feudal aristocracy. The French Revolution challenged this ancient order, relocating power in the Third Estate, that protoparliamentary body representing and, for the first time, conceptualizing the people as possessing "interests" that differed from those of the old regime. Where Louis XIV had declared he was the state, the Third Estate declared they were the nation. Modern politics was thus born, in which legitimacy flows from the people, and "citizens" demanded the right to participate in their own governance.

Throughout this period, culture industries arose to meet the aesthetic desires of the newly emerged middle classes just as these groups developed new administrative and governmental forms to represent their political interests. As the ever-growing middle classes became more and more literate, as the efficiencies of mass industry produced often stupendous economies, and as social differentiation gave more people a sense of their own lives as projects filled with possibility, the western European bourgeoisie sought to "cultivate" themselves as more than mere interchangeable workers laboring for existence. The novel, for instance, rose as an expression of and reflection on modern life and its central figure, the subjective individual. The "news" was invented by as well as spread through new media, documenting the accelerated occurrence of history. Entertainment and leisure emerged as new categories of experience and possibility, at first restricted to the high middle classes, later accessible to virtually everyone.

These new cultural interests and practices contributed to, as well as grew from, changes in the social organization of aesthetic production. A court-based system of arts sponsorship in Europe before the nineteenth century had supported a "high" culture not available to ordinary people. Such a system provided necessary insulation for an artistic conception of aesthetic production, allowing producers to pursue aesthetic impulses in the abstract; while they depended on the understanding and support of an elite audience, that audience was cultivated and trained, with the time and energy to contemplate aesthetic products as a separate category of existence. Artists were thus free from the uncultivated judgments of the masses, while through their association with the centers of power they and their work enjoyed high status and official sanction.

With the rise of industrial society, however, these conditions of aesthetic production changed dramatically. The resources and prestige of court patrons declined precipitously at the same time that less insulated and exalted forms of culture began to occupy the public stage. Industry produced culture and leisure products on a mass scale just as it manufactured durable goods. Creators of high culture thus faced the choice of appealing to wider publics by subjecting their work to popular criteria, working in the culture industries as hired hands, or retreating to specialized—often countercultural—settings, contexts in which they produced only for themselves in ever more esoteric forms, creating as well the contemporary ideal of the devoted artist who renounces all worldly goods.

A clear-cut distinction between popular culture and high culture, however, depended not just on the middle classes generally or on the situation of aesthetic production from the point of view of the artist, but on the active work of the upper classes in response to these changed circumstances. Qualitative distinctions do not come only from the intrinsic qualities of works—that is, from their level of abstraction and degree of esotericism—but from the ways various social groups use culture to distinguish themselves socially. In his own time, for instance, William Shakespeare's plays were common entertainment, and the Globe theater included room for all sorts of people, though each group in its separate place. In the mid-nineteenth century, roving theater troupes performed Shakespeare all over the American countryside as popular distraction, and lines from the plays were at the hands not only of specially educated elites but of wide numbers of ordinary people as well, perhaps more so. Music performances included all varieties of composition in one long evening, ranging from what we now call the "classics" to dance and folk music.

In the realm of culture, threatened elites developed qualitative distinctions to dramatize and defend their exalted status. Although the newly emerging middle classes might achieve material equality, there was to be no doubt that they were not true equals of the older establishment, who distinguished themselves through their level of aesthetic and intellectual cultivation. Old elites engaged in processes of cultural entrepreneurship, founding art museums and symphony societies in which to entrench their cultural values and, thereby, defend their social position. In the process, they created conditions for the autonomy of high cultural values, even leading initiatives to educate and enrich the masses; but in practice these arrangements led to even further separation of high art from popular culture, and elites gained even more status from their association with the arts since the criteria of excellence were now objectified in purportedly impartial institutions.

Similar processes were at work in politics as well as culture, and arguments in the two fields are in fact intricately connected. Through the French Revolution, aristocratic elites articulated a political theory to shore up their declining fortunes: democracy—the rule of the people—was inherently debased, nothing more than submission to an undifferentiated and unknowing mob. Early on, this critique focused on the danger *from* the masses, who had no idea of what was good for themselves and whose unfettered passions threatened stability and the proper order of things; later, elite theorists highlighted the dangers *to* the masses, whose essential formlessness left them gullible and susceptible to demagogic manipulation, especially through new media.

As popular culture developed into a powerful category of aesthetic and life practice, there thus arose as well a vibrant tradition of commentary on it. Within such discourse, the concept of popular culture is Janus-faced: with it, we either celebrate or revile the ordinary people. Popular culture refers democratically to the capacities of all human beings, no matter what their social position or level of "cultivation," to produce and consume symbolic products, indeed, to entertain ideas worth attention at all. It refers as well to the baseness of common thinking, the homogenized incapacity of the masses, their danger to the life of aesthetic refinement, their irrelevance, even threat, to thoughtful governance. In politics, we simultaneously embrace democracy and lament its low level. In culture, we encourage general aesthetic expression and bemoan its poverty.

A basic line of division is thus between those who identify popular culture negatively as mass culture—undifferentiated and low—and those who reject the association. The so-called mass culture critics, nevertheless, come from both left and right. Among the most famous of right-wing mass-culture critiques is Matthew Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy*. Arnold argued that the middle classes were uncultured "Philistines," wealthy but lacking proper appreciation of what he called "the best that has been thought and known in the world." Later, Van Wyck Brooks drew a distinction between "highbrow" and "lowbrow" culture. Critics in this tradition saw the battle lines clearly: on the one side, the invading hordes, on the other, that small cultivated elite who alone were able to discern what is of value, on whose judgment and leadership alone the future depends. They often employed analogies to the decline of the Roman Empire, though now the enemy was within—it was the people itself.

Defense of "high" culture against the masses, however, was by no means limited to the right. Theorists in the Western Marxist tradition worried about the effects of mass production and mass media on political as well as cultural life. Members of the so-called Frankfurt School argued that popular culture was "industrial" insofar as it shared the debased features of capitalist society more generally, which included rampant individualism, superficiality, and instrumentalism. Given the unique capacities of mass production in all spheres of life, popular culture destroys the foundations for critical reflection, pervading leisure time with entertainment commodities that have a narcotizing effect on the masses. These cultural commodities, like capitalist commodities generally, helped maintain the alienated condition of contemporary society, creating out of atomized individuals a shapeless mass incapable of recognizing its own situation. In contrast, the aesthetic dimension of a "pure" high culture provided a last refuge of critical thinking. Insofar as commodification is an ever-expanding scourge, however, mass culture threatened to extinguish even that remaining realm of hope and critical potential.

In contrast, however, there have been varieties of popular culture theory that reject the identification of popularity with massification and commodification. Theories of this variety criticize mass-culture theorists for objectifying ordinary people, for denigrating their enduring capacities for reflection and subjectivity even in a mass-mediated surround. Herbert J. Gans, for instance, argues for a populist position that appreciates the aesthetic (and, by extension, political) capacities of all people, no matter what their level of "cultivation." Gans argues that differences between high culture and popular culture have been exaggerated, that they are similar in their abilities to express the needs of different people: for every "taste public" there corresponds a "taste culture." Moreover, Gans argues that all taste cultures are of equal value, to be judged not one against the other but in relation to the groups they serve.

Additionally, writers from widely divergent political positions saw some redemptive possibilities in popular culture. Walter Benjamin, for instance, while wary of many aspects of culture in the age of mechanical reproduction, also saw in it a liberating potential: mass-produced works were no longer enthralled to the "aura" of the original, thereby providing an escape from the jargon of authenticity that defined so much work in aesthetic theory. It also allowed more people to approach the "great" works, although such works did face the risk of becoming clichéd and debased through repetition. Edward Shils, as well, argued that the spread of classical music and art through mass production had to some degree "improved" the tastes of the people, though the condescending tone of this argument is apparent.

In the second half of the twentieth century, a new line of (often British) cultural theory known as Cultural Studies has emerged from the tradition of Western Marxism, critically appropriating that school's understanding of commodification, but avoiding its implied low opinion of the people. Cultural Studies theorists agree with the Frankfurt School that the industrial commodification of culture inculcates the masses into a hegemonic ideology that saps them of some critical potential. But writers in this tradition disagree with the Frankfurt School about the totality of ideological domination: ordinary people bring to bear sometimes significant critical capacities in their reception of culture, and oppositional readings are always inscribed in mass-culture texts, even if only through their exclusion.

Theorists in the Cultural Studies tradition redefine popular culture—the culture of the people—in terms of reading and reception as a realm of resistance to dominant culture: popular culture is the culture that arises out of the experiences of ordinary people, experiences that include consuming mass-produced culture but only within contexts that are always more complex than can be controlled by such overgeneralized, mass-produced images. Cultural Studies thus involves a shift from a focus on production to a focus on reception.

Writers like E. P. Thompson, Raymond Williams, and Richard Hoggart emphasize the ways in which people use mass-produced culture within the contexts of their everyday lives, pointing out especially the ways in which ordinary people resist the implied messages of that culture. Through continuous selection and interpretation, people resist the totality of mass culture: they act as gatekeepers, rejecting the majority of what is produced; they "read" what is offered through the sometimes quite critical lenses of their own experiences, which are often not those addressed by the products (women, for instance, filter male-addressed media through their lives, as working-class youths respond to middle-class utopias not always in the inscribed manner); consumers often create hidden—and sometimes not-so-hidden—practices of resistance or appropriate images and commodities contrarily to the ways in which these are sold. An important implication of this approach, then, is that meanings are not transcendent, to be uncovered through expert strategies, but are products of social contestation, the result of negotiation among producers, texts, and readers. Pure aesthetics has thus fallen, and sociology replaces philosophy. Distinctions among kinds of culture are matters of social relations, not intrinsic aspects of the works themselves.

Artists as well as cultural theorists have also participated in this "deconstruction" of pure aesthetic distinctions. In the 1960s, Pop art blurred and eventually demolished distinctions between high and low, exalted and ordinary, pure and prosaic. Supportive theorists of this movement dismissed the possibility of distinguishing between highbrow and lowbrow, attacking those who maintain such distinctions as elitist. This so-called new sensibility sought to explode the "canon" of Western civilization's great works, embracing film as well as painting, the Beatles as well as J. S. Bach and Ludwig van Beethoven. Later, this rejection of boundaries contributed to an attack on traditional reading lists in American universities as inscribing an exclusionary program meant to support the dominance of a Eurocentric worldview. Critics sought to make reading lists more "inclusive," reflecting the experiences of people (mainly women and minorities) traditionally excluded from analysis and participation in academic and political discourse. In the wider political context, we refer now to the "culture wars," where the parties argue about the political implications of social and cultural distinctions and about the very possibility of drawing them innocently or objectively.

[*See also* Comics; Cultural Studies; Fashion; Folk Art; Kitsch; Pop Art; Rock Music; *and* Television.]

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JEFFREY K. OLICK

PORNOGRAPHY. *See* Obscenity.

PORTRAITURE. The terms *portraiture,* conventionally defined as "the action or art of portraying," and *to portray* as "to make a picture, image, or figure of" are familiar terms in everyday language. They move between the poles of descriptive delineation in the literal sense and a much more generalized concept of representation, where depiction has a tenuous connection with a palpable object of reference to which some name, some specific identification can be given. In either case, there is an operative assumption that the portrait, the product of portrayal, bears a significant relationship with some being, or entity, in the world that has, or had, both actual existence and some degree of singularity, sufficient for identification. However difficult it may be to portray a specific person, the exclusive subject of "por-