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Abstract: Though often posed in oppositional terms, modernist and popular music have always shared common ground. This is reflected in a growing body of literature that examines crossover as much as conflict, but mutual entanglement has been the case from the get-go. It is of course important to understand modernism and pop as two fairly distinct forms, but the territory between them has proved fertile ground. This chapter studies that territory. It provides a critical synthesis of literature on the topic, and looks at a number of concrete musical examples of ‘popular modernism’, a limit case of pop/modernist entanglement.

Running Head Right-hand: Modernism for and of the masses?

Running Head Left-hand: Stephen Graham

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Modernism for and of the masses? on popular modernisms

Stephen Graham

Experiments in modern music: modernism and popular music

The stories of modernist and modern popular music are intertwined. Pieces like Charles Ives' 'From Hanover Square North, at the End of a Tragic Day, the Voices of the People Again Arose' (1919, taken from the Orchestral Set No. 2) and songs like Rodgers's and Hart's 'Manhattan' (1925) have much in common. Not only products of the same city and the same historical moment, these two examples of modern music both in their own way prioritized technical innovation and aesthetic experiment. Both also gave voice to a particular kind of observing urban sensibility, something akin to Georg Simmel's disinterested 'city type', which might be characteristic of the early decades of the massifying, urbanizing Western twentieth century. **1**

Casting our net further afield, we can hear other significant connections, whether we think of the political theatre of Schoenberg and Weill, the sprung rhythms, extended tonality and style pastiches of Stravinsky and Gershwin, or, later, the modal trancing of Coltrane and Riley and the politicized improvisation of the Black Arts Movement and groups like Musica Elettronica Viva.

Modern music can be seen as a broad church rather than simply a series of sects. This is not to erase important tensions and differences; it is merely to point out that this music emerged at the same times, dealt with some of the same creative, technical and political problems, and used some of the same tools.²

The potential intimacy of the relationship between modernist and popular music is reflected in a growing body of revisionist literature that examines agreement between the two forms.³ This is in addition to humanities literature from outside musicology that similarly looks at or tries to unearth convergences of popular culture and modernism.⁴ These various projects, musicological or otherwise, refashion stereotypical conceptions of modernism (and, in some cases, the avant-garde) as primarily elitist and popular culture as primarily entertainment focused by shining a light on previously unheralded connections between the two. This literature, as we shall see, looks at things like Tin Pan Alley, Broadway and the blues through a modernist lens and, on the other hand, considers figures such as Erik Satie in terms of their relationship with popular culture.

But it would be naïve to see this revisionist scholarly trend as representing a timely postmodern deconstruction of now-outmoded but formerly rigid boundaries. One way or another, figured in positive or negative terms, modernism and mass culture have been intimately connected from the get-go. As Robert Adlington points out in this volume, via Rachel Potter, it is possible to identify ‘two genealogies’ even within classic ‘high’ modernism. Each of these genealogies is defined in terms of its relationship with mass culture; the one anxious and elitist and the other critical but expansionary. The first of these is ‘marked by hostility to a mass public and everyday life’ and is populated by ‘cultural aristocrats’ toiling away in a ‘sacred realm’ fearful of contamination. Adlington embodies this attitude in musical figures such as Arnold

Schoenberg and Milton Babbitt. The second genealogy is seen to ‘champion democracy and the popular voice’ and, following Raymond Williams, to view ‘art as the liberating vanguard of popular consciousness’. Adlington identifies groups such as the Futurists and the Constructivists and individuals such as Nikolai Roslavets and Luigi Nono as engaging with the people and/or mass culture through a modernist lens (even if avant-garde might be a better label at least for the two groups).

By exploring this second genealogy Adlington shows how even within classic ‘anti-hegemonic’ modernism we can identify the presence ‘of a democratizing or popular-revolutionary urge’, either directly in figures like Nono or adjacently in historical avant-garde groups. But the importance of the relationship between modernism and the popular in both cases shows that it is not just revisionist critical accounts written from or in the direction of popular culture that are able to identify important links between modernism and mass culture. Such links can be found all the way down, both in practices of and literature on modernism. For instance, theorists such as Peter Bürger and Andreas Huyssen have attempted to frame the historical avant-garde as a mediating faction existing somewhere between high modernism and mass culture.⁵ More polarized Frankfurt School accounts likewise rest on some notion of complicity. Adorno’s famous description of mass and classical music as ‘torn halves of an integral freedom’ is typical in emphasizing dialectical entanglement.⁶ Despite what he saw as a ‘volatile relationship’, for his part Huyssen identified a ‘persistent complicity of modernism and mass culture’.⁷ Adorno further underlined the intertwinement of the two forms in his suggestion that ‘the diverse spheres of music must be thought of together’ since ‘in both there appear, however distantly, the changes of the whole’.⁸

But to be intertwined is not to be the same. Notwithstanding the convergences identified in recent literature and the complicities threaded through all sorts of classic accounts, modernism and popular culture have usually been defined in more or less antagonistic terms. Modernism, for one, has invariably been seen to emphasize anti-hegemonic innovation, complexity and affective estrangement, providing through this, in Daniel Albright's words, 'a testing of the limits of aesthetic construction'.⁹ Björn Heile, similarly, has homed in on criticality as a key modernist contribution: 'the dialectical critique advocated by modernism is something one gives up at one's peril'.¹⁰ This focus on anti-hegemonic critique, expressed both in implicit (largely the first genealogy) and explicit (largely the second) political and aesthetic terms in modernist art, potentially places it in something of an oppositional relationship to popular culture.

Going further along this track of divergence between modernism and mass culture, other writers emphasize modernism's formalism and its consequent rejection of the mass appeal of popular culture. For example Georg Lukács described modernist literature's 'exclusive emphasis on formal matters'.¹¹ This emphasis, seen as a negative by Lukács, for its advocates actually allows modernism to embody progressivist, critical ideals in both aesthetic and political registers.¹² Form is content in this understanding, as Brecht responded in not so many words to Lukács, since form can of course easily be deployed for strategic semiotic and political purposes; for example to embody oppression or liberation allegorically. This likewise distinguishes modernist art from what stereotypes would suggest are the text- and image-laden discourses of popular music.

Lukács, meanwhile, also connected modernism's formalism to a kind of 'negation of outward reality', something that we can relate to Clement Greenberg's and Arnold Schoenberg's praise for what they saw as modernism's disdain for popular appeal. Again what was a negative

for Lukács, a supposed turning away from the world, was reframed in positive terms as a rejection of commercialism by supporters of modernism. In this spirit Greenberg balked at the ‘gigantic apparition of popular art’ in urbanized modernity, which he labelled in a broad critical sweep as ‘kitsch’. Greenberg suggested that this ‘ersatz culture’ was ‘mechanical and operate[d] by formulas’ that only offered ‘faked sensations’ to audiences.¹³ Schoenberg, for his part, famously said that ‘if it is art it is not for everybody; if it is for everybody it is not art’.¹⁴ Modernism is seen by these figures as neither ‘for’ everybody nor as ‘operating by formula’. Popular music, by contrast, with its mass market mediations and its basis in a shared rhythmic, timbral and tonal language that is generally more immediately culturally readable than the musical languages of classic modernism, is seen to be hopelessly compromised by its commodity status and therefore as largely dumb with respect to modernism’s dialectical critiques.

So we are in a bifurcated situation. On the one hand a narrative of convergence built on or at least framed in response to Frankfurt School accounts of dialectical complicity can be seen to be in the emergence, both in musicology and other disciplines. On the other an oppositional narrative that emphasizes a fundamental disparity between popular and modernist culture retains its classic explanatory power.¹⁵ The rest of this chapter considers literature and music that have something to say to this debate. In contrast to Adlington, who looks at modernism *for* the people but not necessarily *of* the people – in other words looks at classic ‘high’ modernism directed in one way or another ‘towards’ the people – I pay particular attention to so-called popular modernism, a form that might be seen as being both *of* and *for* the people. I aim to provide a critical synthesis of existing literature as well as to explore the concept in the context of various musical examples.

Arising out of all of this is a threefold argument about the viability of musical popular modernism. In the next section, I explore a range of potentially ‘popular modernist’ music from the first half of the twentieth century, and argue that something is lost when we ignore important qualities of modernism’s classic form. The ‘Post-1960s popular modernism’ section, on the other hand, suggests that popular modernism might be a useful concept in helping us to contextualize and understand various (and variously) exploratory, exigent examples of popular music from across the later twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Both sections begin by examining apposite theoretical literature before moving on to musical examples. Finally, and partly contrarily to the argument put forward in the popular modernism section, I suggest in the conclusion that the concept of ‘popular modernism’ potentially betrays something of a lack of faith in the popular on its own terms.

Golden Age popular modernism

The central place of so-called Golden Age American popular music in the modern urban moment in the West is fairly clear. Recent scholars have attempted to go beyond the general sense of mutual influence and co-extension that exists between the two, however. They argue that this music might be seen not just as both part and productive of the modern moment, but as being part of *modernism* too. This argument, reflective of the literature emphasizing convergences between modernism and popular culture mentioned earlier, relies to some degree on an amended version of modernism that nevertheless finds key tenets of classic modernism in the music. In this section I shall survey arguments from Ronald Schleifer and Ulf Lindberg on this topic whilst

also looking at other potential examples of popular modernism from the first half of the twentieth century.

Ronald Schleifer's 2011 book *Popular Music and Modernism* corresponds very closely with Ulf Lindberg's 2003 *Popular Music* article 'Popular Modernism? The "Urban" Style of Interwar Tin Pan Alley'. Schleifer and Lindberg use slightly different language but both look at the way that the lyrics of Golden Age pop songs describe particular modern subjectivities and lives, and at how the form and style of those lyrics and the music through which they are delivered variously embody modernist techniques of formal play, destabilization and innovation.

Schleifer, for his part, attempts 'to locate popular music within a working comprehension of twentieth-century modernism'.¹⁶ In doing so, he points to what he sees as the 'enormous transformations in the lived life of the early twentieth century' through processes such as mass urbanization and the growth of the consumer society.¹⁷ Schleifer's modernism tries to respond to the sheer variety of these transformations, incorporating pleasure and suggesting, in contrast to 'high' modernist alienation, that 'there are other ways of inventing other realities'.¹⁸ Schleifer's approach is to read key figures in terms of a tailored analytical framework based broadly on a quartet of modernist concepts: semantic formalism, defamiliarization, montage and dialectical wholeness. The music discussed by Schleifer 'semanticizes' its abstract laws through these various means, as seen in the 'ensembled' performance-compositions of Billie Holiday and the layered signifyin' and patter of Fats Waller.¹⁹ Meanwhile Schleifer locates Cole Porter's work within a Lacanian nexus of pleasure, desire and enunciation, where Porter's materialized lyrics, his dislocated forms and his shifting chord patterns, for example, use 'metonymic displacement' (where, as for Lacan, desire is always slipping away onto another object) to express fundamentally modernist qualities of transience and disconcertion.²⁰

Lindberg takes a similar tack to Schleifer in that he argues that we can identify classically modernist strategies of defamiliarization and estrangement in Golden Age popular music. In order to do so Lindberg develops his own theoretical vocabulary of ‘derealisation’, self-reflexivity and irony, and as noted draws heavily on Georg Simmel’s 1903 notion of a ‘city type’, a particular modern kind of subjectivity consisting of an ‘intellectual, reserved, blasé attitude’.²¹ Comparing Golden Age pop to literary modernism, Lindberg suggests that,

When looked for [. . .] the uncertainties of living in modern times become equally visible in interwar consumer culture (which, like high culture, should be thought of as stratified). The Alley greats were revisionists in their idiom, not iconoclasts; but so were, after all, a great deal of the high literary modernists.²²

Lindberg expands on this claim, suggesting ‘that the renegotiation of the terms of romance, which characterizes the work of the period’s top lyricists, should be seen against the backdrop of a developed urban sensibility’, and that it ‘makes sense to consider the rise of “unsentimental, even anti-romantic” standards for writing song lyrics in terms of a popular modernism’.²³

Lindberg argues that various songs inhabit and creatively respond to these new social mores. ‘Manhattan’, for example, is seen to ‘pastoralise’ and therefore ‘ironically re-present’ the metropolis, introducing ‘the big city as a hybrid between a home and an amusement park – simultaneously place (inhabitable territory) and space (explorable territory)’.²⁴ Lindberg expands his case using extended analyses of tracks such as Johnny Mercer’s 1937 ‘Too Marvellous for Words’ and the Gershwins’ ‘Embraceable You’ (1930), where he hears their lyrics operating across multiple stylistic levels and registers as modernist ‘meta-texts’ using hybrid language to destabilize boundaries between lover and loved, subject and object.²⁵

Lindberg fleshes out his case by discussing the touristic lenses in Cole Porter songs such as ‘Let’s Do It’, which he thinks help push realist aesthetics ‘into modernist uncertainty’.²⁶

Both Schleifer and Lindberg have much to say about American popular music that is insightful in terms of its relationship to modernism. The same is true of writers such as Edward Comentale, who has argued that genres such as blues and rock ‘n’ roll in the pre/postwar periods embodied through their form and their affect a kind of ‘new modernity’ and as such can be identified with modernism.²⁷ But in the end none of these accounts are fully convincing, I think, since modernism needs to transform to such a degree for them to hold water. It is potentially fruitful to see modernism as being as much about urbanity and the urban, or about Comentale’s new modernity, as about abrasive criticality – if for no other reason than that the shock often attributed to modernism in this respect is so easily absorbed into bourgeois cultural life and therefore muted. I am also not against making room for pleasure in the modernist project, in line with the efforts of Arved Ashby.²⁸ But something is surely lost by giving up the aesthetic and/or cultural criticality that has been so central to classic formulations of modernism, or by deemphasizing affects of estrangement and alienation.

Adding ‘popular’ to modernism would, as I have said, surely modify the concept’s meaning. But it shouldn’t fundamentally transform it or water it down so that it becomes tasteless and hollow. Modernist art, at least in its classic form, presents a kind of disunity. It doesn’t just re-frame conventions and confound expectations but also tries to present some kind of broken image of the world, maybe to shock audiences or at least simply to embody or critique current conditions. As Adorno suggested of modernist art, ‘with equal necessity it [turns] its back on conventional surface coherence, the appearance of harmony, the order corroborated merely by replication’.²⁹ I don’t see Cole Porter or his ilk doing that, however much they can be seen to be

engaged in modernistic strategies of defamiliarization and semanticization. Of course, however, Golden Age American popular music doesn't tell the whole story of popular modernism in this era. I shall look at a few potential further examples before moving to my conclusion.

Marxist musical theatre, for one, might merit the label of popular modernism. Kyle Gann has described the Broadway composer Marc Blitzstein as 'at the same time a determined populist and determined modernist', drawing attention to how 'smoothly' Blitzstein 'integrated feisty modernisms into the accompaniment' of his 1937 labour movement musical *The Cradle Will Rock*.³⁰ Those 'feisty modernisms', which Gann hears in the irregular pulse groups, polyrhythms and chromatic root progressions of songs such as 'There's Something So Damn Low About the Rich', match up with the critical class politics that Blitzstein attempts to braid into the work through its text and narrative.

All these elements in Blitzstein – the wonky, jerky rhythms, the mordant chromaticism and the politics – build clearly on theatrical practices established by Kurt Weill in collaboration with Bertolt Brecht in the late 1920s and early 1930s in Germany, and developed by Weill in America in the ensuing two decades. Though the classic account of Weill is a dualistic one, with the German works seen as modernist but the American ones as trading novelty off for commercial gain, recent scholarship has offered a different perspective. Stephen Hinton, for example, sees a continuous line through Weill's music, arguing of Weill that 'the adjective *new* was as indispensable to his artistic vocabulary as it was to Busoni'.³¹ Running throughout Weill's varied career was what Hinton calls a desire for 'reform', as can be seen in everything from the socialist epic theatre of *Die Dreigroschenoper* (1928) to the formally daring albeit highly tuneful psychoanalytical Broadway musical *Lady in the Dark* (1941), and from the hybrid opera-musical *Street Scene* (1946) to the antiapartheid show *Lost in the Stars* (1949). As Hinton

suggests, ‘it is Weill’s self-appointed role as theatrical reformer that arguably supplies the key to his relatively short but intense creative life.’ Moreover, this ‘reform’, thinks Hinton, ‘is not merely a technical or formal matter; it is a moral one as well.’³² Hinton’s continuous vision of Weill’s creative life builds on Kim H. Kowalke’s 1995 article ‘Kurt Weill, Modernism, and Popular Culture: *Öffentlichkeit als Stil*’. For Kowalke, Weill’s music after 1925 ‘tried to break out of New Music’s splendid isolation, to attract a non-specialist audience, to dismantle the barricades that the “art-for-art’s-sake” wing of modernism had erected against mass culture’.³³ Speaking of Busoni’s ‘post-war attempts to reconcile past and present’, Kowalke ultimately thinks that Weill’s work can be seen in a similar way, as ‘characteristic of what Martha Bayles calls “extroverted modernism,” whose attitude toward accessibility/popularity differentiates it from its “introverted” and “perverse” kin’.³⁴

Does all this make Weill a modernist, popular or otherwise? The political and theatrical reforms of his work seem to problematize simple oppositions of mass culture and modernism, but its sheer tunefulness and accessibility seem to put any modernist credentials in question. Weill innovated profoundly within context, dealt directly with concepts like alienation in his epic theatre works and likewise consistently endorsed critical politics. But the degree to which his music presents disunity and dissension is limited, and as such Weill should only partially be seen to participate in modernism.

We can examine other pre-1960s music in this context. Cabaret has often been cited as a seeding ground of modernist culture, a place where, in the case for example of the famous Le Chat Noir in Paris, composers such as Claude Debussy and Erik Satie could rub shoulders with artists, writers and popular singers such as Aristide Bruant.³⁵ The cabaret, in this spirit, has been cited as a fertile meeting place of high and low, a place where, in Bernard Gendron’s

words, ‘popular music joined forces with art and literature in a synthesis of high and low cultures that has since rarely been equalled’.³⁶ But whilst we can certainly think of examples of art and music that embody this synthesis, for various reasons the direction of the influence was often one-way. This is such that, for example, Erik Satie’s music could explore humour, farce and popular music styles, as for example in the ragtime of a short piece like *Le Piccadilly* (circa 1904, pre-echoing the Debussy of *Le petit nègre*, 1909) or the gunshots, typewriters and tottering oom-pah of his ballet *Parade* (1924), or on the other hand entertain with the conceptual hi-jinks of something like *Vexations* (1893), without ever getting beyond the feel of a cross-cultural encounter. The same could be said of the composer-members of Les Six in the 1920s and 1930s, where cabaret and jazz aesthetics come together (creatively, but perhaps uneasily) with modernist sounds and ambitions in pieces like Darius Milhaud’s *La création du monde* (1922–23) and Francis Poulenc’s *Concerto for Two Pianos* (1932).

We are only ever really hearing high perspectives in this music. The borrowed syncopations and parodic air in Satie speak to us of a popular-infused modernism rather than anything more organically fused or more authentically popular, notwithstanding the amount of music Satie wrote directly in popular idioms early in his career. In these cases, the distinction between classic characteristics of modernism – difficulty, estrangement, cultural illegibility – and of popular music – commercial appeal and cultural legibility – is upheld through deviation. Similar (albeit reversed) issues of acculturation face other cases of potential popular modernism, from jazz musicians such as Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong to cabaret singers like Bruant.³⁷ Despite clear modernist qualities of innovation and urbanity in their work, these artists do not explore criticality or disunity to a fundamental degree.

A whole host of pre-1960s popular, classical and jazz songwriters, composers and musicians can therefore be seen to be working in modernistic and populist ways without fitting comfortably into the popular modernist category. Their work draws on modernism and on popular culture without clearly moving into the liminal territory implied by my use of the popular modernism label. Satie and composer colleagues seem to me only to flirt with the popular. Cole Porter is ‘too’ popular. Kurt Weill problematizes this binary, but even in his case the work feels too populist, too whole, to count comfortably as modernist. Popular music can therefore be seen to verge onto modernism in many of these Golden Age and pre-1960s cases, but in only a few seem to justify the popular modernist label. We can in the end reasonably describe much popular culture in modernistic terms, as trucking in one or other modernist technique or strategy, but examples of work that is both genuinely popular and genuinely modernist – of popular modernism, in short – are fairly rare. But they do exist. In order to show this, the next section goes back a little and lays some theoretical groundwork with Frankfurt School and Frankfurt-derived arguments, before exploring various potentially more viable examples of popular modernist music.

Post-1960s popular modernism

Theodor Adorno’s arguments about mass culture are far more layered than we might expect given the impression we get of him as a humbugging naysayer from figures such as Charles Rosen and Lukács.³⁸ This caricatured version of Adorno, not wholly inaccurate but nevertheless reductionist, sees him as an irremediably sour figure fixated on *Kulturindustrie* standardization and ‘new music’ authenticity, subscribing to what Thomas Y. Levin has called ‘a myopic

mandarinism blind to the utopian and progressive dimensions of mass media'.³⁹ But Adorno's theories present a much more complicated picture than this caricature allows; I expand on this point here as a way of setting up a theoretical context for popular modernism.

Whilst arguments about standardization and related concepts such as the social substitution of exchange-value for use-value pervade much of Adorno's work, taken in blunt terms these concepts obscure a complex array of evolving dialectical positions. In fact, Adorno can be seen to lay the groundwork for a version of popular modernism we can tie to familiarly modernist notions of criticality. He did this by providing a model of critique which, despite parochialism, was fundamentally malleable. Nothing was beyond criticism; what mattered was concrete expression, not some abstract schema of high/low value. Adorno was after all as willing to criticize high culture and new music as he was mass culture.⁴⁰ And in any case the sting of Adorno's dismissive and reductive comments about mass culture should not blind us to how richly developed, comprehensive and indeed dialectical his views actually were. In the letter to Walter Benjamin that the famous 'torn halves' statement comes from, Adorno outlines a complex argument that undermines both 'high' mandarin and 'low' celebrant positions.⁴¹ In *Aesthetic Theory* Adorno again twists away from comfortable Leavisite elitism in suggesting that whilst 'the distinction between entertainment and autonomous art points to a qualitative difference that must be retained', this is so only 'provided one does not overlook the hollowness of the concept of serious art or the validity of unregimented impulses in lowbrow art'.⁴² If everything is compromised then everything can also be free, or at least speak of freedom. This is not to ratify postmodern relativism but merely to recognize the natural variations of value and affinity found in all musical forms.

Adorno's panoramic rulings, then, do not easily reduce to a recognizable or conventional scale of cultural value, instead insisting on specificity with regards both to commodification and critique. As Frederic Jameson suggested in this vein: 'the Adorno-Horkheimer theory of the Culture Industry provides a theoretical description of mass cultural experience which can scarcely be reduced to sheer opinionated or elitist vituperation against "bad art"': ⁴³ Because of all this, Adorno's work can be treated as a toolkit that helps one to locate critical value in potentially unexpected places; and this kind of treatment of Adorno has indeed become more and more common. ⁴⁴

One of the strongest voices raised through Adorno in this kind of way has been the British writer Ben Watson. Watson sees Adorno's 'hysterical' disposition, his rejection of middlebrow classical culture and the 'radical psychosis' of his style in a line with the surrealists, the beats and the punks (echoing Greil Marcus in drawing this kind of line through the twentieth century, if obliquely): ⁴⁵

Adorno is at one with the Surrealists in celebrating the grotesqueries on the edge of the culture industry – he's a video nasty fan, not a moralist. [. . .] Gratitude for the 'culture' handed down to us by the authorities merely paves the way to manipulation. Adorno's revulsion to that kind of top-down, patronizing programme anticipates the sneers punk hurled at 'lovely music'. ⁴⁶

In 'Adorno, Plato, Music', Watson expands these links between Adornian cultural critique and popular culture. Discussing Adorno's participation in and encouragement of an 'institutional avant-garde' at Darmstadt in the 1950s and 1960s, Watson connects Adorno to non-institutional or mass cultural practices. He draws particular attention to the 'free jazz, free improvisation and

progressive rock movements which exploded in the 60s' and are 'currently [in 2001] urgent objects of debate and enquiry among a new generation of radical musicians and listeners':

Understanding them requires appreciation of the intimate and tense relationship between possible community, political consciousness, commercial restraints and the noise of negation. Adorno's insights can really help. Attention to how musicians argue about music and freedom shows that the controversies which surrounded a high modernist like John Cage also appear inside demotic genres like rock. Focus on musical actualities can provide an exit from the defeatist paradoxes of postmodernist cultural theory trapped in 'high/low' and 'pro-Adornian/anti-Adornian' binaries.⁴⁷

This last point about postmodern traps of high and low – categories that get reinforced every time a theorist suggests they are traversed in postmodern culture – turns out to be key for Watson. Instead of characterizing music based on 'inert' categories born of market behaviour (e.g. 'popular'), Watson rejects out of hand the 'postmodern empirical sociology' or 'sociology of manners' that he thinks slots music into a static high/low spectrum. This approach is represented most directly for Watson by writers such as Simon Frith and Georgina Born.⁴⁸

Watson instead sees music as a materialist practice where such stratifications of high and low and such commercially defined, non-musical descriptions will not do:

A materialist study of music, one that looks at the actual problems facing people engaged in music-making, immediately discovers conflicts over ideological compromise, musical standardization, and audience misunderstanding. It finds antagonism and '*avant-garde*' postures at every level. Only by exclusive focus on the 'consumer' – a putative concept with no ground in social class and a material relationship to the means of production – can popular studies evade the dialectical role of the unpopular in the genesis of Pop.⁴⁹

For Watson, neither popular nor avant-garde/unpopular labels should be seen to designate static or ‘watertight’ musical practices cordoned off from one another ‘as if they describe particular styles’, or as if they map neatly on to some abstract high/low distinction. This kind of (in Watson’s eyes) music-sociological approach ‘obscures the fact that music’ is a ‘material process in which abstract antinomies are in continual interpretation and transformation.’ **50**

Watson therefore tries to draw attention to the ways in which all musical forms contain the possibility of conformity and instability, and to how all are more or less mediated by a social/cultural nexus of commercial imperatives and capitalist capture. This is as true of new classical composition as it is of noise music or black metal or bluegrass. All music genres are embroiled all the way down in both conforming and confrontational gestures. Of course degree matters: Slipping in an unconventional harmony to a bluegrass song or writing a new orchestral piece using combinatorial harmonic principles *may* not be as confrontational as, say, putting a noise act on the main stage at a large popular music festival. But the point is that the possibility exists in each genre or cultural context for profound confrontation and challenge. In laying out this analytical scheme Watson can be seen to expand Adorno’s critical project beyond Paul Whiteman jazz and Schoenbergian new music, whilst nevertheless building on ideas of equal opportunities critique, where any musical form retains the possibility of confronting its own conditions, in doing so.

It is through this expansive, potentially inclusive gesture that we can start to see how Adorno’s work could inspire a popular modernism based on criticality. Examples of Watson reading popular music against the grain in this way, as assuming both commercial and antagonistic/avant-garde postures for its audience, abound. Watson’s whole project around Frank Zappa, for example, is based on an Adornian framework of negative dialectics (and poodle

play).⁵¹ Meanwhile in ‘Semen Froth’ Watson rails against the class basis of the high/low distinction, and describes the ways in which everything from various entry points of Black music into Britain (Lol Coxhill playing with Rufus Thomas; Jimi Hendrix visiting London with Chas Chandler) to the KLF’s ‘pranks’, Sinéad O’ Connor’s ‘politics’ and Sonic Youth’s ‘noisecore raids’ communicate an antagonism that equates in many ways to an avant-garde transformation of the status quo.⁵²

Whilst Watson is in danger of idealizing these moments of perceived authenticity, and indeed of staging personal taste as historical imperative (‘my innovation is better than yours!’), the expansive organizing gesture of his argument about avant-garde postures being visible in all music is valuable nonetheless. Although there is some distance between ‘avant-garde’ and ‘modernism’ as concepts,⁵³ in this case it’s not too much of a stretch to identify in Watson’s arguments a set of blueprints for how we might read details of specific examples of popular music in popular modernist terms.

And it is here that we finally arrive at the motivating topic for the chapter, popular modernism. This notion of popular modernism, where popular music might be seen to embody modernist techniques and affects of estrangement, critique and alienation to such a degree that it demands (or at least warrants) recontextualization and reconceptualization, is a tantalizing one. Popular modernism, I argue, should be seen as an intermediate region along a spectrum linking popular music at one side and modernism at the other. Popular modernism, in this understanding, would not necessarily operate as a fixed concept with clear and straightforward real-world referents. It would instead be seen as a regional frame through which we might contextualize the interaction and overlapping of popular music and modernism. It does not have one singular definition but instead embodies a set of tendencies in interaction and flux. Concrete examples of

music may fit into the frame as clear examples of *popular modernist music*. Or they might exist at its edges, as examples of *modernist popular music* (i.e. as popular music with modernist dimensions). The point, as I shall show, is that enough examples exist of supposedly popular music drawing directly on modernist techniques and goals that using the category of popular modernism to describe them, or at least to provide a context with which they more or less overlap, is both useful and instructive.

I will look at some writing from Mark Fisher in this area as a bridge into more direct discussions of potentially popular modernist, or modernist popular, music. Fisher has been a strong recent advocate for his own version of popular modernism. Working somewhat within the Adorno-infused language of Watson insofar as he endorses criticality and avant-garde postures as existing within all forms of music – in other words, insofar as he subscribes to a version of modernism which insists on its progressive capacities whilst relativizing these at the same time – Fisher differs even from Watson in his embrace of truly *popular* music.

In a 2006 piece, ‘From 1984’, Fisher laid out his vision of modernist culture:

Modernism is not an advocacy of the current or the contemporary. It would be better to say that it is the exact opposite of such a stance. Modernism is about breaks with current conditions. The modernist event is the moment when what appeared to be a seamless ‘pre-sent’ (Burroughs) breaks open; the Possible shatters into a million previously unimaginable possibilities. [. . .] Each modernist artifact is significant not for what it ‘is’ but for the possibilities it points to but which itself is not. **54**

This kind of framing of modernism as a negation of the present, as a shattering of the possible and a resetting of current conditions, chimes with more traditional accounts mentioned earlier.

But in an untimely (and therefore perhaps essentially modernist) gesture, Fisher identifies these criteria in examples of popular music, from post-punk and no wave in the late 1970s and early 1980s to jungle in the 1990s.⁵⁵ Fisher additionally praises the ability of this sort of music to communicate challenging ideas and to shock in this way even whilst speaking to a broad public. This music, according to Fisher, embodied in its public nature top-down postwar social democratic paternalism's concern for the public good over consumers and market-mediated desire.⁵⁶

Fisher underscores the importance of public impact on what he identifies as popular modernist music:

The Jam thrived in public space, on public service broadcasting. It mattered that they were popular; the records gained in intensity when you knew that they were number one, when you saw them on Top of the Pops – because it wasn't only you and fellow initiates who heard the music; the (big) Other heard it too.⁵⁷

Fisher makes a similar point when writing in a separate piece about the Bristolian post-punk act The Pop Group, whose music's jerky, prime number union of dub, funk and punk templates within a political programme of Marxist critique, as heard on inflammatory songs such as 'We are all Prostitutes' (1979) and albums like *For How Much Longer Do We Tolerate Mass Murder* (1980), might be seen to represent a particularly ripe example of popular modernism:

How could a sound like this ever have been made? A whole secret history of the 20th century is oneirically compressed into this lugubrious, delirious sonic anarchitecture. This incandescent condensation of Stockhausen, Duchamp, King Tubby, Albert Ayler, Guy Debord. [. . .] A polymorphous punk-funkadelia predeconstructed by dub, flirting with collapse and chaos, [. . .] a euphoric shattering of the social in the name of a dream collectivity, a dreaming we, a

dreamed we. And not skulking on the margins, but exploding in the heart of the commodity. On the front of the *NME*. 1979 – a different world. 58

In these arguments Fisher's project shows its Watsonian dimensions most clearly: Modernism might applaud and pursue criticality, but popular music can be as critical and as progressive on its own terms as high modernism can on its. In fact, Fisher asserts, popular modernism is in some ways superior to and even justifies 'high' modernism: 'In popular modernism, the elitist project of modernism was retrospectively vindicated'. 59

This last point is obviously a contentious one, not least because it seems to be based on what some would see as a fundamental contradiction: the inability to be critical of a system when speaking from comfortably within that system. At least, traditional modernists might argue, high modernist culture is somewhat removed from the marketplace and therefore less compromised than the examples Fisher lauds. This is a valid point. But the charge of elitism levelled by Fisher points to its own unanswerable contradiction (attempting to provide an all-encompassing critique of society but from a necessarily limited vantage point), whilst his argument about popular modernism being able to speak critically for and to the public with a much stronger mandate than high modernism seems to me at least to resolve some of the tension within the second genealogy of modernism quite convincingly.

Watson and Fisher in any case argue in support of a version of popular modernism that equates classic modernist criticality with popular culture. In order to explore and test this point further I will now explore different examples in more depth. One of Fisher's go-to reference points when describing popular modernism is post-punk. I therefore focus initially on no wave, which was a localized movement within post-punk that built on some of the values of punk, chiefly its DIY emphasis and its anti-establishment politics, and claimed to radicalize these.

No wave had a scorched-earth mentality. The music, born amidst the scuzzy venues, low rents and thriving art scene of late 1970s Downtown New York and consecrated by the Brian Eno-produced compilation *No New York* (1978), expressed disdain for the musical grammar and performing etiquette of rock and pop.⁶⁰ No wave presented itself as an ‘aggressively Year Zero project’.⁶¹ Simon Reynolds suggested that ‘no wave groups acted as if they had no ancestors at all’. Teenage Jesus and the Jerks leader Lydia Lunch indeed ridiculed the idea of links between punk and no wave, saying, ‘I hated almost the entirety of punk rock. [. . .] I don’t think No Wave had anything to do with it’.⁶²

Like other modernist movements, then, no wave saw itself as a self-consciously critical site of struggle against the conventional limitations of popular music as such. The antagonizing force at the movement’s core, the ‘no’ that tried to refuse new wave, punk and popular norms, displaced punk’s musical conciliation with the rock ‘n’ roll-derived principle of ‘three chords and the truth’ by installing modernistic appeals to Year Zero novelty, leaning into permanent and clean-slate renewal as a driving force. However, also like other modernist movements, the music’s claimed distance from preceding and parallel movements was not so clear-cut as it was often made out to be. The cross-media nature of no wave (where film was as prominent as music), in addition to its challenging performance aesthetics, tied it to previous Downtown scenes.⁶³ Likewise the musical similarities between no wave and other musical forms are palpable, from Albert Ayler’s and Ornette Coleman’s free jazz in the 1960s to the Stooges’ ‘LA Blues’ in 1970 to punk or proto-punk acts such as Suicide in the later 1970s, all of whose sonic wildness, freedom and abrasion no wave can be seen to mirror.⁶⁴

In this way, no wave clearly emerged from a lineage and existed in a context. But even though the distance from something like punk to no wave was not always as vast as was claimed,

we can hear clear differences nonetheless. Punk's simplicity was here fringed with a strong degree of sonic chaos and aggression that seemed to push affect and technique into deeply unconventional territories. No wave songs, at their extreme, could be made almost exclusively of shards of guitar feedback and indistinct noise, as heard on a track like Mars' brutal, rock-slide, almost freeform noise-screed 'N.N. End' (1980). Other songs are dominated by shouted vocals, the most primitive of drum beats and detuned and distorted guitars played with scant regard for conventional chords, as heard on Teenage Jesus' 'The Closet' and 'Orphans' (both 1978). The noise-squall distortion of these songs prioritized dense, metallic sheets of feedback and leaden low-end sounds over the lightly distorted power chords and buoyant rhythm section of punk.

But this doesn't tell the whole no wave story. The music of DNA and the Contortions sounded out a bony, gawky roughness that contrasted somewhat with the squall of Mars or Teenage Jesus, even though noise and aggression were likewise important here. Arto Lindsay's crunchy guitar and unkempt vocals, Tim Wright's skulking bass and Ikue Mori's pulverizing drums in DNA songs such as the irregularly phrased and noise-full 'New Fast' and '32123' (both 1981), or the wild skeletal funk of Egomaniac's 'Kiss' (1978), are exemplary of the screaming, collapsingly angular vocal and instrumental gestures of this end of no wave. As are James Chance's saxophone skronks for the Contortions, which can be heard on wound-tight, brittle shout-songs such as their version of James Brown's 'I Can't Stand Myself' (1978) and, most famously, 'Contort Yourself' (1979). Post-punk angularity – irregular hypermetrical patterns, for instance, or spread-wide guitar riffs – is skewed here to a point of near-collapse.

No wave music therefore emphasized aggression, noise and instability in a manner that separated it from punk (and this isn't even mentioning subsequent and even less punk-like acts often connected to the style, from Swans to Magik Markers). Where punk played with cultural

identifiers, from catchy sloganeering to blunt expressions of political antagonism, which allowed it to be read as the culminating point of a radical historical lineage, no wave implied a similar historical trajectory but deduced seemingly different conclusions from it.⁶⁵ The clearest path to the future, no wave seemed to suggest, lay in new sounds, not merely in dressings-up of rock 'n' roll conventions. 'N.N. End' or something like the rough, shuddering, trebly sounds of DNA's typically scratchy 'Not Moving' (1978) could never have been made by the Sex Pistols.

It seems clear that no wave provides a strong case of a popular form of music – popular in the sense of working clearly in a pop lineage and in pop contexts, if not in having huge popular appeal – whose aggression, criticality and emphasis on innovation well recommends it as modernist. Of course these aren't the only qualities we might identify as modernist, but they're important nonetheless. The kind of investment in confrontation found in the music and indeed across no wave as a movement – Lunch has referred to herself as a 'confrontationalist' for years, whilst no wave concerts often accentuated aggression and disorder – as well as its relative innovation within context emblemizes its modernistic credentials. No wave's popular modernism as based on criticality and subversion of localized genre norms is surely an untimely and potentially denatured modernism, but, unless we were either to bar entry to music existing in the marketplace or to treat modernism as a closed historical period, that doesn't necessarily preclude it from the club. The former idea seems to be unreasonable in any case, since nothing is pure in the sense desired by this claim, and the latter, whilst potentially compelling, would likely serve to inhibit modernism to an unhelpful degree.

Once we accept supposedly 'popular' music as potentially fitting the bill of modernism, we start to see many other examples working in this kind of way. Popular music criticality and abrasion can be heard throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, just as innovation and

exploration. I mentioned degree earlier: it would be very easy here to slide down a slippery slope and acclaim any local instance of perceived innovation or abrasion as modernist. Against this tendency, it is important to hold on to some core defining features of modernism. I suggest that criticality; a challenge to normal procedures; and affects of estrangement, shock and alienation are of paramount importance in this context.

By these criteria, no wave and some examples of post-punk would certainly count as popular modernist music. They pull apart musical norms of their time and their immediate contexts, sometimes unite these with critical artistic and/or political programmes, and in doing this challenge audiences profoundly. We can identify similar achievements in many other popular musical forms, from jungle, grime and wonky in Britain in the 1990s, 2000s and 2010s, to related experimental techno in Germany and the United States and finally to noise/free jazz in Italy, the Netherlands and many other places (not to mention underground and fringe forms such as extreme metal and noise among many others). All these musics place an emphasis on future-facing sounds and reflect evolving and distinctive urban modernities through their lyrics and the technologies they employ. Alongside this emphasis on innovation and experiment, shock and criticality play a lesser or greater role in each of them. Taken together, these genres put traditional separations of modernism and popular culture into question.

In the last category (affects of estrangement, shock and alienation), an act like the Dutch group The Ex – whose album *Catch My Shoe* draws on the aggression and distortion of punk, the scaly, brittle grooves of post-punk and the pulverizing, frenzied attack of free jazz musicians like Peter Brötzmann, among other elements – seeks to challenge and to destabilize in a recognizably modernist way. The aforementioned grime and wonky are just two of a series of 1990s and 2000s club or urban styles of British music hailed by writers in futurist, even modernist terms.

Not all may comfortably fulfil the criteria set up earlier, but they all respond to aspects of popular modernism. Many techno and electronic acts, from those signed to Basic Channel or Raster-Noton in Germany in recent years to Kraftwerk in the 1970s and 1980s, likewise play or played with topoi of futurity whilst also seeking to make music in unexpected, challenging ways.

Kraftwerk is an interesting example here. On songs such as ‘Geiger Counter’ (1975), ‘Showroom Dummies’ (1977), ‘The Robots’ (1978), ‘Neon Lights’ (1978) and ‘Computer Love’ (1981) – songs whose titles and lyrics served as programmatic invocations of the group’s conceptual investments – the synthesized sounds, lyrics and even the musicians themselves become projections of a *Gesamtkunstwerk* modernity interested in the automatization of subjectivity and the subjectivation of machines. Kraftwerk’s cyborgian modernism clearly expressed a futurist sensibility. But this was nevertheless anchored in postmodern references to and a melancholic longing for past modernisms and past styles of music, evident both in the beauty, proportion and polish of their machinic sounds and in the anchoring of their project in a kind of nostalgia for 1920s and 1930s modernism.⁶⁷ So Kraftwerk might be seen as postmodern modernists, if not fully as popular modernists.

But other forms of electronic music played with futurity in a much less ambivalent way. As argued by Kodwo Eshun, the various linguistic, sonic and conceptual innovations found across techno, trip hop and electronic music from the likes of Cybotron, Tricky and Drexciya speak of posthuman, alien soundworlds that intimate an ‘AfroDiasporic futurism’, which Eshun describes as a ‘webbed network of computerhythms [*sic*], machine mythology and concepttechnics which routes, reroutes and criss-crosses the Black Atlantic’.⁶⁸ Though the variety of the music Eshun discusses works against its collapse into any neat Black Atlantic modernism, the emphasis on innovated futurity suggests a vibrant strain of popular modernism.

The weird geometries and cyborg sounds of late twentieth and twenty-first century acts and producers such as Timbaland, Missy Elliot, Rodney Jerkins and others *might* place their work into a similar kind of sympathy with popular modernism. Both Destiny Child's Timbaland-produced 'Get on the Bus' (1998) (produced by Timbaland) and Missy Elliot's 'Get Ur Freak On' (2001) (co-produced and written by Timbaland) contain characteristic techniques that sounded a clear pop future for audiences. From the importance of the minor second as grounding melodic interval, to interpolated samples that (timbrally and rhythmically) cut against the context, to tight, sprung grooves made of lattice layers of skittering percussion, vocal sounds and synthesizers, these tracks are machines built to speed pop into the future. But despite that, they don't seem critical in any way, nor do they feel abrasive or likely to cause estrangements of perception in audiences. On the other hand, hyper-real future-pop from the likes of PC Music and Yen Tech seems to rest on (ambivalent) criticality, but leans too much towards populist appeal to feel truly modernist. For these reasons, though all of these examples might reasonably be seen to draw directly on modernist techniques and as such to earn the label of modernist popular music, I don't think these or other similarly commercial tracks can be seen in popular modernist terms.

Examples like this might help us to see where a line might be drawn between such clearly critical, challenging and future-facing music as no wave or noise jazz on the one hand, and future-facing but consensual music by the like of Missy Elliot and Destiny's Child and by certain grime, wonky and electronic artists likewise on the other. A more recent case such as Kanye West's coruscating 2013 album *Yeezus* would problematize such a line, however. 69

Commercially successful and publicly appealing despite its modernistic aggression and alienation, this album forces together industrial, techno, pop and electro sounds with fissures

intact, form and tone intentionally fragmented amidst lacerating riffs and drums that rip apart as soon as they start to groove. West's lyrics are similarly charged up as they range across slavery, materialism and intensely wrought biography. The fragments and tears of the sounds and the words on *Yeezus* could even be said to evoke Adorno's late Beethoven: instead of building narrative progress through combination they repeat, recur, revolve blankly, mute in their broken shapes. This is a critical and exploratory project if there ever was one, both in a musical sense and in terms of wider political arguments about race in the United States in the twenty-first century. But it is nevertheless dressed in much more recognizably commercial clothes than even jungle or no wave. This album, then, matches the musical futurity of Timbaland and Missy Elliot but frays things with a harsh critical edge even whilst adding commerciality at the same time. Its modernist and its 'popular' statuses are therefore continually in question as a result.

These are in any case just some examples from a potentially long list of popular modernist acts and styles. Looking at even this small sample it becomes clear that it would be very difficult to draw a straight line that might separate 'popular modernist' music from popular music that might simply draw on modernist values. But examples of styles such as no wave and noise jazz seem to me to vindicate the popular modernist category at least to some degree. Despite the danger of stretching the concept of modernism too far, it seems to me that popular modernism preserves the criticality and alienation of modernism, whilst at the same time lending it some vitality.

Concluding thoughts on the desire for a modernist popular culture

Though each of the modern musical practices I have discussed are maintained by cultural frameworks of a very different character, they have clearly had much to say to each other. In many cases they even take on characteristics traditionally seen as belonging to the other. So the ‘popular modernist’ label responds to actually existing mutuality (or, to use my term from earlier, liminality) in demonstrating links that might have been concealed otherwise. It is not, a supporter of this label might argue, about lifting up or dragging down music from one ‘sphere’ to another, it is about reframing debate. As I have argued throughout this chapter I would go along with this up to a point. I identified many examples that might be seen in popular modernist terms, including borderline cases. Popular modernism, in this twofold argument, is both a fruitful term that shines a light on emergent stories of modernist criticality and exploration in popular music and also a potentially problematic concept whose application to music needs to be handled with care.

In conclusion, I want to add a third layer to my argument. Although in the preceding sections I tried to be careful in describing any popular practices as modernist, I nevertheless recognized the usefulness of a term like popular modernism (as well as the aptness of seeing some examples simply as popular music that draws on modernism). But I did so fully aware that critical projects can easily ‘elevate’ even when they try not to. In employing such a loaded term as ‘modernism’ to describe popular music we might be playing into top-down dynamics that indeed elevate. Why is ‘popular’ (or any of sundry subcategories or styles) not enough? Does ‘modernism’ secure a prestige for popular music that might have been unavailable otherwise? Does its use conceal enduring cultural prejudices that see popular music as in need of ‘conversion’ into a serious art form?

Buried within some accounts of popular modernism seems to be a set of prejudices that might give pause in the kinds of ways suggested by these questions. Schleifer, for one, discusses only the ‘best’ popular music and is stuffily anxious to prioritize ‘achieved’ over ‘banal’ popular music as worthy of study.⁷⁰ Steven Moore Whiting, in writing about Satie’s cabaret modernism, suggested that ‘Satie managed to convert popular music into a serious art’.⁷¹ Andreas Huyssen’s postmodern account connecting the avant-garde with mass culture ends up time again and again condescending to the latter. On a number of occasions Huyssen even links mass culture and fascism, saying for example of Adorno and Greenberg that they were trying to ‘save the dignity and autonomy of the art work from the totalitarian pressures of fascist mass spectacles, socialist realism, and an ever more degraded commercial mass culture in the West’.⁷²

All of these perspectives seem to suggest a familiar and tired critical trope that frames popular music as in need of – or being beyond – rescue. Other views are available of course. But whether we have faith in the popular as such or not, I would like to close with a potentially polemical thought. Attempts at loading up popular music with modernist credentials, however much they might make sense in specific examples, risk weakening popular music by playing into outmoded hierarchies of cultural value. Modernism as a concept is alive and well in 2017. But it will always be anchored in a particular period of time and a particular set of aesthetic and cultural values. Popular music has, despite its hegemonic commercial and social presence, perhaps struggled to gain the kind of cultural prestige that rightfully infuses modernist art. The way to secure that prestige is potentially not to reach for labels like modernist but instead to look at popular music’s own processes and idioms and to develop critical languages of value in response. Popular modernism seems to me to be a useful term to some degree. But even better

would be a self-sufficient conception of the popular that could comfortably incorporate both criticality and commercialism.

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- 1 Ulf Lindberg's 2003 article on the purported popular modernism of Tin Pan Alley analyzes the 'city type' and other modernist tropes in songs like 'Manhattan'; 'Popular Modernism? The "Urban" Style of Interwar Tin Pan Alley', *Popular Music* 22, no. 3 (2003), 283–98.
- 2 My connective gesture here echoes David Clarke in 'Elvis and Darmstadt, or: Twentieth-Century Music and the Politics of Cultural Pluralism', *Twentieth-Century Music* 4, no. 1 (2007), 3–45.
- 3 In addition to Lindberg, see e.g. Edward P. Comentale, *Sweet Air: Modernism, Regionalism, and American Popular Song* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2013); Mary E. Davis, 'Modernity à la mode: Popular Culture and Avant-Gardism in Erik Satie's *Sports et divertissements*', *Musical Quarterly* 83, no. 3 (1999), 430–73; Bernard Gendron, *Between Montmartre and the Mudd Club: Popular Music and the Avant-Garde* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002); Keir Keightley, 'Tin Pan Allegory', *Modernism/Modernity* 19, no. 4 (2012), 717–36; Ronald Schleifer, *Modernism and Popular Music* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).
- 4 See, e.g. Karen Leick, 'Popular Modernism: Little Magazines and the American Daily Press', *PMLA* 123, no. 1 (2008), 125–39; and Juan A. Suárez, *Pop Modernism: Noise and the Reinvention of the Everyday* (Urbana, IL and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2007).
- 5 Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant Garde*, trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1984); Andreas Huyssen, *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1986).

- 6 Theodor Adorno, 'Letters to Walter Benjamin', *New Left Review* I/81 (1973), 74–80.
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