she contributes to, the translation. What does this work say of Ives himself? Acting as translator, Ives' own thoughts and opinions inevitably influence the material with which he has worked. The clarity of his arguments, the insight with which they are accompanied, and the connections he makes between theories indicate he has the potential to produce promising theoretical works. In the future, it will be particularly interesting to see if Ives attempts to 'translate' or operationalise his theories for the site-specific contexts of contemporary social movements.

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Carl Freedman, *The Incomplete Projects: Marxism, Modernity, and the Politics of Culture* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2002).

Today, cultural domains are at the forefront of political debate. In the United States, right-wing commentators claim great liberal conspiracies in Hollywood and in the media while on the left, critics have felt it necessary to launch a radio station to counter right-wing talk radio. In Canada we see these issues play out over opinions about the CBC and regarding funding to university programmes in the arts. In *The Incomplete Projects,* the Marxist literary critic Carl Freedman argues that in light of the current unprecedented economic and political dominance of capitalism, culture is a domain that offers an opportunity for Marxists to think politically again. It is here, drawing on Marx, that Freedman offers the study of culture as a strategy to destabilize right-wing dominance.

The book is separated into two parts. The first is more theoretical, serving to situate the rest of the essays as part of three "Incomplete Projects." The first of Freedman's incomplete projects is capitalism. Capitalism is incomplete because it has not "hit the wall" of environmental destruction or revolution which Marxists have long predicted. Because capitalism continues to exist, Marxism continues to be essential for understanding the world today and thus represents the second incomplete and ongoing project. The final incomplete project is modernity. Freedman asserts that while modernity can most easily be defined as the era dominated by the capitalist mode of production, capitalism is an economic category, and as such, Marxism can, at best, problematize the economic dimension of modernity. Thus Freedman legitimizes using Jürgen Habermas and other theorists outside of the Marxist canon to explore questions of culture.

The second part of the book is an empirical demonstration of the theoretical directions of the first. Collected here are seven previously published essays

on cultural topics that Freedman says inhabit the "middle realm" of modern culture, thus blurring the problematic borders between high and mass culture. Topics here include *M*A*S*H*, Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*, the notion of England in the television show *Upstairs Downstairs* and in the film *A Room with a View*, sexuality and race in *All the King's Men*, "work" in Dashiell Hammett's *Red Harvest*, paranoia in the science fiction of Philp K. Dick, and contradictions in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. These are all fascinating essays that problematize culture in interesting ways. Because of the diversity of these essays, I want to concentrate on two as a way to demonstrate briefly both the strengths and weaknesses of Freedman's approach.

The first point to be made about all these essays is their innovative use of genre to make important points that would otherwise be overlooked. This is done in an impressive fashion in the essay on Kubrick's *2001*(1968). Freedman argues that Kubrick films remake and redefine the genre to which they belong; hence, he looks at the way in which Kubrick exposes the ideological and historical frameworks of science fiction and science fiction cinema and then questions whether true science fiction cinema is possible at all. Freedman begins by noting that *2001* was not released in a conservative period in American history unlike other important science fiction movies which were popular in the 1950s and 1970s. The catch-22 of the genre of sci-fi film is its defining characteristic: the special effect, or effects that are self-consciously "filmic." Freedman argues that subsequent sci-fi films either allow special effects to dominate (the *Star Wars* films and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*) while dialogue and story are found wanting, or, in the case of Ridley Scott's *Alien* and *Bladerunner*, there is a closer alliance with science fiction literature, somewhat atypical of sci-fi cinema, which prevents a critique of the genre. In *2001*, on the other hand, Kubrick self-consciously allows special effects to dominate dialogue and story, problematizing human banality itself. Furthermore, Freedman argues, this approach self-consciously puts into question the possibility of science fiction film because Kubrick's solution only leaves space for lame imitations. Freedman's analysis, by comparing and contrasting these films with others from within and without their genre, as well as with works from other literary forms, brings out interesting conclusions. Explaining why a film is clearly better than another is something less frequently done these days in studies that relate to popular culture where texts are too often seen as equal in value.

The essay on *M*A*S*H*, while interesting, is not as strong. Freedman follows *M*A*S*H* as it moved from the form of a novel to becoming a movie and finally a television series. Once again, comparing and contrasting genres and probing the historical context helps to pose interesting questions. First, Freedman looks to explain why *M*A*S*H* the movie came to be seen as an anti-Vietnam War movie when it never clearly took an anti-Korean War stand. His answer comes from the conservative nature of Hollywood at the time and

the support of a vague "anti-anti-Communist" feeling in the late 60s. The question he poses of the television series is equally interesting. Freedman asks how it was that during the taping of its monumental final episode, the cast received telegrams of congratulations from Cold War warriors like Ronald Reagan and Henry Kissinger even though at the time *M*A*S*H* was the most politically liberal show on television?

Drawing on Roland Barthes' theory of inoculation, Freedman argues that *M*A*S*H*'s protests against the war and American politics were largely diffused through Hawkeye's continued individualism. This individualism was solidly rooted in the status quo of middle-class America and particularly the medical discipline. This contention is less convincing. First of all, to claim Hawkeye as an individualist clearly forgets that he was drafted and that if he had had a choice in the matter, he would have been back home in Maine. His individualist antics were window-dressing for his captivity in the army. Freedman seems to let down his rigorous comparative analysis here when labelling Hawkeye as an individualist incapable of collective action. Hawkeye simply does not rate as a profound individualist when compared to other screen legends of the 1960s like Steve McQueen in *The Great Escape*, to give just one example.

An alternative source of the sitcom's "inoculation" is found in its faith in American collectivism. Frequently the characters in the sitcom were called to come together in collective action (including Hawkeye) to save particular individuals. An example mentioned by Freedman, but never noted as collective action, was the episode when there was an attempt to tar Margaret Hoolihan as a communist. All the characters, even Major Winchester, are involved in an elaborate plan to prevent this injustice from taking place. The message seems to be, even in difficult situations like being forced to go to war, that on fundamental questions most Americans are ready to come together. This seems to be the Barthesian myth. Historically, looking at the McCarthy trials, Americans did not come together collectively to prevent attacks on innocent people until late in the game. In the end, however, this critique suggests that *M*A*S*H* the television series had much in common with the movie in its vague "anti-anti-communism" position (as Freedman would put it) and thus is a small caveat to what is a book that poses exciting questions and offers rigorous answers in the important area of culture.

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