Introduction

Indiewood in contexts

At one end of the American cinematic spectrum is the globally dominant Hollywood blockbuster. At the other is the low-budget independent or 'indie' feature and, beyond that, various forms of avant-garde, experimental, no-budget or otherwise economically marginal production.[1] In between lie many shades of difference. There are lower-budget Hollywood features, including traditional star vehicles and genre pictures. There are more substantial and/or more commercially oriented independent productions, of various kinds. In the middle, however, is a particular territory that constitutes the focus of this book: the zone that has become known as Indiewood, an area in which Hollywood and the independent sector merge or overlap. Films produced and distributed in this domain have attracted a mixture of praise and controversy. From one perspective, they offer an attractive blend of creativity and commerce, a source of some of the more innovative and interesting work produced in close proximity to the commercial mainstream.[2] From another, this is an area of duplicity and compromise, in which the 'true' heritage of the independent sector is sold out, betrayed and/or co-opted into an offshoot of Hollywood.

The aim of this book is to offer a more objective examination of the Indiewood sector, as a distinctive region of the recent and contemporary American film landscape. A number of detailed case studies are employed to offer an understanding of Indiewood at several different levels. Indiewood is considered, throughout this book, as an industrial/commercial phenomenon, the product of particular forces within the American film industry from the 1990s and 2000s. This includes close focus on the specifics of the film industry and its situation within the wider context of certain tendencies in contemporary cultural production in late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century capitalism. Indiewood is considered from the perspectives of both production/distribution (the strategies of industry players) and consumption, the latter including an attempt to locate Indiewood cinema in the wider social sphere of cultural-taste preferences and some consideration of viewer responses to the case-study films examined.[3]

Direct connections are made between these dimensions and the particular textual qualities offered by films produced, distributed and consumed in this part of the cinematic spectrum. A central characteristic of Indiewood cinema, this study argues, is a blend comprised of features associated with dominant, mainstream convention and markers of 'distinction' designed to appeal to more particular, niche-audience constituencies. Close textual analysis is employed to examine the extent to which examples mobilize or depart from formal and other norms associated with the Hollywood mainstream. The dominant Hollywood aesthetic is understood here as providing a point of comparison, as a set of historically and institutionally grounded norms; not a fixed and rigid set of procedures but, as David Bordwell puts it, a repertoire of alternatives that is bounded by particular limitations (for instance, that formal flourishes are usually expected to be given some narrative- or character-based motivation).[4] Against the Hollywood norm, to varying degrees, can be measured a range of more or less distinctive alternatives that might be understood in some cases as constituting institutionally grounded norms of their own (including those variously described as the norms of 'avant-garde', 'art', 'indie' or 'independent' cinema, none of which have entirely fixed or uncontested definitions). One of the issues addressed by this book, to which I return in the conclusion, is whether a distinct and

identifiable set of norms can be associated with Indiewood as a hybrid location. Textual analysis is accompanied, in this study, by consideration of distribution strategies and extra-textual discourses such as promotional materials, reviews and the manner in which Indiewood production is positioned by practitioners and industry figures. The case-study approach employed here provides scope for detailed and in-depth analysis, chosen in preference to a wider survey of the field. Two chapters focus on the work of individual filmmakers: Steven Soderbergh and the screenwriter Charlie Kaufman. Two focus on Indiewood distribution and/or production companies: Miramax, the single biggest influence in the establishment of Indiewood, and Focus Features, the 'speciality' arm of Universal Pictures (speciality – or 'specialty' in the American English rendition – being the term often used within the industry to describe a range of less mainstream products that include American independent films, documentaries and overseas imports). Another chapter examines *American Beauty* (DreamWorks, 1999) and *Three Kings* (Warner Bros, 1999) as two indie-influenced films produced not by the speciality divisions but by the main arms of the Hollywood studios. Broadly the same combination of analytical perspectives is employed in each chapter, although some specific dimensions are highlighted to a greater extent in certain cases (for example, viewer responses in relation to *Kill Bill: Volume 1* [2003], one of the Miramax films considered in chapter 2, and analysis of the positioning signified by trailers and posters for the Soderbergh features in chapter 3).

Indiewood origins and background

The term 'Indiewood' was coined in the mid-1990s to denote a part of the American film spectrum in which distinctions between Hollywood and the independent sector appeared to have become blurred.[5] It suggests a kind of cinema that draws on elements of each, combining some qualities associated with the independent sector, although perhaps understood as softened or watered-down, with other qualities and industrial practices more characteristic of the output of the major studios. The term is often used as a disparaging label by those involved in, or supportive of, the independent sector, as a way of

marking off certain types of cinema deemed to be too close to the activities of the studios to be deserving of the label 'independent'.[6] For those who use the term more positively, it signifies an upsurge of more creative filmmaking that has found space inside, or on the edge of, the Hollywood system, a development interpreted by some (often rather hyperbolically) as a return to something like the situation of the late 1960s and early 1970s, the so-called Hollywood 'Renaissance' period, in which a number of less conventional, sometimes more challenging films were produced or distributed within the confines of the major studios.[7]

The most clear-cut institutional base of Indiewood is constituted by indie/speciality-oriented distributors and/or producers owned by the major studio companies: either studio-created subsidiaries (such as Sony Pictures Classics, Fox Searchlight and Paramount Classics) or formerly independent operations taken over by the studios (Miramax under the ownership of Disney from 1993, or Good Machine, taken over by Universal Pictures in 2002 as part of the basis of its subsidiary, Focus Features). Indiewood is located as a cross-over phenomenon, a product of the success of a number of 'breakout' features that marked the indie sector, especially from the early 1990s, as a source of interest to the big studio players. An earlier and abortive wave of studio involvement in the speciality market at the start of the 1980s (the formation of 'classics' divisions by United Artists, Twentieth Century Fox and Universal) was followed by a more concerted move into independent cinema and some parts of overseas 'art-house' cinema during the 1990s and into the early 2000s, a move spurred by the Hollywood-scale box-office success of films such as *Pulp Fiction* (1994) and *The Blair Witch Project* (1999), and the very healthy profit-to-cost ratio of a number of lower-grossing indie features.

If Indiewood is defined most clearly at this industrial/institutional level, my argument is that an equation can be made between this dimension and the particular qualities offered by many of the films produced and distributed within its orbit. In this conjunction of industrial location and textual definition, Indiewood can also include certain films made or distributed by the major studios themselves, rather than their speciality divisions; films such as *American Beauty* that appear to have been confected consciously to buy into the market

opened up by the independent sector and others that include radical components less often associated with the mainstream, substantially budgeted examples such as *Three Kings* and *Fight Club* (Fox, 1999). It might also embrace some features from institutionally non-studio-affiliated directions that appear designed specifically with potential indie/mainstream cross-over in mind. The indie sector itself, in its commercially distributed forms (that is, not including more abstract, experimental, politically radical or otherwise economically marginal work), often involves hybrid forms that draw on a number of different inheritances, including those associated with notions of 'art' cinema and more mainstream narrative feature traditions.[8] Indiewood, in this context, would signify a particular region of the hybrid spectrum: that which leans relatively towards the Hollywood end of a wider compass that stretches from the edges of Hollywood to the less commercially viable margins.

The release slates of the speciality divisions tend to contain a mixture of films that might be defined, from their textual characteristics, as indie or Indiewood, along with overseas imports (issues considered in more detail in chapter 5). While some more distinctively indie films might be produced or acquired in the hope of achieving cross-over beyond the restricted confines of the art-house market, the term Indiewood is used at the textual level to distinguish examples in which such an aim or strategy appears to be embodied more fundamentally in the fabric of the production itself. The term can have slightly different implications, then, when used to characterize the qualities of individual texts rather than the institutional realm of the speciality divisions, the latter not being exclusively limited to the distribution of the former (or vice versa, although in this case the correlation is likely to be closer). There is, however, a significant and often causal link between the two, all the more so in cases in which the studio subsidiary has the greater stake that results from being producer as well as distributor.

The use of subsidiary arrangements such as semi-autonomous Indiewood divisions is typical of the operations of the Hollywood studios as part of global entertainment corporations. Specialist entities permit larger operations most effectively to exploit particular sectors of the market, alongside their chief priority of attracting mass-number

audiences to the blockbuster-scale and/or star-led productions around which the fortunes of the studios primarily revolve (a parallel elsewhere would be the designer boutique operated as a niche outlet inside the walls of a larger chain store). Indiewood divisions gain from expert knowledge of the speciality market by recruiting notable figures from the independent sector such as Harvey Weinstein, until the departure of the Weinsteins from the Disney fold, and James Schamus, former joint head of Good Machine, at Focus Features. They are usually given a significant degree of autonomy from their studio/corporate parents, often including the power to green-light production or make acquisitions up to a particular financial ceiling. Their operations remain subject more broadly to the dictates of their owners, however, as evidenced by the most likely underlying reasons for the break-up of the Disney/Weinstein relationship. Particular controversies might have been stirred by individual episodes, such as Disney's much-publicized forcing of Miramax to abandon its stake in Michael Moore's *Fahrenheit 9/11* (2004), the last in a series of Miramax provocations to Disney shareholders before the Weinsteins were bought out and left to create a new operation, The Weinstein Company, in 2005. Much was also made of cultural clashes between the working practices of the subsidiary, which built its reputation on the creation and exploitation of controversy around its early breakthrough hits, and its in some ways unlikely-seeming parent. More significant, however, was the fact that Harvey and Bob Weinstein had ambitions for Miramax (including very large budget production and expansion into other media) unlikely to sit easily within the subordinate role granted to subsidiary divisions; the post-Weinsteins Miramax was designed to be a smaller and less autonomous part of the Disney empire.[9]

Involvement in the Indiewood/indie/speciality sector has a number of potential advantages for the studios, in addition to the ability to share in the windfalls that accrue to occasional large-scale independent hits and to broaden their overall portfolios more generally. It can enable them to bring emerging new filmmaking talent into their orbit, potentially to go on to serve mainstream duty, while also supplying attractive vehicles for existing star performers, enabling the studios to maintain valuable relationships while providing different or more

challenging work than the roles with which stars are usually associated (the presence of Jim Carrey in *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* [2004], one of the case studies considered in chapter 1, is a good example). Pressure resulting from the desire of stars to work with a new generation of filmmakers is identified by Sharon Waxman as one of the factors that drew the majors towards the indie sector in the second half of the 1990s, a development that coincided with the rise of a small but significant group of executives committed to creating some space for less conventional approaches within or on the margins of the studio system.[10] Associations with this kind of cinema can be of prestige value to the studios and their corporate owners, an intangible factor – how much is prestige really worth, compared to hard box-office or DVD dollars? – that is, nonetheless, not without significance, both for companies often accused of lowering standards of public taste and faced on occasion with the prospect of tighter regulation and for the self-image of individual executive figures. Films that can be located in the Indiewood zone have been particularly prominent in the achievement of Academy Awards and nominations in recent years, one source of prestige that tends to translate quite readily into cash and good reputation. Prizes of this kind are, as James English suggests, 'the single best instrument' for negotiating transactions between cultural
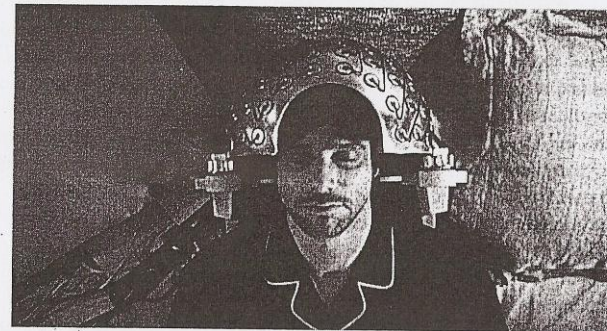
1. Stars in less conventional positions: Jim Carrey gets the treatment in *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* © Focus Features

and economic capital; that is to say, in this case, for converting prestige into financial returns.[11] There is also value for the studios in creating the impression that they are not just involved in the business of maximizing revenues through the production of globally dominant franchise and star-led operations, but can also claim some involvement in the propagation of more 'elevated', challenging or ambitious work. They sought from the 1990s to buy into some of the currency gained by the term 'independent' at a time when it had come to signify something of greater cultural worth than what was usually associated with the Hollywood mainstream.[12] This included the creation of speciality divisions in which the identity of the studio parent was clearly advertised in the name of the subsidiary. Where this was not the case (Miramax, say, as opposed to Sony Pictures Classics, Paramount Classics or Fox Searchlight), the existence of a multitude of production and distribution entities could have the advantage, from a different perspective, of making the business appear more plural and open to competition than was really the case.

Indiewood as subsidiary capitalism

The Indiewood divisions of the major studios can be understood as a manifestation of a wider trend in contemporary capitalism towards what Mike Wayne terms 'subsidiary and subcontractor capitalism'.[13] The shift of this kind of operation to a position of prominence in the economy is usually associated with a move from Fordist (mass production/mass consumption) to post-Fordist (more flexible and fragmented production/consumption) regimes of accumulation. Although sweeping claims of epochal shifts from one to the other are in many ways problematic, it is widely accepted that Fordism, as a central feature of western economies, ran into difficulties by the 1970s, leading to numerous and far-reaching changes, including increased tendencies in some sectors from the 1980s onwards to target smaller and more exclusive niche markets, of which speciality cinema can be seen as one local example.[14] There is, certainly, an historical coincidence of these broader trends and the period in which the American independent sector came to fruition in its current institutionalized form, even if the latter was also driven by a number

of more specific economic forces such as the demand for product and availability of finance for low-budget productions created by the 1980s video boom.[15] The media and communications sector is seen by Martyn Lee as particularly prone to the tendency to focus on niche audiences, as evidenced by massive investments into a wide diversity of specialist periodicals and journals, and the proliferation of cable, satellite and terrestrial broadcasting (narrowcasting) networks, driven by 'the imperatives of advertising to address the now divergent and highly segmented tastes, needs and sensibilities of the modern marketplace'.[16]

Speciality cinema and other such media products also fit into Lee's suggestion that these transitions have included 'a marked demate-rialization of the commodity-form', a shift in emphasis from the characteristically durable and material commodities of Fordism (cars, washing machines, etc.) to a greater role for non-durable 'and in particular, experiential commodities which are either used up during the act of consumption or, alternatively, based upon the consumption of a given period of time as opposed to a material artefact'.[17] Such markets have the advantage, for late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century capitalism, of being less prone to exhaustion and saturation (chronic threats to capitalist stability) than markets for material goods, creating potential for the continued expansion of the consumer economy into new and more finely distinguished realms. The 1980s is described by Lee as a period that saw 'an enormous increase in the commodification and "capitalization" of cultural events',[18] another process in which the institutionalization of indie and the development of Indiewood cinema can be seen as component parts; a move, especially as it developed through the 1990s, in which significant portions of an 'independent' cinema defined previously as more separate, alternative or in some cases oppositional, became increasingly commodified and brand-marketed, and thereby penetrated by the prevailing forms of contemporary capitalism.

These developments can also be linked to understandings of the audiences targeted by Indiewood, and how these might be attracted by particular kinds of textual material. But first some qualifications are necessary. Whatever moves towards an increased emphasis on niche marketing have been involved in developments in the capitalist

economies of recent decades, larger or 'mass' markets have not been abandoned. The continued dominance of mainstream Hollywood cinema is an obvious example of this, targeting very large global audiences for its blockbuster products (even if the 'mass' audience is often a product of emphasis on particular constituencies, especially of relatively younger viewers). The speciality market is clearly of some interest to the studios but it is very much a secondary part of the business, the strictly commercial motivations for which are less obviously compelling than those found in many other niche media. Specialized television and magazine publishing, for example, are often founded on the economics of advertising revenues, as suggested in one of the above quotations from Lee. The fact that higher rates can be charged by programmes or publications that reach high-spending specialist audience fragments permits them to thrive on the basis of relatively small audiences (or, in a case such as the 'quality' television output of HBO, relatively small numbers of subscribers). The equivalent does not really exist in the case of speciality cinema, which makes its situation potentially more fragile, although niche broadcasters such as the Independent Feature Channel have become involved to a limited extent in production funding and theatrical distribution. Indiewood operations offer some commercial and less tangible benefits, as suggested above, but they are not in a position to gain obvious extra value from the relatively upscale markets they target, because they do not benefit from premium-rate advertising in their most important release windows (theatrical and home video/DVD). Higher prices are not usually charged for viewing and although an affluent 'connoisseur' audience might be more inclined to invest in 'special edition' DVDs, this is also a market heavily exploited in the mainstream. 'Added-value' prices might be set for the 'fancy coffees', mineral waters and cakes typically associated with art-house theatre concession stands, but, again, it seems doubtful that these offer higher margins than those charged for carbonated sugar-waters and popcorn at the multiplex. The screening of full-motion commercials other than trailers – as opposed to static advertising slides – was a new phenomenon in US cinemas of the early to mid-2000s, but seen as of primary benefit in reaching the mainstream 18–35 and young male demographics in the face of the increased fragmentation of television audiences.[19]

The American film industry continues, primarily, to revolve around a hit-based economy at all levels – Hollywood, Indiewood and indie; domestic cinema and overseas imports – that has lagged behind some other aspects of cultural production in its ability to take advantage of the growing potential for the exploitation of more extensive niche markets created by the era of broadband internet distribution in the early 2000s. It has invested relatively little to date in the phenomenon known as the 'Long Tail', popularized by Chris Anderson, the substantial market that can result from the aggregation of large numbers of much smaller niches.[20] The development of studio speciality divisions is consistent with Anderson's argument that investment in both mainstream and niche markets is important to the future of larger companies operating in this context, in which a relative democratization of access and the existence of new customer feedback mechanisms can make it possible for a diversity of smaller products to gain attention and find their audience. Distribution direct to the internet or DVD offers potential outlets for films beyond the gatekeeping networks of the studios and larger independent operations. The studio speciality divisions remain primarily focused on fewer and larger niches, however, in the theatrical and DVD businesses, their function largely being to cherry-pick limited numbers of films for promotion and release, a process probably more likely to reduce than to increase the total number of non-studio productions that gain commercial distribution. The other important qualification required in any account that draws on notions of post-Fordism or the importance of niche markets, some of which include a utopian vision of decentralized operations, is that there has been no significant fragmentation of ownership and control, in the film business or more generally in niche-market-oriented capitalism, as indicated above in the case of the Indiewood speciality divisions of the studios and their corporate parents.[21]

Niche-market audiences, Indiewood and taste cultures

What, then, of the audiences for Indiewood productions? How might they be conceptualized? Is it possible to suggest particular kinds of

viewers who are likely to be attracted by such material? This issue will be addressed here at two principal levels. It will be considered first in terms of what is implied more broadly in the marketing of and to particular cultural-taste formations. This requires quite lengthy consideration of the processes through which consumption of particular kinds of cultural goods might be associated with particular social groups. Secondly, but linked to this in the kinds of qualities likely to be highlighted, the identification of potential audiences for Indiewood films can be understood through the notion of the 'implied audience' for which the texts themselves appear to have been designed,[22] a framework that leads more directly into the analysis of examples of Indiewood cinema that comprises the main body of this book.

Niche marketing involves a much closer breakdown of the categories into which products can be sorted and sold than is usually implied in the mass-consumption associated with Fordist regimes of accumulation (the latter involving the sale of vast numbers of broadly standardized – if often far from identical – products). Niche-based outfits offer products quite specifically tailored to relatively narrow market segments, usually those prepared to pay extra for what are perceived to be higher-quality and more exclusive goods or services. They offer a finer-grained approach than mass-market strategies, enabling the penetration of the logic of commodification into the smaller capillaries of culture. If speciality films offer no obvious source of the premium prices that characterize many such products, they can be understood as offering appeals to the consumer of a kind similar to those provided by other niche-market materials: not just any objectively higher quality in the product (on whatever grounds that might be judged or contested in one case or another), but the marketing of a subjective impression of difference, distinction and superiority on the part of the viewer. By choosing to view speciality rather than mainstream films, the argument goes, consumers are associating themselves (consciously or unconsciously) with a particular social-cultural domain based on varying degrees of differentiation from mainstream cinema, culture and society.

At work here is the expenditure of what Pierre Bourdieu terms 'cultural capital', the resources and disposition required for the ability to gain access to (and, importantly, to take pleasure from) more specialized realms of cultural production. Patterns of cultural consumption are, from this perspective, tied up with the processes through which distinctions are made between and within different social classes, groups or milieux, cultural capital being gained through a combination of formal education and informal upbringing. This can be seen as part of a wider system in which the consumption of goods can be understood not just in material terms but as a dimension of the social mechanism by means of which distinct senses of self- and group identity are constructed and asserted. For commentators such as Bourdieu and the early Jean Baudrillard, consumption is understood as a way of *establishing* differences as much or more than as a way of signifying distinctions that already exist on other grounds.[23] The essential point of Bourdieu's argument, and that of others coming to these issues from the perspective of sociology or social anthropology, is that preferences for particular kinds of products – among which speciality cinema can be included – are not individual choices that exist in isolation, but the outcome of wider and more objective fields of forces. A key dimension is what Bourdieu terms the 'habitus', a durable matrix of shared dispositions, perceptions and appreciations into which the members of particular social groups or classes are socialized and from which their taste preferences are drawn.[24] The habitus, for Bourdieu, is a crucial link between the objective conditions of existence of particular groups or classes and the schemes of classification and taste that lead to the generation of particular lifestyles.[25] Each habitus, and the lifestyle to which it leads, is a particular historical construct, the product of objective historical conditions and the field of relations in which one set of schemes is related to another. It is experienced by its occupants, however, as 'natural' and immediate, which gives it an ideological function in the naturalization of social differences.[26] The result is that socially shaped acts of consumption are often experienced as the exercise of personal, individual preference. As Nikolas Rose puts it, in a different context:

> Leisure has been invented as the domain of free choice *par excellence*. However constrained by external or internal factors, the modern self is institutionally required to construct a life through the exercise of choice from among alternatives. Every aspect of life, like every

commodity, is imbued with a self-referential meaning; every choice we make is an emblem of our identity, a mark of our individuality, each is a message to ourselves and others as to the sort of person we are, each casts a glow back, illuminating the self of he or she who consumes.[27]

Pleasurable consumption of works for which higher than usual reserves of cultural capital are required is likened by Bourdieu to an act of 'deciphering' and 'decoding' for which particular competences are required.[28] In the case of the avant-garde or experimental, this might be a very specialist knowledge, without which individual products are unlikely to make much sense – or have much appeal – to the viewer. For the more commercially-oriented speciality market, including Indiewood, the requirements are less exclusive or involve extra dimensions of pleasure available to those able to pick up particular nuances, resonances or references. In some cases, it might be a matter of relatively more complex narrative structures or more challenging material, although the bounds of difference vary from one example to another and are likely to be more limited than those found in the wider indie or art-cinema sectors. For Jeffrey Sconce, for example, the key line of demarcation in what he terms 'smart cinema', which includes titles from the indie and Indiewood sectors, is established through the use of an ironic *tone* that divides the audience into those who do or do not 'get it'.[29] In some cases markers of distinction might include the employment of an identifiably different *style*, or just the use of small stylized touches, in keeping with Lee's argument about the importance of style or aesthetics as a primary ground for the distinguishing of one commodity from another in a diversified niche-market economy. The making of distinctions based on an ability to appreciate such dimensions is a process that can be detected in responses to the examples of Indiewood cinema examined in this book, as evidenced in postings on websites cited in the chapters that follow. The establishment of such capabilities, differentially distributed in society, might always have been the case in the consumption of cultural works, but is a process seen as of increased importance in aspects of the cultural economy viewed as operating according to the logic of post-Fordist niche-marketing. As Nick Heffernan puts it:

'[T]he search for higher rates of profitability has shifted the emphasis from Fordist forms of standardized mass consumption to new forms of customized or "niche" consumption which revolve around notions of difference and distinction and imply new kinds of status gradation and social exclusion.'[30]

An important aspect of this process, of direct relevance to the indie/Indiewood market, is the commodification of cultural products understood (or constructed) as alternative to the mainstream in a manner that is experienced or sold as 'hip' and 'cool'. This is a phenomenon that dates back to the 1960s and in which, as Thomas Frank argues, the 'bohemian' counterculture and the American business ethic to which it was offered as a contrast were always more closely interwoven than is often implied.[31] The result was the widespread development of a form of 'hip consumerism' reinvented ('almost mechanically repeated') in 1990s incarnations such as the notion of the existence of a coolly disaffected 'Generation X' demographic, with which indie production has often been associated.[32] The Indiewood sector fits into this framework very clearly, as part of a tendency of mainstream industry (not just the marginal) to buy into and exploit aspects of what is understood to be the 'cool', 'hip' and 'alternative'. What is involved here for viewers, and that is sought to be commodified, can be a mix of cultural and *sub*-cultural capital, the latter suggesting forms that can carry cachet as a result of not being officially sanctioned but seen as existing in some kind of opposition to the mainstream.[33] The 'cool', 'hip' and 'alternative' can also become the 'cult' favourite. The opposition between mainstream and alternative is often asserted rhetorically, however, greatly oversimplifying a range of differences on all sides, while the co-optation of 'cult' or other such niche products by mainstream institutions can serve to undermine the process of distinction through which such status is maintained.[34] Cult movie fandom, as Mark Jancovich argues, did not develop in opposition to the commercial but as a result of specific factors in the postwar decades that created 'selective film markets' (urban art cinemas, repertory, the 'midnight movie') driven by their own economic imperatives;[35] the same can be said of the indie and Indiewood sectors more generally. The question of co-optation is a potentially tricky one for Indiewood,

especially, in which a close line is often walked between more and less distinctive qualities, and in which the basis on which differentiation from the mainstream is measured can easily be challenged.

Concern with gradations of culture/taste status are seen particularly prominently in middle- and upper-middle-class cultures, the principal territories on which Indiewood is generally likely to draw (selectively) for its audiences. Cultural capital can become especially important as a source of distinction in regions in which economic capital is relatively evenly distributed, as Lee suggests might be the case, drawing on Bourdieu's empirical research, in the class fractions of the petite bourgeoisie. Occupations such as clerical work, junior management, teaching and work in the media exist in broadly the same socio-economic terrain, but analysis of taste preferences in spheres such as photography suggests significant differences in access to cultural capital (higher in the cases of teachers and media workers) and resulting patterns of consumption.[36] Research into audiences for speciality films conducted in the UK from 1984 to 1986 confirmed the expectation that such viewers can be differentiated from the general population, particularly on the basis of class and education.[37] Activities such as regular visits to art cinemas or exhibitions are a cost-effective source of distinction for those higher in cultural than economic capital, Bourdieu suggests, 'governed by the pursuit of maximum "cultural profit" for minimum economic cost'.[38] 'Symbolic profit' here is restricted to the consumption of the work itself, and its discussion afterwards, as opposed to the ostentatious display involved in more upmarket attendance of forms such as 'bourgeois' theatre or opera by those higher in economic but lower in cultural capital, instances in which the emphasis might be less on the work than what is signified by conspicuous dress and seats in expensive theatres and restaurants. Cinematic distinction might be established by patronizing an art theatre, or a metropolitan art-complex such as the Angelika Film Centers in New York, Houston and Dallas, rather than a multiplex; or, as is often the case for Indiewood films that gain access to mainstream sites of exhibition, by what is experienced as a more 'discerning' choice of film within a multiplex environment.[39]

The entire social field of preferences – ranging from products such as art, film and literature to choices of food, newspapers or holidays –

offers 'well-nigh inexhaustible possibilities for the pursuit of distinction', Bourdieu suggests, although the arts are singled out as 'explicitly pre-disposed to bear such a relationship' because of the removal of their consumption from the immediately practical requirements of life.[40] The less materially necessary our forms of consumption, the more exclusively they can function as markers of distinction (this need not be a conscious, overt or cynical process of positioning-through-consumption, however, an assumption of which is the basis of some criticism of Bourdieu's approach). Janet Harbord suggests that film occupies an especially privileged position as a vehicle for contemporary 'lifestyle consumption' as a result of both its own status as a primarily dematerialized, experiential commodity and the ability of the text to function as an advertisement for a range of additional lifestyle products.[41] The domain of the symbolic is particularly important to the middle classes, in Bourdieu's account, because of the uncertainty and anxiety of their ambiguous position in relation to the upper and lower classes and, it might be added, among the various shadings that exist within their own territory: 'Torn by all the contradictions between an objectively dominated condition and would-be participation in the dominant values, the petit bourgeois is haunted by the appearance he offers to others and the judgement they make of it.'[42] Artistic/cultural products also permit forms of appropriation other than material possession that are translatable into the realm of off-mainstream cinema. As Bourdieu suggests, in a formulation that might apply particularly well to the development of subcultural investments:

> Liking the same things differently, liking different things, less obviously marked out for admiration – these are some of the strategies for outflanking, overtaking and displacing which, by maintaining a permanent revolution in tastes, enable the dominated, less wealthy fractions, whose appropriations must, in the main, be exclusively symbolic, to secure exclusive possessions at every moment.[43]

Distinct taste-preferences are also found in different fractions of the middle classes, however, as might be evidenced by some of the range of qualities found in films distributed in the Indiewood sector as well

as elsewhere. At the more 'intellectual' end of the scale we might place narratively complex or unconventional films scripted by Charlie Kaufman, considered in chapter 1; products designed, to some extent at least, to challenge the viewer. Some Indiewood products fit more closely with Bourdieu's version of what is sometimes viewed as a more complacent 'middlebrow' culture, examples such as literary-oriented dramas that present themselves as belonging to the 'quality', 'respectable' part of the spectrum, 'combining two normally exclusive characteristics, immediate accessibility and the outward signs of cultural legitimacy'[44] (for example, *Shakespeare in Love* [1998], one of the case studies in chapter 2, and probably a better example of this conception of the middlebrow than some more direct adaptations of literary 'classics'[45]). Others offer relatively modest touches of distinction within otherwise familiar/conventional frameworks. How such qualities are manifested in particular examples will be considered in detail in the chapters that follow.

As in the case of approaches related to Fordism and post-Fordism, some qualifications are required in the use of Bourdieu. A number of commentators have questioned the immediacy of the link suggested between cultural-taste formations and class, in addition to Bourdieu's somewhat reductive models of different parts of the class–taste spectrum (considered further below).[46] Michele Lamont suggests that he overstates the importance of specifically *cultural* markers of status, generally and particularly in relation to the US context (his work being based on his own and other research on taste-culture preferences in France). In a comparative study of French and American upper-middle-class culture (college-educated professionals, managers and business people), Lamont finds cultural boundary markers slightly less important to American interviewees than to the French, but in both cases accuses Bourdieu of greatly underestimating the importance of moral grounds for expressions of distinction (on the basis of qualities such as honesty, sincerity and respect for others).[47] Members of the American upper-middle class 'stress socioeconomic and moral boundaries more than they do cultural boundaries; and this is not the case in France, where moral and cultural boundaries are slightly more important than socioeconomic boundaries'.[48] If the role of cultural capital in general can be overstated, it is always easy to exaggerate the

likely importance of any particular acts of cultural consumption such as the patronizing of particular forms of speciality cinema. If such acts of consumption play a part in the constitution or reinforcement of particular notions of the self, individually or collectively, it is important to remember that they are only ever one among many other dimensions of experience that might perform such a role.[49] It is also easy to use Bourdieu in a manner that over-simplifies the way cultural consumption might exist in practice. Viewers of art, indie or speciality cinema might *also* view highly formulaic mainstream Hollywood blockbusters, for example (although such exchanges might be relatively one-way: a higher proportion of consumers of independent cinema might be expected also to consume blockbusters than the proportion of blockbuster viewers who also go to indies). Bourdieu often gives the impression that particular sets of dispositions are more exclusive to particular groups than might always be the case, or that they are more unified than might be found in practice (he refers to the lifestyle resulting from the habitus and its classificatory grid as 'a unitary set of distinct preferences', which risks overstating the degree to which all of its elements might hang so coherently together[50]).

There is no guarantee that every occupant of a particular habitus will have exactly the same cultural preferences. The concept is designed to offer an alternative to two extremes: taste preferences understood as either fully determined by objective circumstances or as matters of purely individual subjective agency. It is offered as a ground that mediates between the two, as the outcome of an objective social position but in the form of collective sets of dispositions and tendencies rather than a direct one-to-one determinant of each act of taste discrimination or judgement. Some freedom can be ascribed to individuals, in this account, but within socially determined parameters. Exactly which products might do the work of establishing particular distinctions within the habitus is subject to variation. The concept of habitus need not be read as collapsing back into a simple mechanical determinism, in other words, as is suggested by Martin Barker and Kate Brooks.[51] But additional considerations are necessary if we are to understand how exactly individual cultural products might be 'taken up' by specific groups or individuals. A useful concept suggested by Barker and Brooks, resulting from research on audiences of the

Hollywood feature *Judge Dredd* (1995), is to differentiate participation in leisure activities such as film-going on the basis of the degree of 'investment' involved on the part of the viewer. 'People do not "belong" within a habitus in some mechanical, even manner', they suggest: 'Fields generate possibilities of, even genres of, responses to which people orient themselves. The manner of their orientation will be a function of their history and class situation, of course, but also of their individual and collective investments in the situation. How important is it to them, and why?'[52] Some viewers of Indiewood films might invest quite strongly in the notion of consuming products perceived to be in some way different from those of the mainstream, for example, while for others this might be far less (if at all) important as a determining factor in their choice of viewing, a position supported by audience responses considered in the chapters that follow (they might also make distinctions *against* Indiewood, in cases where the investment is in a notion of greater independence in relation to which Indiewood is perceived as a betrayal). The line of demarcation between different kinds of cinema might be more or less in play, depending on the basis on which a particular film or type of film has been chosen. Exactly what is signified by the consumption of particular products – cinematic or otherwise – is also subject to variation. If cultural differences function as signs, they often function 'polysemically', as Jim Collins suggests, both across and also sometimes within taste communities.[53] This is particularly the case in the media-proliferating post-1990s context, Collins argues, in which the kind of holistic classificatory system outlined by Bourdieu, and striven for by past upholders of high/low culture boundaries, is undermined by a greater pluralization of taste hierarchies.[54]

The relationship between mass/popular and 'higher' reaches of the American cultural landscape has undergone a number of historical shifts. The widely cited work of Lawrence Levine suggests that strong distinctions between popular and elite cultural products were established in America towards the end of the nineteenth century, displacing an earlier regime in which the two were far more closely blended (where the work of Shakespeare, for example, had a familiarity that made it part and parcel of the broader American culture).[55] The resulting 'sacralization' of culture was, for Levine, only partially undermined by the growing eclecticism and flexibility of culture in the second half of the twentieth century. Collins suggests a four-phase relationship, building on the first two stages identified by Levine (although, as he suggests, these should be seen as tendencies rather than universal or unilateral shifts).[56] The third phase for Collins is the era of Pop Art, from the late 1950s, in which the separation of artistic/cultural realms came under attack, but according to a particular dynamic that sought to move the popular into the world of what was recognized as 'legitimate' culture. The direction of flow is reversed in Collins' fourth phase, which he terms 'high-pop', in which aspects of officially recognized high culture are 'desacralized' by being transformed into mass entertainment. This is a formulation that includes aspects of Indiewood, as understood in this book, the main cinematic example cited by Collins (alongside others such as 'block-buster' museum shows and mass-marketed designer interiors) being the adaptation of literary classics under the auspices of corporate entities such as Miramax and Sony Pictures Classics.

Different degrees of distinction and exclusion are implied by different kinds of (relatively) non-mainstream cinema. The greatest quantities of cultural capital (and the greatest investment on the part of the viewer) are generally required for the pleasurable/meaningful consumption of the most 'difficult' abstract and avant-garde works. A spectrum then exists between this extreme and a range of other alternatives to the most accessible and broadly marketed mainstream, including the commercially distributed 'art', 'indie' and 'Indiewood' sectors. These labels are no more than rough approximations, with plenty of overlap between them, but they might be taken as indicating, in general, progressively wider potential audience constituencies. If the audience for abstract and avant-garde cinema is very exclusive, 'art' and 'indie' forms appear designed to offer a marked degree of distinction within considerably more accessible frameworks. Indiewood, then, would constitute a point at which some markers of distinction often remain present but in combination with more mainstream/accessible characteristics than might generally be associated with examples of art or less conventional indie film (it would exclude some of the more challenging work that gains commercial distribution in the independent sector – the films of Todd Solondz, for example – which would

be seen as risky because of their greater potential to alienate many viewers). Indiewood cinema is, generally, accessible to viewers without the necessity for a high degree of personal investment, but can offer additional pleasures for those sufficiently invested and inclined to pick up its more distinctive qualities. (The same could be said of other forms of investment found in Indiewood and also in some mainstream Hollywood productions; investment in the notion of the director as 'auteur', with distinctive trademarks, is one example found across the divide, although perhaps more often in the indie or Indiewood regions of the spectrum, an issue to which we return in some of the chapters that follow.) This has to be seen as a question of relative degrees, rather than clear-cut differences. It is quite possible for some features produced in the indie realm beyond the institutional confines of Indiewood to display characteristics that might seem more mainstream/ conventional than some of those produced/distributed within the orbit of the studio divisions, and vice versa. There is no one-to-one match, but it is possible to identify broad areas of correspondence.

Locating the Indiewood audience

So, how might we locate, in the wider social-cultural landscape of the recent/contemporary period, the potential audience for the specific Indiewood blend of (relatively) distinctive and more familiar/ mainstream characteristics? To whom might this most characteristically appeal, on the broader rather than the more individualized scale? Some have argued that taste boundaries and distinctions in the USA have become increasingly blurred and fluid in recent decades, particularly as a result of a widening of access to higher education and an increase in the numbers employed in professional and technical occupations that require college or postgraduate degrees.[57] Increased investments in sources of cultural distinction are necessary, in Bourdieu's account, for those challenged by the entry of new groups into competition for academic qualifications.[58] Others argue that developments such as these are part of a process in which cultural taste has become less clearly associated with social class.[59] Lee suggests that symbolic competencies have become increasingly important as markers of prestige in a postwar context in which, in most 'advanced' industrial societies, there has been

'a genuine effacement of many of the economic differences by which class distinctions have traditionally been signalled'.[60] Numerous interventions were made into this debate in the late 1980s and early 1990s, particularly among theorists seeking to provide a wider grounding for cultural products of the period described as embodying qualities associated with the postmodern. One version of the postmodern of particular relevance to this discussion suggests that the term can serve to highlight certain tendencies in postwar consumer-oriented capitalism in which consumption has gained increased prominence as a medium through which social identities can be constructed and reconstructed, a process that results in some blurring of boundaries between different cultural categories and products.[61] The American context, in which consumer capitalism first came to fruition, is often seen as one in which such tendencies are especially to the fore. For Richard Peterson and Michele Lamont, a particular characteristic of social distinction in the American context more generally is that it is marked by access to a range of products that spreads wider than elite arts to include aspects of popular culture.[62] Members of the American upper-middle class tend to have 'a wide range of cultural repertoires', Lamont suggests, 'within which they can encompass much of main-stream culture'; a 'pervasive, explicit nonexclusiveness' that most clearly differentiates them from their French counterparts.[63] Americans make fewer cultural distinctions and the boundaries they establish are more blurred in what Lamont terms a 'loose-bounded' culture, the kind of territory in which the Indiewood combination of more and less mainstream ingredients – the product of specific developments at the industrial level – might be expected to thrive.[64] Maximum credit in the US context goes to what Peterson terms 'the inclusive yet discriminating *omnivore*',[65] a formulation that might be applicable to the viewer of products found in the indie/Hollywood overlap.

It is not possible to assert with confidence that viewers for Indiewood films come from any one clearly identifiable class or class fragment. Life is not that simple, for any acts of cultural consumption. It is possible, however, to suggest that films produced/distributed from a particular part of the spectrum are designed, if only implicitly at some levels, with specific kinds of audiences broadly in mind, and that these audiences are likely to exist primarily within particular regions

of the landscape of social class, gender, age and ethnicity (although the emphasis in most of the work cited here has been on class). A number of efforts have been made to suggest particular qualities in cultural products that are most likely to appeal to specific taste cultures. Representative of these is the outline of five 'taste publics' offered by Herbert Gans.[66] Innovation and experiment at the level of form are seen by Gans as characteristics of the domain of 'high' culture, populated primarily by highly educated members of the upper and upper-middle classes employed in academic and professional occupations. These qualities do not, generally, appeal to the rest of the taste-culture spectrum, in this account. In the move from upper-middle to lower-middle and 'low' cultures, Gans suggests, there is an increasing preference for emphasis on substance rather than form. This involves fiction with an emphasis on plot more than mood or character-development, for what Gans sees as the growth area of upper-middle culture, and more melodramatic assertions of dominant values at the lower-middle and low ends of the spectrum. Bourdieu makes similar distinctions between what he terms the 'aesthetic disposition' of class fractions high in cultural capital ('intellectuals' and artists, in particular) and the 'popular aesthetic' of the lower classes. Distinction is marked in the former by 'displacing the interest from the "content", characters, plot, etc., to the form, to the specifically artistic effects which are only appreciated relationally, through a comparison with other works which is incompatible with immersion in the singularity of the work immediately given'.[67] Where the aesthetic distances the work from substance, in its emphasis on form, the popular is based on 'the affirmation of the continuity between art and life, which implies the subordination of form to function'.[68] In place of detachment, the popular is founded on a sense of audience involvement and participation.[69] In both cases (each of which might be accused of over-simplification), these preferences are directly linked by Bourdieu to the life-circumstances of those involved: a concern with pragmatic factors on the part of the lower classes contrasting with the desire of the aesthete to mark a distance from necessity. In Bourdieu's terms, Indiewood might again be seen as offering hybrid products, combining popular dynamics with more distinctive, sometimes more formally oriented, dimensions.

Specific class/taste schemas such as those offered by Gans and Bourdieu can be useful but should only be seen as highlighting certain broad tendencies, within which many complications and/or contradictions are likely to arise.[70] Distinctions other than those related specifically to demographic factors such as class background can also come into play, as suggested, for example, by Matt Hills' study of fans of horror fiction. Products that would, conventionally, be ascribed primarily to the 'lower' cultural reaches, horror fictions generate responses within fan forums a key aspect of which is a marking of distinction on the grounds of connoisseurship. A key marker of fandom, for Hills, is an articulation of appreciation at the levels of form and craftsmanship – precisely, a detached, relational appreciation – instead of at the 'immersive' level of emotional fear or disgust.[71] This is another indication of the importance of different levels of investment in the consumption of cultural products, in this case in the deployment of a subcultural capital that might be accessible to a wider constituency than those associated by Gans and Bourdieu with such a mode of consumption/appreciation.

The mixing of elements of high and popular culture identified by Lamont and Peterson as a distinctively American phenomenon has been associated with the development in recent decades of new middle-class fractions. These have been variously described in this context in formulations such as the 'professional-managerial class' (Fred Pfeil), the 'new bourgeoisie', 'new petite bourgeoisie' and 'new cultural intermediaries' (Bourdieu) or new 'knowledge-based' middle-class formations (John Frow).[72] Many of these accounts, the full details of which are beyond the scope of this book, suggest that broader social-economic developments (often associated with or including elements of transition to post-Fordist economic practices) have created a context in which consumption of symbolic goods plays an increased and (for some) increasingly flexible role in the construction and articulation of markers of identity and distinction. Another dimension is the increased role played in the broader economy, especially in the USA, by the 'creative industries', a development viewed by Richard Florida as an important part of the material ground for a fading or blurring of markers of distinction such as those established between 'alternative' and 'mainstream'.[73] The result, for Florida, is the transcendence for

many of a previously long-standing opposition between the distinct ethics of the bourgeois (rooted in the Protestant work ethic) and the bohemian (artistic, creative, expressive, hedonistic). A similar argument is made by David Brooks, who describes the emergence of a 'Bobo' (bourgeois bohemian) complex resulting from a combination of the 1960s' counterculture and the business/profit-oriented culture often associated with the 1980s.[74] For Brooks, this is a generational phenomenon, related to the mutual implication of counterculture and commerce described by Frank. Florida suggests that its roots are somewhat different, in the openness to creativity and cultural difference of the 1960s computer pioneers of Silicon Valley, and the outcome of 'deep economic shifts' rather than 'primarily a lifestyle-and-consumer thing'.[75] Whatever their differences, the accounts of Florida and Brooks are suggestive in terms of both industrial and potential-audience conjunctures relevant to the development of Indiewood cinema, among other cultural trends. They describe an arena in which the creative and the commercial blend very much as is the case in Indiewood, the creative forming a substantial part of the *basis of* rather than just an accommodation with 'the bourgeois realm of ambition and worldly success'.[76] They help – along with some of the other accounts cited above – to suggest a broader cultural context with which the development of Indiewood is consonant.

In each of these cases, the kinds of social/class or generational formations described might provide fertile ground for the products of Indiewood, in which elements of more and less distinctive/mainstream cinema are mixed in varying quantities and in which plenty of scope exists for symbolic appropriation by those who select them as sources of taste–cultural investment. This might be the case regardless of whether any particular commitment is made to the notion of the 'postmodern' as a broader cultural conjuncture or a way of describing any particular qualities of artistic/cultural products. Other demographic factors such as age, gender and ethnicity also need to be considered. Age might be a significant factor, for example, along with class location, in the case of production that aspires to the status of a 'quality' defined in literary or quasi-literary terms, as is the case in a variety of Indiewood output associated particularly with Oscar-garnering Miramax releases from the mid-1990s (examined in more

detail in chapter 2). Such films are targeted primarily at an audience of older viewers, usually defined in industry terms as the 40+ market. This is a niche audience, relatively speaking, in Hollywood terms, compared with younger audience groups that comprise a larger share and also tend to attend more frequently. But it is a substantial niche and one that grew significantly in the period in which Indiewood took shape, from the early 1990s to the later 1990s and the early 2000s; from the low 30s to 40 per cent of the US cinema audience in 2000 and 43 per cent in 2004.[77] This might also be seen as a kind of production targeted at female more than male audiences. Other kinds of Indiewood product, such as those aspiring to 'cool' or 'cult' qualities, however exactly these might be defined, appear to be aimed at segments of the younger audience that is also the main target of Hollywood. In most cases, along with indie cinema more widely, the primary audience is also probably a white as well as a middle-class entity, of whatever age or gender.

But how consciously do the producers and distributors of such forms design them for particular types of audience constituencies, however these might be understood as the product of specific social or historical conjunctures? The answer to this question depends on the point in the process at which we direct our focus. At the production and post-production end of the Indiewood business, notions of what might be seen as a cynical audience-targeting approach are often disavowed in favour of an emphasis on the individual filmmaker (or filmmaking team) as creative artist, even if working within the constraints of studio subsidiaries. A lack of internalization of an image of the intended audience is typical of those at the media-production end more generally, according to studies cited by James Ettema and Charles Whitney: 'writers, whether newspaper reporters or television scriptwriters, along with most other creators of symbolic materials, learn and practice their craft not by internalizing an audience image but by acquiring and maintaining a "product image"', a shared vision of how the work itself should be rather than the audience for which it is designed.[78]

Images of the intended audience reappear, however, 'if we look for them, not in individual daily work routines but in organizational strategies and interactions within the overall arrangements of the

institution'. In the case of the speciality film industry, this is a question of the considerations taken into account by those involved in activities such as finance, distribution and marketing (particularly the latter two), the more immediately economic sharp ends of the business, in which audience targeting figures quite explicitly. In addition to traditional demographics (social class, age, gender, ethnicity, geographical location) and more vague impressions of 'sophisticated' or 'upscale' audiences (terms that occur quite frequently in interviews with distributors and marketers), Indiewood marketing and distribution campaigns also draw on 'attitudinal' descriptions of their target constituencies when deciding where to spend their usually limited advertising and promotional budgets. These include 'psychographics', a form of consumer segmentation derived from social psychology, and 'lifestyles' research, 'based upon more descriptive accounts of attitudes, opinions and beliefs', forms of market segmentation that date back to the same 1960s context as the hip consumerism analysed by Frank.[79] The more discriminating and fine-tuned nature of the breakdown of the market suggested (or created) by such approaches is of particular value to the speciality sector, as well as to niche-oriented business more generally, producing 'both a more intensive individualization of consumers than demographics and emphasiz[ing] the differences between groups of consumers in more explicitly cultural terms'.[80] Particular target areas for speciality cinema are 'sophisticated' urban communities in major metropolises (the standard locations for platform release openings, in which films are distributed initially to a limited number of key cities, usually starting with New York), along with college towns and inner-city 'bohemian' or upscale enclaves. Neighbourhood communities such as the latter are specifically defined in lifestyle marketing conducted on the basis of a classification by zip-code, a significant part of the armoury of speciality marketers since the 1970s.[81]

The Indiewood field of cultural production

A challenge to the 'charismatic ideology' surrounding the figure of the creative artist, taken out of such industrial/economic contexts, is also offered by Bourdieu.[82] Rather than the products of individual 'genius', Bourdieu suggests, artistic-cultural works are the outcome of objective

relations within a wider 'field of cultural production' such as that occupied by Indiewood in its particular location between the dynamics of the mainstream and the more independent sectors. Indiewood is defined, that is, not as a 'thing in itself' but through its relative position in a wider field. Indiewood products might not be written or produced consciously *in order to* play into this field (although that remains a possibility), but it is the existence of the objective forces of the field that creates a context in which they are likely to be funded, produced and distributed. The manner in which production and consumption come together is seen by Bourdieu as a product of the shared habitus, the wider configuration of taste-culture in which each end of the process is embedded:

> the matching of supply and demand is neither the simple effect of production imposing itself on consumption nor the effect of a conscious endeavour to serve the consumers' needs, but the result of the objective orchestration of two relatively independent logics, that of the field of production and that of the field of consumption.[83]

This is one way of addressing the question of which comes first, in the various accounts cited above: the push resulting from industrial imperatives to combine larger-scale with specialist niche-targeting strategies or a pull from consumer demands that might be associated more or less specifically with the taste/distinction preferences of particular class fractions or other social groups in particular historical contexts. Both can be seen as products of a larger configuration of socio-economic forces, perhaps relatively less independent from one another in this particular conjuncture than Bourdieu suggests; quite strong links between the two are certainly implied by many of the commentators cited above. For Bourdieu:

> The producers are led by the logic of competition with other producers and by the specific interests linked to their position in the field of production (and therefore by the habitus which have led them to that position) to produce distinct products which meet the different cultural interests which the consumers owe to their class conditions and position, thereby offering them a real possibility of being satisfied.[84]

The fact that the particular qualities of a given habitus are experienced by its occupants as natural and self-evident makes both production and consumption within any particular sphere seem spontaneous rather than deliberately contrived. Practical mastery of the field 'gives its possessors a "nose" and a "feeling", *without any need for cynical calculation*'.[85] This helps to explain the fact that figures such as the heads and leading executives of Indiewood divisions tend to present themselves as enthusiasts for the films they handle, lending their skills in business or marketing to the support of a creative enterprise, rather than as more detached and purely commercially minded. They situate themselves within the habitus, as sharers of the values considered to be embodied in the kinds of films produced or distributed, rather than as external figures seeking to exploit a particular market, even while conscious of using individual skills to do exactly that. They fit quite well, in this respect, with the merging or transcendence of bourgeois and bohemian distinctions described by Florida and Brooks.

Indiewood can be located, in this sense, within broader dynamics characteristic of the overall field of cultural production, as a product of the rival pulls identified by Bourdieu (in all artistic and literary endeavour) between larger-scale, more commercial and smaller-scale, less commercial operations.[86] At one extreme is production operating according to what Bourdieu terms the 'heteronomous principle', in which creative work is subject to the ordinary prevailing laws of the market, as just another commercial product. At the other is the 'autonomous principle', in which total freedom is achieved from the laws of the market and all that counts is artistic prestige.[87] Indiewood clearly exists nearer to the former than the latter, being required to produce works that are marketable to particular audiences in order to earn profits (or, at the very least, to avoid making losses) for its corporate parents. It remains a sector in which part of the emphasis, however, is on the production of cultural capital of value to the speciality divisions of the major studios for the reasons discussed above, even if we conclude that the primary motivation is the capacity for this particular form of cultural capital to be converted – via particular audience constituencies – into its economic equivalent. The cultural capital produced by this kind of cinema also appears to be significant

to many of the executives involved in the sector, for their own personal investments and the articulations through which they distinguish themselves from their colleagues in the commercial mainstream. The aspirations of Harvey Weinstein at Miramax, as considered in chapter 2, are a case in point, as might be those of some of the executives who played key roles in shepherding 'maverick' studio productions such as *Three Kings* and *Fight Club*, considered in chapter 4. Economics set limits – the imperative to make profits, if modest compared with the stuff of the Hollywood blockbuster – but the context is one in which a lower scale of financial gain might be accepted, in some if not all cases, as the price of a higher return at the cultural level. Profit might also be deferred, to a later moment at which films that do not achieve great initial box-office success gain 'cult' or other forms of delayed critical and/or audience recognition that can be converted into substantial ongoing revenues, particularly in video/DVD, as proved most notably to be the case with *Fight Club*. The 'genuine' nature of the personal investments of those involved in the processes through which such works gain space in the orbit of the studios need not be doubted for this process to be understood effectively as serving more practical and functional (commercial and ideological) purposes for the studios and their preferred self-images.

Empirical audience studies are the best way to sample who really does consume films such as the Indiewood products under consideration here, although such work remains thin on the ground. A small-scale study by Martin Barker of viewers of *Being John Malkovich* (1999), one of a number of films scripted by Charlie Kaufman considered in chapter 1, is broadly, if tentatively, supportive of the approach outlined above, in which Indiewood films of this kind are seen as establishing particular demands on viewers in return for giving them a sense of belonging to a particular kind of interpretive community.[88] Similar conclusions can be drawn from many responses found in online forums such as 'customer reviews' on the Amazon.com website, examples of which are considered in the chapters that follow. Some evidence for different orientations towards film consumption of the kind implied in the accounts of Bourdieu and others is also found in Barker and Brooks' *Judge Dredd* project, even if developed in the context of audiences for a very different type of film. On the one

hand, Barker and Brooks identify action-adventure-oriented viewers whose attitude fits with aspects of Bourdieu's 'popular aesthetic', in which the overwhelming emphasis is on the experience of the thrills offered by the film in the present tense. What the film has to offer is 'obvious, it's all there on-screen', and a marker of distinction in this case is 'to separate yourself from the "analysts"'.[89] Among other orientations, however, are those defined as 'film-follower' and 'culture-belonging'. In the former case, elements of which Barker and Brooks found in many of their interview-responses, the film-going experience is important to viewers in the context of the organization, rehearsal and display of 'expert' knowledge. In the latter, acknowledged at some level by 'just about every single interviewee', the key dimension is the contribution film consumption offers to the individual's feeling of belonging to particular groups; the cinematic experience is 'a continuous process of belonging, gathering up appropriate materials as cultural "coinage", and making the appropriate knowing use of them'.[90] Each of these two orientations entails a mobilization of some form of cultural or subcultural capital as a significant aspect of investment in the consumption of particular types of film, the film-follower orientation including potential interest in a wider range of cinema (and likely to figure at least as prominently, if not more so, among viewers of Indiewood productions).

As far as seeking to establish who such films are *designed for*, however, the motivating force for their distribution and/or creation/production/financing, we can have recourse to the texts themselves, as well as to their economic and social-cultural contexts. No one can guarantee which films reach exactly which audiences, and there is always likely to be an imperfect match between target and actual audiences (as manifested by some of the negative Amazon responses cited in the chapters that follow), but all films entail in some sense what Barker terms an 'implied audience', based on the set of particular skills and knowledges required 'if the film is to be made sense of and related to'.[91] What exactly such a viewer orientation comprises is variable, however. As Janet Staiger suggests, film theorists have often greatly simplified the likely orientations of spectators to films, including an undue assumption that viewers are 'knowledgeable and cooperative' in relation to what are often assumed to be primary

dimensions of the film-going experience (particularly, in the case of 'classical' Hollywood cinema, an emphasis on narrative and character as opposed to dimensions such as spectacle and excess).[92] Reception activities presumed to be 'normative' for narrative features encompass only a narrow range of the kinds of responses made by viewers, Staiger argues (so many alternatives, she suggests, as to expose the status of the 'normative' as a narrowly grounded construct).[93] The extent to which viewers of Indiewood films might be 'knowledgeable and cooperative' in relation to the specific qualities highlighted in such products is another factor likely to depend on the level of investment on the part of any particular groups or individuals. Those who invest relatively highly in such films, as sources of cultural distinction, might be expected more closely to fit the requirements of a specific type of implied viewer, choosing Indiewood or other such products specifically on the basis of what they offer beyond or alongside more conventional/mainstream characteristics. In such cases, a relatively good 'fit' would exist between the orientations of viewers and the distinctive qualities according to which products are defined by filmmakers, distributors or other intermediaries. This, again, appears to be supported by some of the audience responses considered below. Allowance always has to be made for the fact that what viewers take from any kind of cinema cannot entirely be determined, however, even where particular features are foregrounded by the text and/or surrounding promotional or critical discourses.

Mainstream Hollywood films have culturally specific requirements of their own, if they are to achieve certain minimal levels of legibility, but are designed to be accessible to a very large constituency. Indiewood films are not generally designed to be difficult to access but also offer some more distinctive features, implying an audience role that can differ in some respects from that associated with 'the mainstream', or that can include particular kinds of viewer appropriations, in the sense suggested by Bourdieu. The term 'mainstream' can easily become a rhetorical construct that obscures numerous forms of differentiation, as suggested above, a risk I run in its repeated use in this book (as can other terms such as 'dominant', 'commercial', 'alternative', 'distinctive', and so on). But it is also an *operative* construct, a discursive category in widespread use, explicitly or implicitly, in

the articulation of a range of points of distinction (as are the other terms listed above). It is used as shorthand for what can be understood to be a specific set of historically and institutionally grounded norms against which other practices can be measured. The formal dimension of this study is an exercise in what has become known as historical poetics, in which, as Henry Jenkins suggests, stylistic choices 'are understood not simply as a means of individual expression by exceptional artists, but rather as grounded in institutional practices and larger aesthetic movements'.[94] A key aspect of this approach is the concept of the aesthetic norm, as developed in greatest detail in David Bordwell's analysis of the classical Hollywood style, which should be taken to suggest a relatively stable paradigm characteristic of mainstream Hollywood production, although one that permits variation within and the possibility in some cases of pushing beyond the usual limitations.[95]

Notions of the mainstream or the 'popular' are often taken as a reference point against which other forms are defined. For Lee, Bourdieu's popular aesthetic serves as 'the primary benchmark against which the remainder of all other taste formations, which have at their heart a systematic exclusion of popular forms and the denial of popular modes of consumption, may be fixed and consumed'.[96] This may be the case regardless of the oversimplified nature of prevalent under-standings of what exactly is constituted by the popular/mainstream (oversimplified versions are likely to be more functional, for this purpose of articulating distinctions, than more complex or nuanced accounts that might do better justice to the reality). Each position in the field is a social construct, defined, as Bourdieu argues, in terms of its relationship with other positions. A similar point is made by Janet Harbord, in a context more directly related to the subject of this book. The film cultures surrounding the multiplex and the art-house cinema mark a polarity of positions, as Harbord suggests, the latter often seen as threatened with extinction by the expansion of the former: 'Yet this gloss evades the central dynamic at work in the relationship between these cultures, one in which positions are both carved out in relation to the other and also in dynamic structural play.'[97] Implicit in the definition of art-house cinema is that from which it marks its separation and independence. The position of Indiewood is one in which some distinction is marked, but the degree of separation can be significantly less than that implied by the material exclusively of the art-house.

Some of the formulations employed by Bourdieu and Lee quoted above do not apply in the case of Indiewood, the hybrid nature of which is far from systematically excluding or denying popular forms or modes of consumption. Indiewood films do not, generally, displace interest from elements of 'content' such as character and plot to issues of form, even if they might sometimes offer distinctive formal appeals to those sufficiently invested to find these a source of distinction-marking pleasure. Character and plot remain dominant, as will be seen in the examples examined in the rest of this book, even those that appear more formally innovative or challenging in some respects. It is also rarely if ever the case that Indiewood films can be associated with an aesthetic disposition that 'tends to bracket off the nature and function of the object represented and to exclude any "naïve" reaction – horror at the horrible, desire for the desirable, pious reverence for the sacred – along with all purely ethical responses, in order to concentrate solely on the mode of representation [...]'.[98] If its output is largely built around character and plot, Indiewood also remains a realm of cinema founded on appeal to the emotional reactions of viewers, in much the same way as Hollywood, if sometimes in a more nuanced tone. Emotional reactions are not bracketed, certainly not entirely, even where formal devices or issues relating to the broader mode of representation are highlighted. The same is true of much of the commercially distributed indie sector, even if the bounds of possibility here are generally drawn more widely.

The implied audience for Indiewood cinema, then, would be an audience receptive to the presence of some markers of difference or distinction within the context of frameworks broadly familiar from the Hollywood mainstream. It would, in at least some instances, be able to find pleasure in the specific difference constituted by examples such as the complex or self-referential narratives scripted by Charlie Kaufman or the stylized touches often associated with the films of Steven Soderbergh. But it would also take pleasure from more mainstream/familiar articulations in dimensions such as plot, character and emotional engagement and response. That such a combination of

orientations exists among a significant number of viewers of the films considered in this book is supported by responses taken from online sources, principally reviews posted on the Amazon.com website, even where these are found amid a wider spectrum of reactions. A word is required here on the use of such sources as a way of considering viewer responses. Given the centrality to this study of notions of audience targeting and the potential of particular kinds of texts to provide sources of distinction-marking for viewers, it is necessary to make some attempt to 'test' these approaches against the responses of actual viewers, even if no methods of audience research can be said to provide definitive or unmediated answers to questions such as why particular viewers choose, enjoy or react otherwise to particular films. Online sources such as Amazon reviews are a useful resource for this purpose, particularly in the case of films that are no longer on theatrical release and therefore beyond the reach of audience research based on the distribution of questionnaires to those attending or who have recently attended the cinema (one of the prevailing forms of audience research on film to date). They also have the merit of not focusing exclusively on the theatrical experience, frequently offering a combination of reactions to a film generally – regardless of where seen – and comments relating more specifically to a particular release for home viewing.

Amazon reviews also offer sizeable samples, as many as 1,000 or more in the cases of *Kill Bill: Volume 1*, considered in chapter 2, and *American Beauty*, considered in chapter 4, a scale difficult to achieve (without very substantial resources) through more traditional research methods. Like all research samples, qualifications are required, however, in regard to any claims that might be made to more broadly representative status. Amazon reviews have the benefit of appearing to canvas a fairly wide range of opinion, including many viewers of the films considered in this book who would not, from their reactions, appear to be among the obvious target market.[99] Such samples are self-selecting, however, and cannot be considered representative in any strict sense (although the same can be said of other audience research samples such as those based on the limited number of respondents who complete and return questionnaires or agree to take part in activities such as focus group sessions or interviews). The major drawback of the use of online postings, perhaps, is that they do not

enable specific questions to be put to viewers, directly to test particular hypotheses. The upside is that the opinions expressed are generated by the respondents themselves, as their 'own' reactions, prompted by their response to the film in the context provided by other reviews and circulating discourses. The latter can, of course, play a substantial role in shaping what are presented as viewers' own subjective opinions, as can recourse to certain formulaic varieties of response, as will be seen in the chapters that follow. It is also important to note that statements made in such fora do not provide unmediated access to viewer responses. They must be considered, as Thomas Austin puts it, as 'performative acts made about feelings and engagements, rather than as transparent reproductions of these'.[100] For a study that includes a focus on degrees of articulation of distinction and the employment of particular forms of cultural/subcultural capital, however, the performative dimension of such responses is one of the main objects of interest, regardless of the extent to which the performative is believed to mask or express the 'real' thoughts and feelings of the respondent.[101]

Sources such as Amazon reviews also play an active part in the public mapping of taste cultures, which gives them added resonance for my purpose. Bottom-up consumer feedback of this kind is a key component of an 'amplified word of mouth' considered by Anderson to play an important role in helping to match supply and demand in the world of escalating choice created by the huge inventories of stock made available by online retailers such as Amazon.[102] Amazon reviews are part of the broader phenomenon examined in this book, components in a feedback system (in this case, particularly related to DVD releases) that can help to shape as well as to reflect patterns of consumption and distinction-marking, rather than existing in a vacuum as tends to be the case with data generated specifically for academic research. These sources do not help directly to answer questions about the social-class or other status of viewers, however, as no such information on respondents is provided (it might be possible to speculate about such status from the nature of the discourse employed by individual examples, but such an interpretation would risk the employment of a circular logic).

The primary focus of the remainder of this book remains textual, but with the industrial and potential-audience contexts, and some

viewer responses, very much to the fore; how certain features are structured in a manner that locates them in a particular region of the marketplace, offering qualities likely to be of primary appeal to particular audience segments. The first chapter focuses on three films scripted by Charlie Kaufman, starting with *Adaptation* (2002), a feature that explicitly figures the Indiewood tension between more and less conventional textual qualities in its tale of a screenwriter (a fictionalized Kaufman) attempting to adapt a book to the screen. The films of Kaufman can be situated at the more indie/alternative end of the Indiewood spectrum. Far more mainstream in its orientation was the strategy of Miramax Films, the speciality arm of Walt Disney since 1993 and one of the key architects of the Indiewood blurring of distinctions between Hollywood and the independent sector, before the departure of the Weinsteins in 2005. This is considered in chapter 2 through an analysis of films that mark two ends of a Miramax spectrum that ranges from articulations of quality/prestige (*Shakespeare in Love*) to a more youth-oriented mainstreaming of pulp and/or cult film traditions (*Kill Bill*). Chapter 3 returns to a focus on the individual filmmaker in the shape of Steven Soderbergh, a figure whose work has demonstrated an ability to straddle as well as to work on both sides of the indie/ Hollywood line, exemplified here in case studies of *Traffic* (2000) and a remake of the science-fiction art-cinema classic *Solaris* (2002). The latter was produced within the borders of one of the main studio divisions, Twentieth Century Fox, a dimension of Indiewood considered more directly in chapter 4 via case studies of *American Beauty* and *Three Kings*, two films that demonstrate the nature and (often limited) scope for relatively alternative kinds of production at the heart of the studio sector. The final chapter moves towards a conclusion but also widens the range of the book by considering a larger body of 34 films, the US distribution slate of Universal's Focus Features from 2002 to 2005, before returning to some of the broader issues raised in this introduction.

Notes

1. I am using the term 'independent' here to suggest the part of the film landscape to which the term became most prominently attached in the 1980s and 1990s, the domain signified by the names of institutions such

as the distributor Miramax and the Sundance Film Festival, and by the work of filmmakers such as Jim Jarmusch, John Sayles, Kevin Smith, Richard Linklater and Quentin Tarantino. The term 'indie' is often used to distinguish this particular range of independent cinema from what is signified by wider or more literal uses of the term.

2. For an example of praise, in an often informative but also relatively superficial account, see James Mottram, *The Sundance Kids: How The Mavericks Took Over Hollywood*.

3. In its consideration of broader social and economic contexts in relation to both indie and Indiewood production and consumption, this book attempts to provide more in the way of background explanation than my previous book, *American Independent Cinema*. Some of this contextual material is of relevance to the broader independent as well as the specifically Indiewood sector, although the main focus here is on the specific hybrid location of the latter.

4. 'Part One: The classical Hollywood style, 1917–60', in Janet Staiger Bordwell and Kristin Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Style: Film Style and Mode of Production to 1960*, 5.

5. Peter Biskind, in *Down and Dirty Pictures: Miramax, Sundance and the Rise of Independent Film*, 194, suggests that the term was coined in 1994. One of the locations in which it gained increased currency was the online newsletter/website *indieWIRE*, which gives a later date, attributing the coining of the term to a 1997 article by the filmmaker Sarah Jacobson that celebrated the virtues of lower-budget do-it-yourself production; see Eugene Hernandez, 'First Person: indieWIRE @ 10, And Counting...', *indieWIRE*, 15 July 2006, accessed via www.indiewire. com, and Sarah Jacobson, 'Understanding D.I.Y.' *indieWIRE*, November 1997, exact date not provided.

6. A view commonly expressed in indie-oriented sources such as *indieWIRE* and *Filmmaker* magazine and very much the context in which the term was used by Jacobson.

7. A distinctly hyperbolic, celebratory note is struck, among some more nuanced observations, as evidenced by the subtitles of journalistic works such as Mottram, *The Sundance Kids*, and Sharon Waxman, *Rebels on the Backlot: Six Maverick Directors and How They Conquered the Hollywood Studio System*.

8. For more on this see my *American Independent Cinema*. For more on recurrent characteristics of art cinema, and its institutional basis, see Steve Neale, 'Art Cinema as Institution', *Screen*, 22/1 (1981). As Barbara Wilinsky suggests, the category has had ambiguous and flexible

meaning in its uses at different times within the film industry: *Sure Seaters: The Emergence of Art House Cinema*.

9. David S. Cohen and Ian Mohr, 'Disney minis its "Max"', *Variety*. Posted at www.variety.com, 10 April 2005.

10. *Rebels on the Backlot*, xviii.

11. *The Economy of Prestige: Prizes, Awards, and the Circulation of Cultural Value*, 10.

12. For more on the way the particular meanings of 'independent' have changed, and can best be understood at the level of the discourses surrounding the term, see Yannis Tzioumakis, *American Independent Cinema: An Introduction*, 13.

13. Mike Wayne, *Marxism and Media Studies: Key Concepts and Contemporary Trends*, 77; the same can be said of the wider postwar tendency for the studios to contract out much of the process of film production to independent and semi-independent companies involved in the making of mainstream features.

14. For useful surveys of different ways in which post-Fordism has been conceptualized, and some of the over-simplifications that often result, see Ash Amin, 'Post-Fordism: Models, Fantasies and Phantoms of Transition', and Mark Elam, 'Puzzling out the Post-Fordist Debate: Technology, Markets and Institutions', both in Ash Amin (ed.), *Post-Fordism: A Reader*.

15. For more of this background, see my *American Independent Cinema*, chapter 1.

16. Martyn J. Lee, *Consumer Culture Reborn: The Cultural Politics of Consumption*.

17. *Consumer Culture Reborn*, 135.

18. *Consumer Culture Reborn*, 135.

19. Gail Schiller, 'Alarm sounded on overuse of preshow ads', *The Hollywood Reporter*, 25 March 2004, accessed via www.hollywoodreporter.com; Nicola Sperling, 'Cinema advertising exhibits growth', *The Hollywood Reporter*, 14 June 2004, accessed via www.hollywoodreporter.com.

20. *The Long Tail: How Endless Choice is Creating Unlimited Demand*.

21. Even if the production process has been decentralized in the postwar period in a manner consistent with accounts of post-Fordism, this is far from the case when it comes to the crucial process of distribution, the real source of overall power and control in the industry; see Asu Askoy and Kevin Robins, 'Hollywood for the 21st century: global competition for critical mass in image markets', *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, 16 (1992).

22. Martin Barker, with Thomas Austin, *From Antz to Titanic: Reinventing Film Studies*, 48. Barker draws for his articulation of this concept on notions of the 'implied reader' in literary theory, 42–8.

23. For Baudrillard it is 'sign exchange value' that is fundamental to the world of consumption, rather than 'use value', the more practical uses to which products might be put; *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign*, 30. For an account that seeks to bring the perspective of social anthropology to bear on the issue of consumption and the manner in which 'goods are coded for communication', see Mary Douglas and Baron Isherwood, *The World of Goods: Towards an Anthropology of Consumption*, xxi. Useful surveys of these issues are found in Lee, *Consumer Culture Reborn*, and Robert Bocock, *Consumption*.

24. For a full account of this process see Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, 73–88.

25. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, 171.

26. *Distinction*, 68.

27. *Governing the Soul: The Shaping of the Private Self*, 231.

28. *Distinction*, 2.

29. Jeffrey Sconce, 'Irony, nihilism and the new American "smart" film', *Screen*, 43:4 (Winter 2002), 352.

30. Nick Heffernan, *Capital, Class and Technology in Contemporary American Culture*, 7.

31. *The Conquest of Cool: Business Culture, Counterculture, and the Rise of Hip Consumerism*.

32. *The Conquest of Cool*, 31, 233; Sconce, 'Irony, nihilism', 355–7. For an account that relates its primary understanding of the kind of cinema considered in this book, and that of some more mainstream contemporaries, directly to production inspired by the life experiences of members of the 'Generation X' demographic, see Peter Hanson, *The Cinema of Generation X: A Critical Study*. Another version with a similarly generational orientation is Jesse Fox Mayshark, *Post-Pop Cinema, The search for Meaning in American Film*.

33. A concept developed by Sarah Thornton, *Club Cultures: Music, Media and Subcultural Capital*.

34. Thornton, *Club Cultures*; Mark Jancovich, 'Cult Fictions: Cult Movies, Subcultural Capital and the Production of Cultural Distinctions', *Cultural Studies*, 16:2 (2002).

35. Jancovich, 'Cult Fictions', 315–17.

36. *Consumer Culture Reborn*, 36; *Distinction*, 35–47.

37. More than one-third of audiences at Britain's 37 Regional Film Theatres were in full-time education, a figure that rises to more than

half if the numbers of teachers and lecturers are added, according to data compiled for David Docherty, David Morrison and Michael Tracey, *The Last Picture Show? Britain's Changing Film Audiences*. The study also showed, as would be expected, that this audience had other distinct cultural leanings such as much higher than average tendencies to read newspapers such as *The Guardian* and to listen to Radio 4.

38. *Distinction*, 270.

39. A similar argument is made by Wilkinsky in relation to patrons of art cinemas during their period of growth in the postwar decades in the USA.

40. *Distinction*, 226, 227.

41. *Film Cultures*, 89.

42. *Distinction*, 253. In *Fear of Falling: The Inner Life of the Middle Class*, Barbara Ehrenreich suggests that the professional middle class is particularly subject to anxiety because of the evanescent nature of its principal source of capital (knowledge and skill), which must be renewed in each individual (15).

43. *Distinction*, 282.

44. *Distinction*, 323.

45. See Claire Monk, 'The British heritage-film debate revisited', in Claire Monk and Amy Sargeant (eds), *British Historical Cinema*, for a critique of a dominant manner in which British 'middlebrow' literary adaptations have been disparaged under the label of the 'heritage film'. Jim Collins, in *High-Pop: Making Culture into Popular Entertainment*, makes a distinction between literary texts characterized as middlebrow in the era following the Second World War and what he terms contemporary 'high-pop', which includes Indiewood adaptations of highbrow classical authors such as Austen and Shakespeare: 7–9.

46. For a good example, see John Frow, *Cultural Studies and Cultural Value*.

47. *Money, Morals and Manners: The Culture of the French and the American Upper-Middle Class*.

48. *Money, Morals and Manners*, 5.

49. These include work roles, which remain likely to play an important part in conceptions of self-identity, despite the claims of some that these have been displaced in favour of an emphasis on consumption in a move towards a 'postmodern' condition; Bocock, Consumption, 4.

50. *Distinction*, 173.

51. 'On looking into Bourdieu's black box', in Roger Dickinson *et al.* (eds), *Approaches to Audiences*.

52. 'On looking', 228–9.

53. *Architectures of Excess: Cultural Life in the Information Age*, 195.

54. *Architectures of Excess*, 193–4.

55. *Highbrow/Lowbrow: The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America*.

56. 'High-Pop: An Introduction', in Collins (ed.), *High-Pop: Making Culture into Popular Entertainment*.

57. See Michael Kammen, *American Culture, American Tastes: Social Change and the 20th Century*, and Herbert Gans, *Popular Culture and High Culture: An Analysis and Evaluation of Taste*.

58. *Distinction*, 133.

59. George Lewis, 'Taste cultures and their composition: towards a new theoretical perspective', in E. Katz and T. Szecsko (eds), *Mass Media and Social Change*; Judith Blau, *The Shape of Culture: A Study of Contemporary Cultural Patterns in the United States*; Frow, *Cultural Studies and Cultural Value*.

60. *Consumer Culture Reborn*, 34.

61. Bocock, *Consumption*, 78–81.

62. Richard Peterson, 'Measured markets and unknown audiences: case studies from the production and consumption of music', in J. Ettema and D. Whitney (eds), *Audiencemaking: How the Media Create the Audience*, 180; Lamont, *Money, Morals and Manners*, 113.

63. *Money, Morals and Manners*, 104, 105.

64. *Money, Morals and Manners*, 115.

65. 'Measured markets', 180.

66. *Popular Culture and High Culture*.

67. *Distinction*, 34.

68. *Distinction*, 32.

69. For a critique that argues that Bourdieu's account lacks a full consideration of the potential for genuinely 'artistic' creation within popular culture, see Bridget Fowler, *Pierre Bourdieu and Cultural Theory: Critical Investigations*.

70. For a critique of Bourdieu's version, see Frow, *Cultural Studies and Cultural Value*, 29–47.

71. Hills, *The Pleasures of Horror*.

72. For a number of sociological sources on the rise and composition of new middle classes, see Mike Featherstone, *Consumer Culture and Postmodernism*, 43. For other accounts and/or questioning of the nature of this process, see Fred Pfeil, '"Makin' Flippy-Floppy": Postmodernism and the Baby Boom Professional-Managerial Class', in Fred Pfeil (ed.), *Another Tale to Tell: Politics and Narrative in Postmodern Culture*; Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 304–70; Frow, *Cultural Studies and Cultural Value*, 124–5; Scott