

France's own entanglement during wartime: both victim and victimizer, a real simultaneity that has long proven painful to grasp as national history.⁶⁵ By putting the sexualized young female on parallel trial as the sign of all that was wrong, unnatural, and impure in postwar France, Cayatte imagined a way to repudiate and excise national shame. But in the case of France during the Occupation, the narrative of guilt is so subtly woven into the national experience that the ease with which Cayatte—and the viewer—can ascribe blame speaks largely to the all-too-human desire to find a scapegoat—our own victim—in a history and in stories where complete innocence is hard to find.

4 Technological Society and Its Discontents

As *Avant le déluge* showed, the unpredictable trajectory of the teenage girl as French culture imagined her in the 1950s bears little resemblance to the long-standing prescriptions for the *jeune fille*. With no maternal role model in sight, Liliane finds guidelines for behavior and strategies of self-determination in popular culture—the movie star vamp, the scheming accomplice to murder. But what is always intimated to be bad behavior is also always punished in the end. Even as French culture lamented her disappearance, the *jeune fille* consistently haunts narratives and images of the sexually knowing teenage girl in the post-World War II period, closing the door abruptly on the vista of freedom and possibility and leaving solitude and guilt in their stead: for Liliane, for Geneviève in *Le Repos du guerrier*, Odile in *La Sensitive*, Cécile in *Bonjour tristesse*.

As the ambiguities of France's wartime role receded in national memory, the cultural context for the discomfort that such punishment for bad behavior translated became, conversely, the nation's awareness of its lurking future. By the mid-1950s, France's sense of national identity was being tested from two directions: Algeria and the United States. How to imagine France without the *département* of Algeria? With the growing influence of American culture and the accompanying encroachment of technology, what would become of the French way of life? This chapter looks at how youth figures in connections, both real and represented, between these two aspects of France's own troubling loss of intactness: the rise of an Americanized technological society and the war for Algerian indepen-

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Media in France, 1945-1968.

Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University
Press, 2001

dence, for which two to three million young men were called up to defend French interests. In the aggregation of these social, economic, and political tensions, the discursive shift from the existentialists and J-3s of the previous chapter entails a depoliticization that is simultaneous to the reality of military conscription, as youth became an economic category: the *copain*, a fun-loving consumer of American-style pop music and its accoutrements. This depoliticized image of youth was overturned by the mid-1960s, through the same channels of the Algerian war and consumer culture, in a repoliticization whose dramatic culmination arrived in May 1968.

As consumers and copains, the line between young men and young women became increasingly diffuse. Youth of both sexes were sharply defined in contrast to their parents by advertisers, manufacturers, and the music industry, all of whom surely saw the economic potential of discourses on the generation gap already in circulation. Wartime victims and survivors were relegated to the annals of history. The accent was now on gender-inclusive "fun" — though many of the same young men hailed as consumers would also be called to military service in the Algerian war. Between 1955 and 1962, censorship of written texts, radio programs, and visual representations that "posed a threat to state security" meant that there could be no direct references to French military tactics or the long duration of the war.¹ However, "the events" could be evoked. Allusions are made to this unsettled political climate in the two films studied in this chapter, Marcel Carné's *Les Tricheurs* and Jacques Rozier's *Adieu Philippe*. But the films are primarily about the lures of Americanized high-tech culture for teenagers of both sexes. While female characters continue to operate in an antisentimental mode, they express their individuality less in precocious sexuality than in the denial or deferral of romance, while other kinds of desire specific to consumer culture come to the fore. I argue that the Algerian war, itself completely off-screen, is what made romance impossible, prematurely cutting off the familiar feminine trajectory whose marks in these films are nevertheless in place: an ambiguous expression of nostalgia for a familiar and certain world.

Technological Society

Albeit to a lesser extent than in the American context, the mid-decade in France marked the beginning of an era where the voices of scientists and technocrats along with their interpreters in popular culture began to

be heard, rather than solely those of prophets and ideologues.² Following Daniel Bell's *End of Ideology* (1960), we can identify how discourses on technology and its economic promises for France — which alternately evoked the end of the traditional way of life and the coming of a brave new Americanized world — and the glories that advancement conveyed for the nation and its individuals were politicized prophecies in their own right. Along with books such as Jacques Ellul's ominous *La Technique ou l'enjeu du siècle* (1954) and economist Jean Fourastié's excited predictions for advancement in French productivity and quality of life in *Histoire de demain* (1956) and *La Citélisation de 1975* (originally published in 1953 and reprinted every two to four years until 1962), newspaper and magazine articles and films presented technology as the monolith behind various complex processes of social change, a point of view that is called technological determinism.³ In the spectrum of technological determinism, the "soft" view proposes a dialectic between technology and society and foregrounds human actions and history in their multiple valences, while the "hard" view posits technology as a causal force independent of social constraints. Discourses in mid-1950s France tended toward the latter.

For the present study, the interest of this plethora of analyses of "technology" as a socioeconomic motor for France's future lies in the fact that many commentators positioned youth as the key variable in the transformation of the traditional French way of life. At the end of the decade, the discursive tendency to associate youth with technology in order to make large-scale statements about social change and the nation conjoined with real changes technology introduced on the humbler scale of everyday life. Technological icons such as the scooter, the automobile, the transistor radio, and eventually television dramatically altered the place of the adolescent in the French family and in public life. Teenagers emerged as a new category of consumer whose uncomplicated mission in society, as a popular culture that was now "theirs" told them, was to have fun.

As far as young men were concerned, the underside of such discursive associations of youth with technology, of the emergence of their generation as a new economic category within metropolitan France, was the reality of youth without: the two to three million conscripts (*appelés*) sent to defend French interests in Algeria. In that the period of the Algerian war (1954–62) overlapped precisely with the centrality of youth in popular discourses of technological determinism as well as the eventual emergence of the teenage consumer, it would be an incomplete picture of the images and the realities of youth in this period to consider one without the other. The

same popular media culture that formed around the copains, young singers inspired by American pop music, disseminated largely reassuring information about the daily life of conscripts, a concomitance whose oddness, as the following pages will show, does not end in an analytical juxtaposition.

Two world wars had taken their toll on the French economy: the nation would not retrieve the rhythm of its growth curve of 1900–14 until 1965.⁴ Economic stagnation along with a widespread nostalgia for life before wartime conspired to maintain the particularly French state of mind known as *immobilisme*. Yet the mass media raised the spectre of the advent of an unrecognizably high-tech society, a brave new world where only the young could find their way. In a France nostalgic for life before wartime and seduced by images of American-style comfort, innovation, and efficiency, the media declared the unfamiliarity of technology to be the cause of a generation gap unlike any previous manifestation.⁵ Adults could no longer play their ancestral role of initiating children into society, since they themselves had to be initiated into a world that was equally unfamiliar to them, and certainly stranger: “Nos enfants sont nés dans un monde que nous n’avons su ni leur annoncer ni leur expliquer [Our children were born into a world we knew not how to present or to explain to them], lamented physicist-turned-journalist André Labarthe in a 1955 issue of *La Nef* entitled *Jouissance qui es-tu?*”⁶ Most worrisome was how the distance young people put between themselves and their elders, who could no longer be their guides, echoed the new distribution of power on the global scene. France’s youth realized full well, wrote Louis Dalmas in an article from the same issue, that both economically and politically, their nation was no longer a major player:

Bonne chère et douceur de vivre, tant vantées par les prospectus du tourisme, n’embellissent que des rides; sous le maquillage, la France est vieille. Dans ses veines coule la camomille des retraités; c’est autre chose que le sang des jacobins.⁷

[The good life and the sweet life, praised so highly in tourist brochures, only embellish wrinkles; underneath the makeup, France is old. In her veins runs the chamomile tea of retired folk; it’s not the same thing as the blood of the Jacobins.]

The advent of technological society gave the distinction between Old World and New a troublingly different meaning, decades before Jean Bau-

drillard and Marc Fumaroli would write about the ossification of contemporary France in the nineteenth century. Dalmas may have been referring to the literal fact that the population in France was older in 1955 than it was in 1789, but the tea-drinking retirees he evoked as a demographic metaphor doubled for the quaint desuetude of the French way of life as well as the insequentiality of French politics. For all the articles in this issue of *La Nef* posited the eagerness with which youth welcomed technology, and not their technological pessimism, as the logical partner of political apathy. Why would young people care about contemporary politics when they perceived that their nation, once the seat of revolution, had become little more than a tourist venue? “France is old,” wrote Dalmas simply and dramatically: revolution was now elsewhere — specifically, as many of these articles posited, in the technological transformation of everyday life most apparent in America.

Writings about youth and technological society made the claim that it was the lure of America that brought with it a newly dismissive attitude toward a France mired in the glories of its past. Openness to the advances of science and technology doubled as a kind of pessimism for the viability of Old-World ways and values. The headline of a 1960 *Le Figaro* survey of twenty-year-old students in the sciences quoted a young engineer who expressed this sentiment in darkly manichean terms: “Quand la terre entière se transforme, rester en arrière c’est mourir”⁸ [When the whole world is being transformed, to remain behind is to die]. As one eloquent young man said, old ways were dead, and the rising generation felt there was nothing to learn from them:

A quelles valeurs voulez-vous que nous nous accrochions quand sous nos yeux tout se transforme, se désagrège ou se décompose? Nous sommes nés dans un monde neuf . . . Nous remarquons très souvent que nos aînés en savent moins que nous sur des problèmes aujourd’hui essentiels.⁹

[What values do you want us to uphold when right before our eyes everything is being transformed, coming apart, or decomposing? We are what’s brand new in a brand new world . . . We notice quite often that our elders know less than we do about the essential problems of today.]

Most striking in this dismissal of Old-World values and knowledge is the disproportionate drama of its tone. To speak of transformation, breakdown, and decomposition at the age of twenty in 1960 was to go beyond the

ture of technological society that America was seen to incarnate, beyond the contrast between New World and Old. Twenty was precisely the age of conscription for military service in Algeria. An ocean separated France's colonial war from discourses and debates on the nation's vexed relationship to technology. Yet technology came to play a decisive role for conscripts. Though they were at a physical remove from metropolitan France, they remained connected to what was going on at home — musically, that is. Equipped with transistors, young soldiers could listen to the same music as their peers in France did, and until the putsch of 1961, the radio largely served the purpose of linking them to the world of fun they had left behind.

Copains, Copines

The transistor radio was the icon of technological society best suited to the needs as well as the budget of the majority of young people. Transistors had first been imported to France from the United States at the beginning of the 1950s, with the first French model presented at the Salon de la Radio at the end of 1956. The number of transistors manufactured rose from 260,000 in 1958 to over 2,000,000 in 1961, representing 50 percent of radios sold in France in 1959 and 70 percent a year later. With television in the process of becoming a gathering point in the home, teenagers seeking to claim their own taste and space vis-à-vis the nuclear family found the portability of the transistor particularly appealing (fig. 14). It practically became a bodily appendage in new images of the technologically savvy adolescent: the typical young male's first gesture of the day, reported the scandalized authors of a sociological study entitled *La Jeunesse dans la famille et la société moderne*, was to turn on his bedroom radio, a gesture which also opens a short film by François Truffaut about young love in Paris, *Antoine et Colette* (1962).

Young people and their transistors were everywhere: in parks, cafés, beaches, small towns and cities. In 1962, the Michelin restaurant guide inaugurated a new code: the word "radio" with a line through it, indicating establishments where the transistor was not welcome.¹⁰ The transistor's portability and price also made it the ideal going-away present many parents offered sons called to serve in Algeria — a gift that was, furthermore, recommended by the military hierarchy as a way for the young soldier to fill his empty hours and was available for purchase through the army magazine *Bled*.¹¹

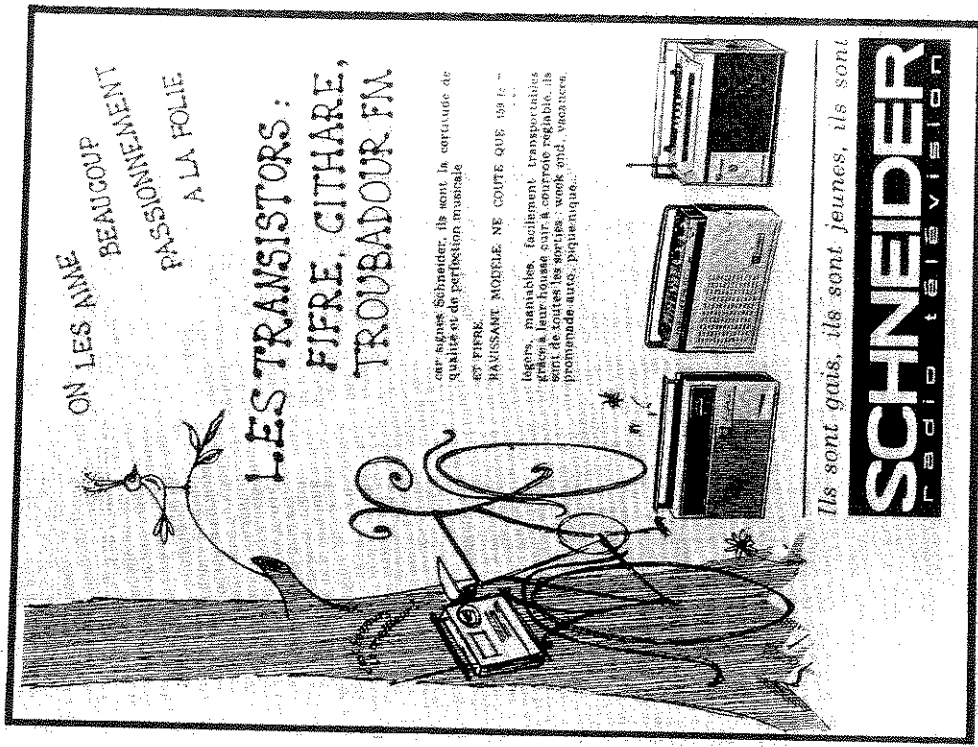


Fig. 14. Transistor radios offered privacy for teens. Reprinted with permission from Royal Philips Electronics NV

By the end of the decade, the radio medium began to offer transistor-toting teenagers in France and young conscripts listening in from Algeria programs appealing especially to them. Nineteen fifty-nine saw the introduction of a daily program on the station Europe 1 that explicitly targeted the youth sector by featuring American pop music, "Salut les copains."¹² The program was not an immediate widespread success.¹³ In 1959 young

people were still largely listening to jazz, and jazz was still the musical form associated with them, as the soundtracks of *Les Tricheurs* and *A Bout de souffle* attest. The association conjured intensity, seriousness, nuclear fatalism, and the smoky clubs of Saint-Germain-des-Prés. As the narrator of a 1956 television documentary entitled "Les Jeunes et le jazz" rhetorically queried of the young men and women who unsmilingly shared the dance floor, "n'est-ce pas parce que la jeunesse est anxieuse, inquiète, qu'elle aime le jazz?" [Isn't it because youth is anxious and worried that they like jazz?]

Rather than radio, television was the first medium to offer an alternative to the predominant image of generational ennui that jazz ostensibly expressed so well. Teenagers may have disdained the family-oriented television programming of the early sixties, but TV also orchestrated the breakthrough of the first French rock star, Johnny Hallyday. His songs written to the tunes of American hits were initially unpopular on the radio, for the Hallyday experience was above all a visual one. When Johnny first appeared on the TV show "L'École des vedettes" in 1960 at the age of seventeen, clad in tight black leather pants, to sing "T'Aimer Follement," his French version of Elvis Presley's "Makin' Love," he became notorious overnight. Public opinion was divided, and the division ran clearly along the lines of generation. Parents were horrified; teenagers were thrilled.¹⁴ The record, which had only sold twelve thousand copies before the show, sold over one hundred thousand in the following weeks.

With Johnny's voice now attached to a physical presence, the radio assumed the pivotal role in diffusing his music and that of singers like him. These singers were called copains (buddies) or *yé-yés*, in reference to the typical American-style refrain of their songs ("yeah, yeah"). Stations initiated a "mouvement de 17h," marking the hour when students returned from school.¹⁵ In recognition of the phenomenal popularity of "Salut les copains," Europe 1 moved the show out of its original Thursday slot and broadcast it daily for several years. In another sign of the times, Radio Luxembourg replaced "Passe-temps des dames et des demoiselles," a show for housewives and ladies of leisure, with a program by and for youth and their music: "Balzac 10 10," (pronounced "dix deux fois," ten twice) followed by the opening of a club of the same name on Paris's rue Balzac. Johnny Hallyday's first concert at Paris's Palais des Sports in 1961 was an event that for Jean-René Huguenin, one of the new spokesmen for youth, signaled a sea change in his generation. Previously appraised as hostile, passive, and slug-

gish with ennui, they seemed to have awakened from their state of semi-consciousness. From Huguenin's point of view, the mad scene at the concert meant that youthful revolt was finally at hand. This generation needed to breathe, he wrote, to rediscover its primitive side, and Hallyday's fans found just that in the "bruit et sang," the blood and noise, of rock 'n' roll.¹⁶

Blood and noise perhaps, but there was money to be made. Teens who tuned in to "Salut les copains" could buy postcards, key chains, cups, and bowls featuring the show's mascot, Chouchou, a figure clad in jeans and a T-shirt and sporting a Beatles haircut. The alliance of music and consumer products targeting youth was unabashed. When record producers descended upon the Golf Drouot club in search of the next Johnny Hallyday, they found Eddy Mitchell (his real name was Claude Moine), a sixteen-year-old Americanophile who wore his hair long and played his guitar hooked up to a big amplifiers, eccentricities in France at the time.¹⁷ Mitchell and his friends, some of whom barely knew how to play their instruments, signed a three-year contract with Disques Barclay. Barclay discreetly negotiated with the head of Lainière de Roubaix, a wool company, in order to associate the group's name with a brand of their socks, Chaussettes Stemm. The group was renamed Les Chaussettes Noires [The Black Socks]. With the purchase of three pair of Stemm socks (black, of course), one received a free ticket to the Chaussettes' first concert. A similar alliance was the endorsement of a group called Les Pirates by the milk industry. As soon as the agreement was signed, posters of the group shot up all over Paris. One of their songs, an adaptation of the Jerry Lee Lewis song "Let's Talk About Us," was altered beyond recognition to fit the profile of their sponsors: "Je bois du lait" [I drink milk]. As for free tickets, one only needed to present milk bottle caps at the ticket window (VF, 77).

Female singers were equally subject to industry fabrication. While it was Julliard's unexpected success with *Bonjour tristesse* that led to the publishing industry's interest in finding the next Françoise Sagan, there was no one young female singer who set the stage, so to speak, for others like her. Instead, the music industry set about the deliberate construction of a parallel "copine" phenomenon. Sometimes the parallel between the two industries was overt, as in the case of Arielle, a fourteen-year-old christened "la Minou Drouot du twist" (VF, 99). The music industry placed a high value on links with America, in the relentless marketing of the bilingual Nicole Croisille and Cleveland native Nancy Hollaway. Many of the copines, generally ranging in age from fifteen to nineteen, were given

stage names that were just first names: Audrey, Sophie, Evy, adding further to their appearance of youthfulness. The singer Sheila presents a case in point. "Sheila" began as an American song reinterpreted with great success by the French singer Lucky Blondo. Producer Claude Carrère decided to find a teenage girl to launch as an automatic star by giving her the name of the hit song. And so the sixteen year-old Annie Chancel, whom Carrère heard at the Golf Drouot, became Sheila (VF, 122-24). Carrère came up with her trademark look: demure plaid skirts, white blouses, immaculately curled hair: the incarnation of the *bonne jeune fille*—albeit prefabricated for its economic potential. In keeping with the virginal image, Sheila appeared on television for the first time in polka-dot pajamas and sang while reclining on a couch holding a stuffed animal. She quickly became a fixture on radio and television and in music magazines. As *Le Monde* saw it, Sheila wasn't particularly beautiful, but she was typical, "comme mille et mille jeunes filles" (VF, 122). Her stardom was the result of her reassuring familiarity. Indeed, with wholesome hit songs like "L'École est finie" [School's over] and "Ma Première surprise-partie" [My first party], whose lyrics were by and large confined to the title, Sheila had strong family appeal. She was just as appropriate for living room viewing as she was for the bedroom transistor or record player. But Sheila proved to be savvier than she looked; she opened a Boutique Sheila in Paris's fourteenth arrondissement, capitalizing for herself on her commercial value.

One of the best-known copines was Françoise Hardy, whose musical style lies somewhere between the poetic tradition of the French *chanson* and the yé-yés. Hardy was hailed as the new Juliette Gréco because of the similarity of their physiques and the cerebralism of their lyrics, but her connection to the first young Françoise to capture public attention, Françoise Sagan, is practically uncanny, as this write-up in *Disco Revue* shows: "Avec son premier disque, elle retient l'attention. Ses paroles apportent quelque chose de neuf dans la chanson française. En somme, ce sont ses propres problèmes amoureux qu'elle nous expose" (VF, 118) [With her first record, she captures our attention. Her lyrics bring something new to French song. In sum, she exposes her own romantic woes to us].

Along with a similar insistence on the autobiographical component, the transition from Françoise to Françoise, from the marketing of young women writers to young women singers, illustrates well the transformation of the mass media in the postwar period and the increasing visibility of the teenage girl. With concerts, album covers, features in teen magazines,

and television appearances augmenting radio and jukebox play, the faces, bodies, style of dress, and voices of the copines became intimate fixtures in French life. In its second issue, the teen magazine *Age tendre et tête de bois* could declare 1963 "L'Année Françoise Hardy," and not exaggerate. Such ubiquity made the publishing industry's book signings, cocktail parties, and concerts at the Salle Pleyel seem rarified and quaint. While the print media's marketing techniques may have been old-fashioned in comparison with those of the music industry, increased visibility and audibility entailed necessary restrictions for the actual content of the copines' songs. Singers like Françoise Hardy never shocked the public the way young writers like Françoise Sagan had. Their lyrics did not, and indeed could not, demonstrate an equivalent sexual frankness—making them along with equally desexualized copains, ideal vehicles for marketing products to their fans.

In the early 1960s, manufacturers had only to associate a product with the words "copain" or "jeune" to signify its desirability. An advertisement for the chewing gum brand May, for example, had no need for visual cues when it could claim quite simply to be "le chewing gum des copains" (fig. 15). A grape juice ad pronounced the drink to be "[le] délicé énergétique favori des jeunes." Advertisements for transistor radios described them as "jeunes," and the battery-operated Philips record player was touted as the perfect Christmas gift for the under-twenty set (fig. 16).

An advertisement for a brand of blue jeans sold at Caddy, a boutique in Paris's tenth arrondissement, which claimed to be "le créateur en France de la mode «Rock et Twist»,", best captures the tone of the market for fun-loving consumerism (fig. 17): "The copains Alain and Claude, stars of Vogue records, prefer, like everyone, Lewis-France jeans, the stars of blue-jeans," the ad reads. The straightforward equivalences this advertisement makes and its overt eagerness to reach the youth market can only disarm the contemporary postmodern sensibility. Alain and Claude—identified by first name alone as befits the casual world of copains—are stars of Vogue Records, just as Lewis-France is a star in the world of blue jeans. Caddy promised the presence of both to potential store customers: "Vous rencontrerez toutes les vedettes du «Rock» [You will meet all the stars of «Rock»]. Caddy carried not only fashions, but all the latest records. It offered youth who were both musically and fashionably hip the novelty of one-stop shopping in a country where supermarkets were still rare. As if this weren't enough, the ad also contained a coupon giving a 10 percent reduction to all readers of the magazine *Salut les copains*. Everyone stood to profit from

the Caddy advertisement: Caddy, Lewis-France, Vogue records, Alain and Claude, and *Salut les copains*.

Teen music magazines were the ideal reinforcement for this commercially driven and naïve youth culture. Producers had originally dubbed young Americanophile singers "idoles"; following the preference of the singers themselves, however, magazines used the term "copains," or buddies, and for girls "copines," an identification that blurred the distinction between the stars and their fans. In September 1961, with Johnny Hallyday on the cover, *Disco Revue* appeared on the newsstands; it was joined a year later by two other publications, *Salut les copains* and *Age tendre et tête de bois*. All of these were the brainchild of young people (*VF*, 90). *Age tendre* was graced with name recognition from an earlier incarnation as a song title; *Salut les copains* took its name from a radio show. The public response to the novelty of commercial magazines targeting teenagers was enormous: a year after *Salut les copains* first appeared, it was selling one million copies per issue.¹⁸ *Age tendre*'s success led to both radio and television shows by the same name.

Salut les copains featured female singers who could be the copines of any reader, just as their male counterparts were copains. Sylvie Vartan, in *Salut les copains*' first issue, described how she wore her brother's pants, used her father's razor to style her hair, and bought her clothing at Prunistic, the French equivalent of Woolworth's. The September issue asked seven copines what they would do if they weren't stars and photographed them costumed as their responses: teacher, florist, model, artist, homemaker, photographer, and à la Jean Seberg in Godard's *A Bout de souffle*, vendor of the *International Herald Tribune*.¹⁹ The October 1963 issue was dedicated to the wave of young female singers, and in December, the magazine *Bonjour les amis* announced its search for a new copine, declaring in a headline, "La Lutte Continue" [The Struggle Continues].

Any reader might give it a try; any girl next door could become a star, or at least look like one. If the majority of female adolescents had not definitively entered the public sphere to find fame and fortune, at least their image had. In the real and fantasized spaces of buying and owning that were stores and advertisements, in the pages of music magazines, and on radio and television shows, youth no longer only meant male. It was just as economically viable to show girls how they could identify with other girls who sang, played the guitar, rode scooters, wore jeans, used Clearasil, and drank grape juice. The consumer culture that grew out of yé-yé

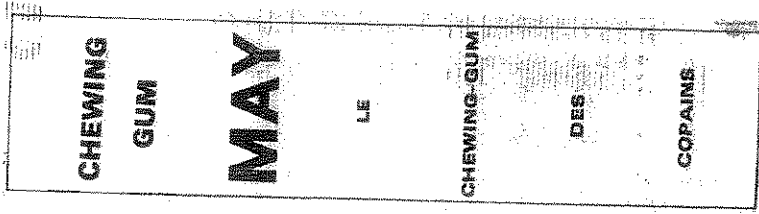


Fig. 15. Chewing gum for savvy youth
Salut les copains, October 1962

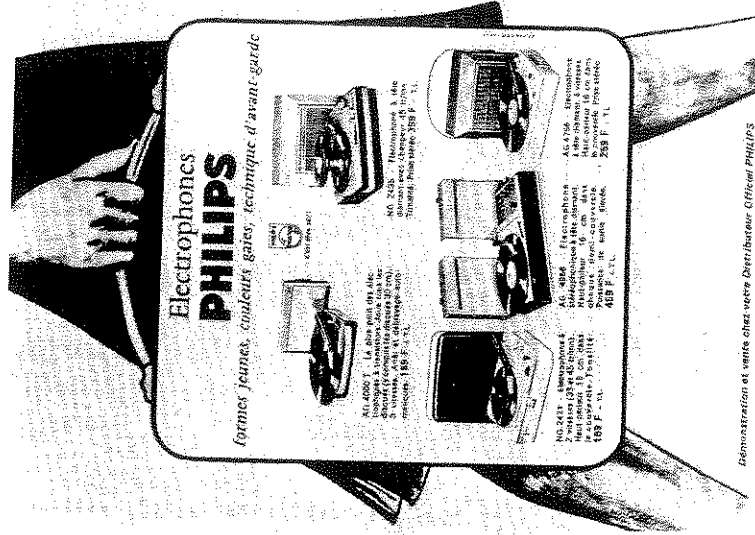


Fig. 16. A personal record player for the teenager's musical tastes
Reprinted with permission from Royal Philips Electronics NV

phenomenon. It promoted the fantasy of egalitarian consumption, ostensibly unhindered by traditional definitions of femininity and regardless of actual purchasing power, social class, or educational level (figs. 18 and 19). Equality in consumer society was a dubious empowerment, since above the stage where carefree fun and easy gender relations were on display, record companies and producers, radio stations, manufacturers, and advertisers held the strings.

A War Without a Name

During the same period that saw the development of a consumer and media culture equally oriented toward youth of both sexes, two to three million twenty-year-old males had to absent themselves from this culture for twenty-seven months of military service in Algeria. Of more dramatic consequence than the indifference to politics of their peers back at home, the conscripts have been inscribed in the national memory of the Algerian war as remaining for the most part apathetic. Why the absence of political passions in the very midst of the fray? Novels, films, and first-person accounts have explored why conscription was not the unifying experience it was during the two world wars but rather one of a "multitude of solitudes."²⁰ Even sympathetic portraits note the tendency of the troops to remain passive, obedient, uninformed, and uninterested in trying to understand a confusing situation in which the enemy remained invisible.²¹

Political passions were everywhere, but the conscripts remained untouched: the book-length *bande dessinée* [comic] *Une Education algérienne* (1982) plays upon the Flaubertian paradigm through the character of a young *appelé* in the days preceding independence, absorbed in the seduction of the wife and daughter of his commanding officer while OAS and FLN attacks provide background scenery.²² The same disengagement is, instead, framed as a philosophical impasse in Alain Manevy's 1960 account *L'Algérie à vingt ans*: "Rester spectateur: lâcheté; intervenir sans savoir: bêtise; le dire: faire la politique des autres; ne rien dire: lâcheté."²³ [Remain a spectator: cowardice; intervene without knowledge: stupidity; say so: engage in other people's politics; say nothing: cowardice]. The reference here is Sartre rather than Flaubert, but neither of these texts suggested why the conscripts chose to keep their distance from the ideological fray. *Le Déserteur* (1960), the account of a Communist "refus" (the official term: one can only desert if war is declared), provided a possible answer.

"les copains"
ALAIN et CLAUDE
 vedettes des disques vogue
 préfèrent comme tout le monde les blue-jeans
LES BLEU-JEANS LEWIS-FRANCE
 vedettes des blue-jeans
 67 rue de la Chapelle
 75018 PARIS
 Téléphone: 91.23.12
 le plus important producteur français de blue-jeans
 171, rue de la Chapelle, Paris 18
 Téléphone: 91.23.12

10%
 A TOUS LES LECTEURS DE "SALUT LES COPAINS"

LES BLEU-JEANS LEWIS-FRANCE COMME TOUS LES VEDETTES DU VÊTEMENT SE TROUVENT EN VEDETTE
 chez "SALUT LES COPAINS"
 171, rue de la Chapelle - PARIS 18

LES BLEU-JEANS LEWIS-FRANCE
 171, rue de la Chapelle - PARIS 18
 Téléphone: 91.23.12

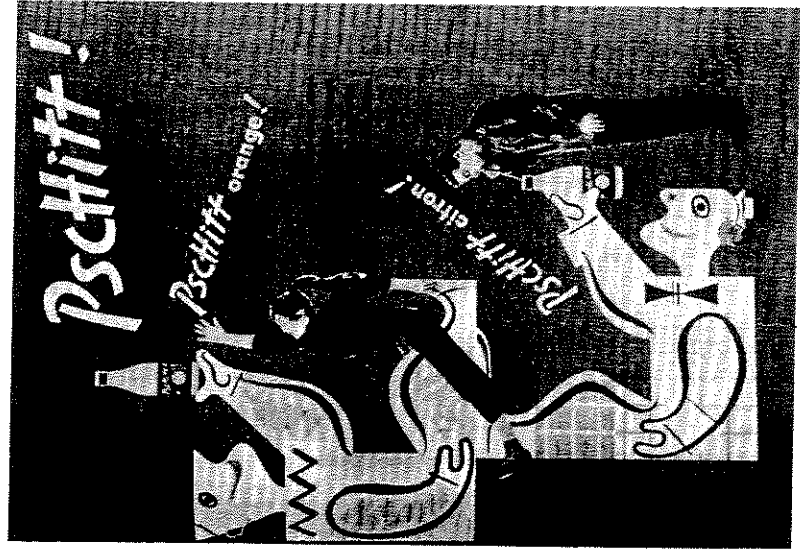
LES BLEU-JEANS LEWIS-FRANCE
 171, rue de la Chapelle - PARIS 18
 Téléphone: 91.23.12

Fig. 17. The many facets of the teenage consumer
Salut les copains, July/August 1962

music was the first to have girls take equal part in the category of generation previously defined as male. This was a marketing phenomenon whose effects were less nefarious than ambiguous. Following real but unspectacular advances for young women of the middle classes and the experience of individual writers and actresses, whom the media depicted as characters no different from those they incarnated in fiction and film, the latest incarnation of female adolescence turned young womanhood into a mass



Figs. 18 and 19.
Marketing youth
68 unisex



The pseudonymous author Maurienne (the valley in the Cévennes next to Vercors, the latter the site of a 1944 Resistance battle) recounts a conversation in the barracks between himself and several other young men. One reflects that the primary victims of the war were the conscripts themselves, engaged in a struggle on another continent that had nothing to do with life in France. Another complains of losing his place in history, by which he means finishing payments on a scooter he cannot even enjoy and missing his chances with girls. The narrator tries to get his peers to see how the indifference to the stakes of the war that accompanies their frustration at having to serve are the logical result of the position imposed on them by consumer society:

On commence par t'obnubiler avec des vitrines de «Vespa», de téléés, de disques, de «Dauphine». On t'offre un but immédiat à atteindre. Et tu te laisses acheter. Avec le crédit, tu fais ta première acquisition, tu penses à la suivante, etc. C'est comme ça qu'on endort politiquement la majorité du prolétariat! Et dans cette atmosphère de course à confort, toi, tu te déintéresses du reste.²⁴

[It begins with Vespa scooters in store windows, televisions, records, and Dauphines clouding your mind. You're offered an immediate goal. And you let yourself be bought. On an installment plan, you make your first acquisition, you think of the next one, etc. That's how the majority of the proletariat is lulled to sleep politically! And in this atmosphere of the race for comfort, you lose interest in everything else.]

Maurienne's analytical appraisal of the political apathy that, in his view, went hand in hand with the seductive promises of a society structured by the acts and desires of buying and selling was not shared by most of his conscript peers. Indeed, only about a hundred young men would refuse to fight in Algeria, unlike the ten thousand Americans who refused to fight in the Vietnam war. The difference can partially be attributed to the phenomenon signaled above: the novelty of the promises of consumer society as a carefree paradise for French youth, particularly welcome after the material hardships that long outlived the war as well as the persistent image of a generation of victims and survivors. As one young man wrote in to *Paris-Match* in response to criticism of a Johnny Hallyday concert, "mieux vaut le rock que la neurasthénie!" [rock n' roll is better than neurasthenia!]²⁵ The conscripts were eager to return to France and to film. In the meantime, they remained as close to it as they could. In the barracks and the infirmaries,

everyone's ear was constantly pressed to his own personal transistor, each tuned in to his own favorite station — music and never news.²⁶

Just as in France, the first gesture of the day for young men serving in Algeria was to turn on the radio to hear the latest hit songs.²⁷ Only on 22 April 1961, soon before the projected negotiations between the OAS and FLN, what greeted them was the news bulletin of the putsch by four generals (Challe, Salan, Zeller, and Jouhaud) who had been removed from their functions for their outlaw attempt to keep Algeria in French hands. Because a successful putsch would mean the continuation of the war, the news functioned as a jolt to the sluggish collective system of the conscripts. Rather than tune in to pop music, they listened for information on the putsch from as many sources as possible, French and Algerian. The conscripts debated and discussed the news bulletins amongst themselves and, in an unusual breakdown in the hierarchy of military communication, even with commanding officers to ascertain their intentions.²⁸

On the evening of 23 April, French television and radio broadcast a message from De Gaulle urging the troops not to follow orders from what he called "in quartieron de généraux en retraite"²⁹ [a handful of generals in retreat]. De Gaulle's direct address rallied conscripts around loyalist officers and legitimated numerous acts of disobedience to orders given by the four generals' supporters. When the putsch was put to an end four days after its inception, even the government recognized the crucial role of the radio. As minister Robert Buran commented most memorably, "c'est la victoire des transistors."³⁰ Through the intermediary of the transistor radio, icon of depoliticized individualism among French youth, the "multitude of solitudes" who were young men in Algeria came to consciousness, realizing their potential to act together and to affect the course of events, even if it was first and foremost out of self-interest.

Le Petit Ecran

One icon of high-tech everyday life that did not generally appeal to young people in the late 1950s and early 1960s was television. TV's enormous impact in the promotion of Johnny Hallyday was an exception: only one out of four French households owned a set in the fall of 1962 — the situation in the U.S. a full decade earlier — and programming was limited.³¹ In Truffaut's *Antoine et Colette*, the packed auditorium of teenagers in the Paris concert hall where the two eponymous characters first meet is evidence that

many in this age group, at least in Paris, preferred the classical concerts and lecture series of Jeunesses Musicales as entertainment. When Antoine (Jean-Pierre Léaud) visits Colette (Marie-France Pisier) at home and encounters her parents for the first time, they are ensconced in front of an unusually large television set as signifiers of the generic adult, categorically devoid of interest. At the end of the film, after a dashing and somewhat older young man comes to pick up Colette while Antoine is over for dinner, the humiliated Antoine dispiritedly decides to forego his usual evening out at the concert hall and watch it on TV with Colette's parents instead. Television here, as seen by the cinephile Truffaut, is just about the most depressing way for a young person to spend an evening.

Partisans of high culture were not the only ones to deem television to be a medium "for parents," as one popular music magazine's disdainful claim read in 1963.³² It was certainly no reliable source of information about what awaited young men called for military service in Algeria. The gap between television reportages and reality was immense: as the medium was state-controlled, the nightly news presented little more than military parades and scenes of young men in uniform performing charitable works for the local people.³³ Journalists had to have authorization before speaking to soldiers or officers.³⁴ In the goal of rallying the public around Gaullist policy, the enemy was rendered invisible; no violence was shown, and some events were not referred to or depicted at all. For technical reasons as well, reportages were limited: camera equipment was heavy and there were insufficient funds for travel abroad, so producers had to resort to the cheaper option of buying footage from agencies like United Press or France-Vidéo.³⁵ The net effect was that the *journal télévisé* did little more than put the face of the newscaster on the impersonal voice-over that Pathé newsreels had provided to the movie-going public since 1908.³⁶

The Algerian war was the first to enter French homes on the TV screen, but the studied neutrality of these images meant that they were a source of neither news nor opinion. In 1956, Prime Minister Guy Mollet himself picked up the phone to complain to a program director about a newscaster's description of a governmental war communiqué as "vague and general": self-censorship in the interest of keeping one's job necessarily accompanied television's subordination to the official line.³⁷ In his presidential capacity, Charles de Gaulle increasingly used TV as a medium to communicate policy: twice in 1959, five times in 1960, seven in 1961, eleven in 1962.³⁸ As a twist on a familiar formula for Leninism, *Express* founder

Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber succinctly defined Gaullism as "le pouvoir personnel, plus le monopole de la télévision."³⁶

The first step beyond the obfuscation enforced by De Gaulle's Ministry of Information was taken by the monthly news program *Cinq colonnes à la une*, much lauded for one broadcast devoted to the everyday life of a young sergeant performing his military duties in the djebel. "A gift from *Cinq colonnes* to the families of France," what looked like a real link-up had in fact been theatrically prepared on both ends: the sector patrolled by the sergeant cleared of Algerians, the home of his parents providing a "live" frame for their emotional reactions to images of their son filmed twenty-four hours earlier. In 1991, Sergeant Charlie Robert would tersely put a dent into the legend of *Cinq colonnes'* audacity: "C'est du cinéma" [that's all make-believe].⁴⁰ Ironic commentary about a medium whose claim was to provide the public with access to an immediacy unavailable in the movies.

The jarring and eventually explosive conjuncture of youth as fun-oriented consumers and the reality of the Algerian war was one that the mass media of the late 1950s and early 1960s could only imply. Most of the first-person accounts, films, and novels directly treating the conscripts' experience appeared after the war, and the better-known avant-garde was more interested in communicating the soldiers' traumatized silence once they returned home (Alain Resnais's *Muriel*, 1963) or ironizing the bipolar political options of *engagement*: FLN or OAS (Jean-Luc Godard's *Le Petit soldat*, released 1963).

The two films discussed in the following pages, Jacques Rozier's *Adieu Philippine* (1962) and Marcel Carné's *Les Tricheurs* (1958) take a different tack. Both comment on the variation that appears in the set of literal and figurative signs of the loss of feminine intactness with the encroachment of an increasingly youth-driven consumerism. In contrast to the imperfect freedom accorded the antisentimental author and her defiant protagonist and their eventual reinscription within received ideas about femininity, consumer culture took girls and their desires out of their familiar inscription in romance and domesticity in the service of market parity only to reinscribe them there, a process that Carné and Rozier reproduce and explore in the context of the Algerian war, to greatly different metaphorical ends.

Jacques Rozier's film *Adieu Philippine* (1962) is a send-up of the promises and artifices of television: a bright new world that stands alone, removed from the traditional French way of life as well as from a war in which

the young men who operate high-tech equipment will eventually be called to serve. The Algerian war is the incongruous, invisible, but unassailably real background of *Adieu Philippine*. In the weeks before he leaves for military service, a young low-level TV cameraman, Michel (Jean-Claude Aimini), meets Liliane and Juliette (Yveline Céry and Stefania Sabatini), two girls who come to the studio in the hope of acting in commercials. When he is fired, Michel tries to convince a middle-aged producer to let him direct commercials ("films publicitaires") featuring the two girls; at the same time, the girls try to get Michel out of military service by playing up to a businessman who seems to have political connections. With the cheerfully rambling mise-en-scène and unscripted dialogue that are Rozier's trademark, the camera follows the girls and Michel, together and separately, from the television studio to department stores to their homes, leading up to what the film terms to be Michel's "last vacation" at Club Med in Corsica.

Michel's imminent departure hovers over chatty scenes of ordinariness and comic moments alike. He likes both Liliane and Juliette and vice-versa, but because of the twenty-seven months that await him in Algeria, no triangular intrigue ensues. "Je choisirai celle qui m'aura attendu" [I'll choose the one who will have waited for me], Michel promises; deferral of romance comes to signify the uncertainty of what awaits Michel in Algeria, the uncertainty of the outcome of a war without a name. In a romantic and political situation marked by an absence of clarity, the two girls necessarily remain indistinct. The film's title serves as apt commentary: "Philippine" in French is a nut formed from two kernels, and considered to be a lucky charm. Who will it be? What does the future have in store, romantically and politically? The trope of the woman waiting for her man's return from battle is literally fragmented in Rozier's scenario. Intactness is conversely maintained in a new formulation: the complicity between Liliane and Juliette. The attraction between each girl and Michel comes and goes, but their primary alliance to each other remains (fig. 20). With heterosexual coupling-off deferred by wartime, Liliane and Juliette's complicity is unfamiliar, yet not threatening. Sexuality is completely absent from all aspects of the triangulation. The intactness formed by female complicity instead signifies innocence, a world untouched by wartime, whose most natural context is the childish decor of Liliane's bedroom. Liliane and Juliette may be waiting for Michel together, but they are still familiarly enough *jeunes filles*.

For ideological and technical reasons, television — despite its promises



Fig. 20. The complicity of jeunes filles
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of reality and immediacy — could not deliver a true sense of the grimness of this colonial war, its long duration and atrocities. Rozier, who had himself worked in the television industry, did not explicitly critique the programming that was uniformly subject to the scrutiny of the Ministry of Information, but the scenes where Liliane and Juliette realize their dream of appearing in commercials stand as telling commentary on the means of production, intentions, and overall artificiality of the medium. Incongruously, producers always cast these frivolous, giggly girls as housewives in ads for domestic products. In one surrealistic commercial for floor wax, Liliane and Juliette are clad in matching plaid housecoats, accessorized with pumps and hose. They recite the product jingle and ineffectually push mops around in a ring formed by bottles of floor wax. A diapered infant, added as another sign of female domesticity, sits positioned on the floor in

front of them. Both the girls' movements and their words are just slightly out of sync. Moreover, Liliane and Juliette have obviously never waxed a floor in their lives; the middle-aged male producer has to come on the set to show them how to use a mop (fig. 21).

New female fantasies made possible by technology come up against the limits of the familiar here — but in a comic mode. Rozier pokes fun at the

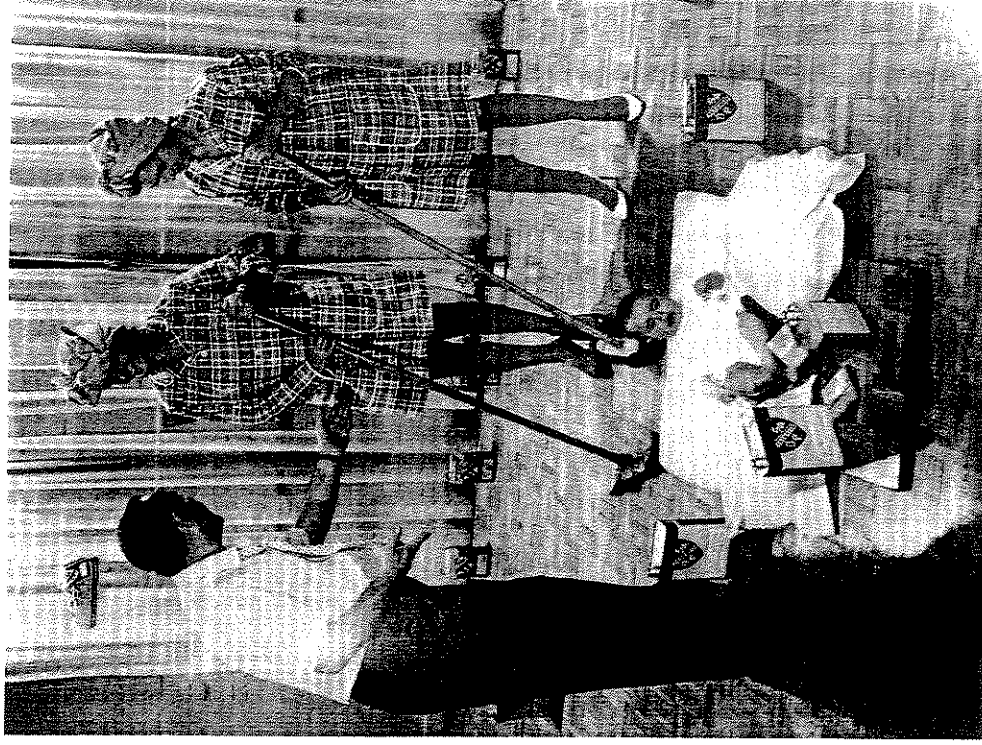


Fig. 21. Adieu Philippine: the floor wax girls
Copyright Raymond Cauchetier-Paris

desire to appear on TV, to simply "be seen" and not as the effect of any act or idea in the world. This was the culmination of the postwar expansion of the mass media and with it the increased visibility of young women. To make it into the headlines as part of the "reign of the *adolescente*" that *Elle* magazine had proclaimed in 1956 required either an engagement with the world of acts and ideas or the fabrication of a recognizable public image: novelist Françoise Sagan, "existentialist" Juliette Gréco, Brigitte Bardot as "B.B." To appear in television advertising, on the other hand, is to submit to a kind of unmaking, since the product itself assumes the central place of the star. By merging with a product, Liliane and Juliette are granted access to living rooms across the nation, becoming stars of a different kind: the floor wax girls.

As anonymous signifiers of a rejuvenated domesticity, Liliane and Juliette represent a high-tech variation of Astra margarine's cartoon teen Arlette that is also intentionally less subtle. In the transition from print media to the televisual, the father's titillation has become the economics of production — exposed by Rozier to highlight the impossibility of a seamless reinscription of youthfulness into female domesticity. By making television the medium for the tenacious message identifying femininity with domesticity, no matter what the age or kitchen experience, *Adieu Philippine* points to the artifice of both. Commercials for cleaning products are more artificial than even state-controlled television news, with the construction of femininity rather than that of current events primarily at stake. Nevertheless, with Rozier's unabashed satire of commercials, there is an implicit reference to the news: femininity and women's role in the home are staged for living room TV viewers, just like the activities of the French army in Algeria. This is not as far-fetched a comparison as it might sound. *Adieu Philippine* assigns separate spaces to gender from the opening scene on: Liliane and Juliette stand outside the glass doors of the TV studio looking longingly in at the young men absorbed in handling the equipment; after the encounter that follows, they have fun with Michel in Paris, but he will go off to war in Algeria. Michel and his male friends are entranced with the used car they have bought together; Liliane and Juliette giggle and chatter about Michel in Liliane's still girlish bedroom. Technology and the experience of war are male: young women remain at the periphery of masculine experiences, which are marked by their greater social importance.

Yet the abundance of detail in the film belongs to the female experience, to the characters of Liliane and Juliette. This abundant detail is

striking in its implied contrast to the eerie presence of the Algerian war on screen only through suggestion. Jacques Demy's better-known film *Les Paraphutes de Cherbourg* (1962) places the conscript's twenty-seven-month service off-screen to similar effect. The originality of Rozier, however, was to take on the question of the representation of the war in Algeria in the context of the promises of television and the reality of informational control. In the elaborate commercial scene, Liliane and Juliette "stand in" as references for the appelés, whose activities as represented on TV were also orchestrated, determined by Gaullist rather than patriarchal ideology. Young men work the equipment, but the separation of spheres in relationship to technology in *Adieu Philippine* gives way to an overarching truth: neither war nor domesticity, masculinity or femininity, escapes the mediating effects of representation, even in the cadre of a small screen promising reality and immediacy.

Speed

Wise to the artifices of television, Michel has no interest in tuning in at home. What interests him rather is the newly acquired car. When Michel screeches up to the house, late for the traditional midday meal, his father expresses disapproval: life is too easy for young folk now, he declares in reference to the vehicle. Once again we witness the contrast between Old-World values and New, but as a commonplace, lacking informational value. In Marcel Carné's film *Les Tricheurs* (1958), teenagers and cars come together much more dramatically in an ideologically loaded formula where gender is the key.

Carné's explicit purpose was to document how French youth flagrantly broke with their parents' values. As he announced, "je voudrais que ce film soit vu comme le témoignage d'une époque"⁴¹ [I would like this film to be seen as the testimony of an era], and the media did indeed take *Les Tricheurs* as such (fig. 22).⁴² With its release, the press once again began to speak of a "mal de la jeunesse," albeit with different factors in the equation. The narrative is recounted after the fact, framed by the bitterness of a young man. Accompanied by a voice-over reminiscent of the wistfulness with which *Bonjour tristesse* begins and ends — "sur ce sentiment incommutable dont l'ennui, la douceur m'obsède, j'hésite à apposer le nom, le beau nom grave de tristesse . . ." ⁴³ — [This unfamiliar sentiment whose sweet listlessness fills me, to which I hesitate to give the grave and beautiful name of

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MIC, ALAIN THURBERG, PASCAL PETIT.
Le vol Bourgeois de Jacques Lévesque et l'histoire de l'industrie de la télévision.
L'histoire de la télévision, par Jean-Paul Lesaffre.

Fig. 22. *Les Tricheurs*: a media event

Reprinted with permission from *L'Express*, 16 October 1958

sorrow]—Bob sips his drink at a café table and observes couples excitedly make evening plans, “heureux comme j’aurais pu l’être” [happy the way I could have been], setting the stage for his own unhappy ending to unfold.

Clean-cut Bob (Jacques Charrier) witnesses a sinisterly good-looking young man steal a record from a store on the Champs Élysées. Bob approaches the thief on the street and is intrigued when Alain (Laurent Terzieff), a lapsed *normalien*, tells him that the act of stealing was purely gratuitous. Bob soon becomes part of Alain’s *bande*, a group of young people who are not exactly friends but who share certain tastes and values: easy money, wild parties, jazz, and free love in Saint-Germain-des-Frès. Bob and one of the girls, Mic (Pascal Petit) meet at a party after having sex with other people, and soon fall in love. As love is scorned by their cohort, they deny their sentiments to themselves and each other. Discounted above all by Alain’s sardonic knowing gaze, Mic sleeps with Alain to prove the truth of her slogan: “moi, jamais rien ne m’engage” [I’m never committed to anything, nothing ever holds my interest], but when Bob walks in on Mic’s enfant terrible version of an *acte gratuit*, Alain continues to detect her false indifference. Bad faith culminates with a truth-or-dare party game and Mic and Bob’s declarations—his after witnessing hers—that each meant nothing to the other. Mic speeds off in her Jaguar and commits suicide by veering into an oncoming truck.

What has changed in the image of Left Bank youth since its association with young “existentialists” of the immediate postwar years is the central place now accorded to high-tech material culture. The stylish “making do” of the late 1940s—roller skates as a mode of transport, Juliette Gréco sporting her one pair of black slacks—has evolved, in Carné’s vision, into an insatiable desire for the icons of technological society: records and record players, scooters, and especially cars. Having luxury within easy reach, lacking the political *engagement* of their elders, *tricheurs* represented a new kind of victim of a new malaise: materialism and, with it, the necessary decline of morality. In a more troubling formulation than Alain’s nihilism, the generational limit case is incarnated in Mic. She refuses to live with her widowed mother, reasoning with what Carné presents as the logic of her generation that it would be “too reassuring.” She is ready to do anything—to steal from the cash register in her mother’s modest lamp store, to blackmail a high society woman—in order to keep a “room of her own” and acquire the used Jaguar of her dreams. Bourgeois Bob, on the other hand, is content with his Vespa scooter. Mic’s brother Roger (Roland Lesaffre),



Fig. 23. *Les Tricheurs*: James Dean au féminin

Photo © 1958—Studio Canal/Image

an auto mechanic, is perplexed: “dans ma jeunesse c’était les robes qui intéressaient les filles” [when I was young, girls were interested in dresses]. Forecasting her own end, Mic muses that she wouldn’t mind dying like James Dean, “jeune, et en pleine vitesse” [young and at top speed]. She is the French, and female, version of a rebel without a cause (fig. 23).

Carné pairs Mic’s rejection of her daughterly role and her unladylike love of speed with her antisentimentality. Bob is new to the gang and its codes and takes his cues from Mic, whose reluctance to yield to her true affections comes across as incomprehensible adhesion to peer pressure. To marry Bob would be a conventional and perfectly acceptable means of gaining access to material comfort, if not the excessive luxury she so ardently desires. Mic ostentatiously rejects the possibility of forming a couple, though on several occasions—for example, during an ironic exchange on a country club dance floor where the ostensibly fake romantic fantasies she pronounces and he echoes are in fact true—her expression betrays the inner battle against familiar sentimentality. And in the truth-or-dare party game, Mic’s false declarations of contempt for Bob are only surpassed by his own for her. He could love “une fille propre” [a clean

girl], but since girls are all the same, “toutes les filles se valent,” he has agreed to marry the aristocratic Chloë, who has announced to him that she is pregnant with the child of an unknown father. At this moment the familiar face of femininity resurfaces on two counts. Abortion (illegal in France until 1967) is never mentioned in this milieu, but incongruously enough, “religious scruples” are. Chloë’s only thought is to save herself in more ways than one through a class-appropriate marriage. As for Mic, in self-punishment for turning away from love, she commits a definitive act of self-annihilation. She runs out of the room too fast, jumps into her Jag too fast, and drives too fast for Bob to catch up and pronounce the words that only the viewer can hear: “j’ai triché, Mic!” — [I cheated], meaning he didn’t tell the truth and he does love her. In counterpoint to elliptical confession, Mic’s swift and wordless escape from the stifling world of her peers conjures up the ghost of the jeune fille. The familiar girlish desires that lurk throughout Mic’s trajectory of acts of rebellion and self-determination ultimately and tragically triumph: by rejecting love and mocking purity, she has created an emptiness whose ostensible finality is a sight too terrible to bear.

In the 1954 *Avant le déluge*, adolescent femininity is equivalent to political apathy and sexual deviousness, masculinity to a consuming preoccupation with current events and recent history. Four years later Carné took a similar position. He indicted Mic’s unfamiliar antisentimentality, embodied in her passion for Jaguars and speed, by giving her an older brother who is a car mechanic. Roger not only accepts his social place among the working classes, but also has been ethically formed by his adolescence during the Occupation and military service in Indochina, the memories of which remain vivid. One repairs, the other consumes: Carné didactically presents two temporally distinct and gendered experiences of adolescence, the brother engaged in Resistance activities and patriotic duty, the younger sister in the desire for high-tech luxury.

We saw a similar generational subcategorization in *Le Repos du guerrier*’s Renaud and Geneviève. But unlike the nihilistic Renaud, Mic’s brother, with his similar situation in recent history, is able to understand his sister’s indifference to all but owning a car, her resolute rejection of love. After Mic dies following the car crash that looks like suicide, the doctor asks: “Qu’est-ce qu’ils ont donc dans la peau, ces jeunes gens?” [What do these young people have under their skin?] Her brother’s answer takes on the history of the twentieth century: “Un univers qui se débine . . . Cinq-

quante ans de pagaille derrière eux et sans doute cinquante autres devant" [A universe that's run itself into the ground . . . Fifty years of chaos behind them and undoubtedly fifty more ahead]. The America of James Dean and Marlon Brando was one reference for the fast cars and reckless behavior of young people in French films of the late years of the Fourth Republic and the beginnings of the Fifth, war memories and nuclear fatalism were another.

The effects of the war under way, however, could only be implied. The *France-Soir* headline prominently displayed in one scene reads, "Tension accrue dans le monde" — and no more. Benjamin Stora asks provocatively whether Jean-Luc Godard's *A Bout de souffle* (1959), a film in which the contemporary political context is even less present than in *Les Tricheurs*, told the story of those who knew that military service in Algeria awaited them. For Stora, *A Bout de souffle* was this generation's "film-miroir."⁴⁴ This first film of Godard's also associated wayward youth with automobiles, but with none of the ponderous morality or tragic tone of *Les Tricheurs*. Though it was Godard's extremely mobile camera that earned *A Bout de souffle* its place in the canon, just as new was the ironic distance taken in his representation of youth.

A Bout refrained from the decade's tendency to diagnose generational malaise; nevertheless, Michel's (Jean-Paul Belmondo) choice — never articulated or judged as such — to live only in the present is not unlike that of Carné's Mic. The incarnation of this choice in a young female, however, is more jolting. Carné embeds the wildly improbable image of a teenage girl of modest means in the late 1950s possessing a luxury car in an elaborate and equally fantastic blackmail scheme. Somewhat less improbable in *A Bout de souffle* is that the criminal is a young man, the conjuncture in these two films of the same elements of youth, automobiles, speed, and crime makes them very much fantasy texts for the end of the decade. As fantasies, they take on particular resonance in light of the publications and real crises of the years 1958 and 1959: the revelation of the French army's use of torture in Henri Alleg's censored testimony *La Question*; Pierre Vidal-Naquet's hypothesis that French paratroopers in Algiers had assassinated mathematician and French Communist Party member Maurice Audin; the dissolution of the Fourth Republic in its inability to resolve the crisis in Algeria. In such a context, the violent endings of Mic and Michel might come less as a brutal intrusion for the moviegoer of the time than an inexorable one, symbolic of the only way out of a war even De Gaulle could not bring to an immediate end.

Whereas *Adieu Philippine* satirized the containment of young women in technological society within traditional definitions of femininity, *Les Tricheurs* punished its female character for displacing romance and sentiment with androgynous desires and fantasies. Each film in its own way used the saturation of detail about the feminine to suggest the unrepresentability of the Algerian war. For Rozier, unrepresentability is the effect of the technical and ideological constraints of the media of television and cinema. In Carné's didactic approach, one line at the end of the film is intended to reconfigure Mic's incomprehensible rejection of femininity, her descent into criminality and dangerous and inappropriate desires, as a palimpsest for the self-destructiveness of the nation. "Cinquante ans de pagaille derrière eux" [Fifty years of chaos behind them] — not only Algeria, but both world wars are rendered on screen in ghostly presence by the loss of feminine intactness, the feminine made unfamiliar, and by Mic's suicide. In contrast to the fiction of defamiliarization and re-familiarization, the tone of first-person accounts and media coverage of the depoliticized conscripts' repoliticization was one of triumph. But these final messages do not annul the trajectories, represented or real, that precede them. "Girls will be girls" and "boys will be boys," but only in counterpoint to the blurring of gendered identities and desires and the accompanying erasure of class difference in the shared quest for fun and pleasure that had become a recognizable mode of representation of youth. The fun-loving teen consumer as the branchchild of consumer society itself would, in turn, be seen in terms of the artifice of its commercial apotheosis: in the movements of May 1968, students used the imposed categorization as a form of self-empowerment, making demands of the culture that created it. Emerging from the crucible of the expression of others' ideologies, youth would finally speak for themselves, creating an image in which a new desire came to the fore, the desire for change. As the graffiti reads, "Cours camarade, le vieux monde est derrière toi": an "old world" of existentialists, J-3s, tri-cheurs, copains — and enfants terribles.

54. *Ibid.*, 255–56.
55. *Samedi-Soir*, 3 November 1945.
56. Cohen-Solal, *Sartre*, 261. “*Samedi-Soir*’s tireless haranguing of Sartre ranged from ridiculous anecdotes to more serious accusations, such as the claim that existentialists control the theatre, the press, and the publishing houses, and that ‘Sartre wants to impose his doctrine and his rule over the entire world.’” Cohen-Solal, 262.
57. Déon, *Les Gens de la nuit*, 184.
58. Claudie Lessalier, “Aspects de l’expérience lesbienne en France 1930–68.” (Thesis for the DEA in sociology, Université de Paris 8, November 1987).
59. See, for example, C. Jégou, *La jeune fille et le redressement national* (1942); Jacques Aubrun, “De la captivité à l’enseignement ménager,” in *Enseignement secondaire et technique*, 25 May 1945, quoted in Paul Crouzet, *Bacheliers ou jeunes filles?* (Paris: Privat-Didier, 1949), 105.
60. Quoted in Guillaume Hanoteau, *L’Age d’Or de Saint-Germain-des-Prés* (Paris: Editions Denoël, 1965), 76.
61. *Ibid.*, 79. In her autobiography, Anne-Marie Cazalis writes that it was all a pack of lies: “Les gens étaient assis bien sagement. Parfois ils dansaient [People were seated, well-behaved. Sometimes they danced].” *Mémoires d’une Anne* (Paris: Editions Stock, 1976), 53.
62. Hanoteau, *L’Age d’or*, 82.
63. Cazalis, *Mémoires*, 90. Jean Cau, Sartre’s secretary in those years, describes this generation — his own — with a combination of pity and disdain in a novel entitled *Les Paroissons* (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1958). In their early twenties during the Occupation, they became the first wave of postwar intellectuals: journalists at respected papers, filmmakers, readers at publishing houses, and café philosophers. According to Cau, his was a tortured, bitter generation, willful outsiders, who by 1950 were idle, poor, and unmarried, who persisted in their allegiance to Stalin and the Communist Party despite their awareness of human rights violations in Soviet labor camps. Quoted in Maurice Nadeau, “Une génération perdue?,” *Letras nouvelles* 6 (June 1958): 948. Cau’s sentiments were echoed quite recently in Tony Judt’s *Past Imperfect: French Intellectuals, 1944–1956* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).
64. Cazalis, *Mémoires*, 82.
65. Deirdre Bair, *Simone de Beauvoir: A Biography* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990), 462.
66. Georges Amado, “Les Jeunes gens inadaptés de Saint-Germain-des-Prés et du Quartier Latin,” *La Nef* 77–78 (June–July 1951): 31.
67. All of these landmark studies are mentioned and annotated in Anne Simonin et Hélène Clastres, *Les Idées en France 1945–1988. Une chronologie* (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1989).
68. Amado, “Les Jeunes gens,” 32.
69. Cohen-Solal, *Sartre*, 264.
70. Cazalis, *Mémoires*, 105.
71. “Pour vous, les jeunes, l’existentialisme est-il déjà du passé?” *Elle*, 24 March 1952, 28–29.
72. *Marie-Claire*, 4 (January 1955): 14.
73. Michèle Perrot, “Fait divers et histoire au XIXe siècle,” *Annales. Economies, sociétés, civilisations* 38, no. 4 (July–August 1983): 911–19.
74. Joseph Kessel, *Le Procès des enfants perdus* (Paris: Editions Julliard, 1951).
15. The book also contains a transcript of the trial.
75. *Le Figaro* 22 May 1951, 4 May 1951, *Arts* 377 (19 September 1952): 10.
76. Maurice Descotes, “Le Mal du siècle n’est pas seulement littérature,” *La Nef* 77–78 (June–July 1951): 25–26.
77. Maurice Descotes, *L’Épreuve* (Paris: Editions Julliard, 1951).
78. Descotes, “Le Mal,” 29.
79. Marc Ferro, “Présentation,” *Annales. Economies, sociétés, civilisations* 38, no. 4 (July–August 1983): 824.
80. Despite the disclaimer at the beginning of the film, the J-3 affair was clearly Cayatte’s inspiration. In 1952, Michelangelo Antonioni began production on a film he never finished based on three crimes committed by adolescents in 1951, in England, Italy, and the J-3 affair in France, to be entitled *Sans amour*.
81. “Le vagabondage des mineures,” *Rééducation. Revue française de l’enfance délinquante, déficiente, et en danger moral* (March–April 1954).
82. André Bazin, *Le Cinéma français de la Libération à la Nouvelle Vague* (1945–1958) (Paris: Editions de l’Étoile, 1983), 79.
83. *Ibid.*, 83.
84. Kessel, *Le Procès*, 90.
85. This is the thesis advanced in Daniel Schneidermann’s *L’Étrange procès* (Paris: Editions Fayard, 1998).

Chapter Four. Technological Society and Its Discontents

1. Benjamin Stora, *La Algérienne et l’oubli. La Mémoire et la guerre d’Algérie* (Paris: Editions la Découverte, 1991), 25–26.
12. Robert Bonnaud, *Les Tournants du XXe siècle* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 1992), 149, 152.
3. Merritt Roe Smith and Leo Marx, eds., *Does Technology Drive History? The Dilemma of Technological Determinism* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1994).
4. “Il a donc fallu vingt ans pour réparer les pertes et les manques à gagner de trente années de guerres et de crises économiques, et se retrouver au point où l’on aurait été si sa croissance s’était poursuivie calmement sur la pente du début du

siècle" [Twenty years had to pass in order to repair the losses and shortages earned from thirty years of war and economic crises, and for the nation to find itself at the point it would have been if growth had proceeded calmly on the curve of the beginning of the century]. Henri Mendras, *La Seconde Révolution française: 1965-1984* (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1994) 14.

5. Leo Marx, "The Idea of 'Technology' and Postmodern Pessimism," in Smith and Marx, *Does Technology Drive History?*, 237-58.

6. Jean Joussein, "Actualité d'une politique de la jeunesse," *La Nef* 12, no. 8 (March 1955): 151; André Labarthe, "Préparons des Français pour l'an 2000," *La Nef* 12, no. 8 (March 1955): 7-8.

7. Louis Dalmas, "Ainsi vieillit notre jeunesse," *La Nef* 12, no. 8 (March 1955): 172.

8. Pierre Macaigne, "Ils ont vingt ans," *Le Figaro* 21-22 May 1960, 9.

9. *Ibid.*

10. Jean-François Remonté et Simone Depoux, *Les Années radio* (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1989), 54.

11. Marc Martin, "La Radio dans les crises politiques contemporaines," in Jérôme Bourdon et Cécile Méadal, eds., *Techniques et politiques de l'information. Actes du séminaire Histoire des politiques de la communication* (Paris: CNRS, 1987), 177. And Maurice Vaisse, 1961, *Alger, le puitsch* (Brussels: Editions Complexe, 1983).

12. The title comes from an extremely successful song written by Gilbert Bécaud. François Jouffa et Jacques Bensamian, *Vinyl fraise. Les années 60* (Paris: Editions Michel Lafon, 1983), 16.

13. Editorial, *Sévit les copains* 1 (July-August 1962): 1.

14. Jouffa et Bensamian, *Vinyl fraise*, 35, 42.

15. Remonté et Depoux, *Les Années radio*, 72.

16. Jean-Paul Huguemin, *Une autre jeunesse* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1965), 117.

17. Jouffa et Bensamian, *Vinyl fraise*, 43-46. All subsequent references are cited in the text with the abbreviation *VF*.

18. Paul Yonnet, *Jeux, modes et masses. La Société française et le moderne* (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1985), 146.

19. "Si les twisteuses ne twistaient pas," *Sévit les copains*, 2 (September 1962): 44-53.

20. Philippe Labro, *Des feux mal éteints* (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1967) quoted in Philip Dine, *Images of the Algerian War: French Fiction and Film, 1954-1992* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 117-18. Dine has done the invaluable work of constituting this corpus and identifying its tropes; more extensive textual analysis has yet to be done.

21. Jean-Pierre Vittori, *Nous les appelés d'Algérie* (Paris: Messidor, 1983), 52.

22. Guy Vidal et Alain Bignon, *Une Education algérienne* (Paris: Dargaud Editeur, 1982).

23. Alain Manevy, *L'Algérie à vingt ans* (Paris: Editions Grasset, 1960), 53.

24. Maurienne, *Le Déserteur* (Editions Many, 1991), 27. The book was seized soon after its initial 1960 publication.

25. *Paris-Match* 667 (January 1962): n.pag.

26. Vittori, *Nous les appelés*, 55.

27. *Ibid.*, 121.

28. *Ibid.*, 126.

29. "Au nom de la France, j'ordonne que tous les moyens, je dis tous les moyens, soient employés pour barrer la route à ces hommes-là, en attendant de les réduire. J'interdis à tous Français, et d'abord à tout soldat, d'exécuter aucun de leurs ordres" [In the name of France, I order that all means, I repeat, all means, be employed to obstruct those men while waiting to defeat them. I forbid every Frenchman and, foremost, every soldier to execute any of their orders]. Quoted in Martin, "La Radio," 176.

30. Remonté et Depoux, *Les Années radio*, 54.

31. René Rémond et Claude Neuschwander, "Télévision et comportement politique," *Revue française de sciences politiques* 13, no. 2 (June 1963): 337.

32. "Leurs rubriques de jeunes, nous n'en pensons rien puisque nous ne les lisons pas," *Age tendre et tête de bois* 11 (Novembre 1963): 50-53.

33. Benjamin Stora, *La Camargue*, 42.

34. Héléne Bousser-Eck, "Cinq colonnes et l'Algérie," in Jean-Noël Jeanneney et Monique Sauvage, eds., *Télévision, nouvelle mémoire. Les Magazines de grand reportage 1959-1968* (Paris: Editions du Seuil et l'Institut National de l'Audiovisuel, 1982), 95.

35. Monique Sauvage and Denis Maréchal, "Les Racines d'un succès," in *Télévision, nouvelle mémoire*, 40.

36. *Ibid.*

37. Jérôme Bourdon, "La Guerre d'Algérie à la télévision," in Laurent Gerureau, Jean-Pierre Rioux, Benjamin Stora, eds., *La France en Guerre d'Algérie* (Paris: BDIC, 1992), 242-44.

38. Rémond et Neuschwander, "Télévision," 325.

39. *Ibid.*, 325, 327.

40. Bourdon, "La Guerre d'Algérie," 243.

41. Raoul Girardet, lecture on *Les Tricheurs*, Vidéothèque de la Ville de Paris, May 1988.

42. The special issue of *L'Express* on *Les Tricheurs*, with an unsmiling Pascale Petit on the cover, featured an article by Françoise Giroud about the reception of the film; an investigative story by Jean Cau on "real-life" *tricheurs* who frequented Paris cafés; an interview with Marcel Carné; articles about youth cultures, all with

their own labels, in England (teddy boys), Italy (*wittolenti*), Poland (hooligans), and the United States (beats). Reminiscent of Jacques Robert's piece on the existentialists for *Samedi-Soir*, captioned stills from the film took the reader on a diagnostic tour of *fricheur* territory: "L'amour: une affaire technique"; "Le café: le centre d'un univers qui se débine"; "La «surboums»: dans l'alcool, dans la danse, la fuite." [Love: a technical affair; The café: the center of a universe in decay; The party: in alcohol, in dance, escape.] *L'Express*, 16 October 1958.

43. Françoise Sagan, *Bonjour tristesse* (Paris: Editions Julliard, 1954), 11.
44. Stora, *La Canguène*, 40.

Chapter Five. Quantifying Youth

1. Jean M. Converse, *Survey Research in the United States: Roots and Emergence (1890-1960)* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 1.
2. *Ibid.*
3. Pierre Bourdieu, "L'Opinion publique n'existe pas," in *Questions de sociologie* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1984), 224-231.
4. Ian Hacking, "Making Up People," in *Reconstructing Individualism: Autonomy, Individuality, and the Self in Western Thought*, ed. Thomas C. Heller et al. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986).
5. Olivier Galland, *Sociologie de la jeunesse. L'Entrée dans la vie* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1991), 33.
6. *Ibid.*, 39. Also see Pierre Bourdieu, "La «jeunesse» n'est qu'un mot," in *Questions de sociologie*, 145.
7. Agathon, *Les Jeunes gens d'aujourd'hui* (Paris: Plon, 1913), v.
8. Galland, *Sociologie*, 33-35.
9. Joan Copjec, *Read My Desire: Lacan Against the Historicists* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1994), 4.
10. Amélie Gayraud, *Les Jeunes filles d'aujourd'hui* (Paris: C. Oudin, 1914), 36, 39.
11. *Ibid.*, 62.
12. Galland, *Sociologie*, 44.
13. Michael Pollak, "La Planification des sciences sociales," *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 2-3 (1976): 108.
14. *Ibid.*
15. "The main tactic employed by the group of historians that came to be known as the Annales school against the threat of structuralism was that of cannibalism: encompass and absorb the enemies as a means of controlling them. Immediately after the war the official journal of the Annales school underwent a significant name change: from *Annales d'histoire économique et sociale* to *Annales: économies, sociétés, civilisations* . . . [T]he disappearance of the word 'history' from

the revised title showed a new degree of willingness to embrace the other social sciences, particularly those of demography and economics. Behind the gesture of self-effacement, however, lurked a continuing will to prevail as absent or invisible master." Kristin Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies: Decolonization and the Reordering of French Culture* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1995), 187-88.

16. Michael Pollak, "Paul F. Lazarsfeld, fondateur d'une multinationale scientifique," *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* 25 (1979): 56.
17. Quoted in Richard Kuisel, *Seducing the French: The Drama of Americanization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 24.
18. *Ibid.*, 25.
19. Ross, *Fast Cars*, 187.
20. Pollak, "La planification," 110; and François Bourricaud, *Le Bricolage idéologique. Essai sur les intellectuels et les passions démocratiques* (Paris: PUF, 1980), 226.
21. Robert Kanfers et Gilbert Sigaux, *Vingt ans en 1951* (Paris: Editions Julliard, 1951), 12, 77.
22. *Ibid.*, 10.
23. Anne Simonin et Hélène Clastres, *Les Idées en France 1945-1988. Une chronologie* (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1989), 102.
24. Kanfers et Sigaux, *Vingt ans*, 163-64.
25. *L'Express* 3 October 1957.
26. Françoise Giroud, *La Nouvelle vague. Portraits de la jeunesse* (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1958).
27. Henri Lefebvre, "La Jeunesse aurait-elle découvert le bonheur?" *L'Express* 19 December 1957, 10.
28. *Les Nouvelles littéraires* 3 January-19 September 1957; Henri Perruchot, *La France et sa jeunesse* (Paris: Hachette, 1958).
29. *Masculin/Féminin: A Film by Jean-Luc Godard* (New York: Grove Press, 1969), 169. All transcriptions from the original French of the film are my own.
30. *Ibid.*, 26-27.
31. *Ibid.*, 41-42.
32. *Ibid.*, 174-75.

Conclusion. From Object to Subject?

1. François Jouffla et Jacques Barsamian, *Vinyl fraîche. Les Années 60* (Paris: Editions Michel Lafon, 1993), 142.
2. *Ibid.*, 160.
3. Edgar Morin, "«Salut les copains» I: Une nouvelle classe d'âge," *Le Monde*, 6 July 1963, 1. And Morin, *Les Stars* (1957; reprint Paris: Editions Gallée, 1984), 42-46.