

The specificity of CCCS subcultural theory to a British academic context is further evidenced by youth culture research in the USA, which has remained far more sensitive to issues of race, culture and locality as factors that cut across, or at the very least problematize, structuralist explanations of youth. Thus, for example, Rose's (1994a, 1994b) work on hip-hop culture in the USA, despite mapping the rise of hip-hop in relation to broadly similar socio-economic conditions to those identified by Cohen (1972) in his work on white, British, working-class youth style-based youth groups twenty years earlier, resists using

the term 'subculture' and instead identifies hip-hop as an extension of those issues and tensions felt by all members of ghetto communities in the USA. Thus, observes Rose (1994a):

Identity in hip hop is deeply rooted in the specific, the local experience and one's attachment to and status in a local group or alternative family. [Hip-hop] crews are new kinds of families forged with intercultural bonds which, like the social formation of gangs, provide insulation and support in a complex and unyielding environment and may, in fact, contribute to the community-building networks which serve as a basis for new social movements. (p. 78)

This acknowledgement of the role of style, music and other popular cultural resources in creating' rather than merely

confirming communities', has led US researchers to reject the concept of subculture and to seek alternative theoretical frameworks. Thus Lewis (1992) has suggested that music and style-based youth groupings are better understood as 'taste cultures. Relating this to popular music, a primary resource around which contemporary youth cultures are constructed, but conspicuously absent in CCCS work (see Laing, 1985), Lewis argues that musical taste 'dramatically cuts across standard indicators such as social class, age, and education in creating groupings with common musical expectations and symbolic definitions' (p. 141).

A further problem associated with the CCCS is its failure to acknowledge the role of the media in the creation of subcultures and subcultural identities. According to Thornton, rather than emerging as fully-formed, grass-roots expressions of youth solidarity, subcultures are the product of youth's dynamic and highly reflexive relationship with the mass media. The mass media are responsible, argues Thornton (1995), for providing youth with many of the visual and ideological resources they incorporate into collective subcultural identities: subcultures "do not germinate from a seed and grow by force of their own energy into mysterious "movements only to be belatedly by the media. Rather, the media and other cultural industries are there and effective right from the start' (p. 117).

