

**Introduction to Cultural Studies**  
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**Lecture – 50**  
**Dick Hebdige-Subculture the Meaning of Style - IV**



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dominance. (Marx and Engels, 1970)

This is the basis of Antonio Gramsci's theory of *hegemony* which provides the most adequate account of how dominance is sustained in advanced capitalist societies.

*Hegemony: The moving equilibrium*

'Society cannot share a common communication system so long as it is split into warring classes' (Brecht, *A Short Organum for the Theatre*).



So hello and welcome to this NPTEL course entitled introduction to cultural studies where we are looking at Dick Hebdige's text Subculture the meaning of style. So we are just looking at the introduction quite carefully because I think this is a very important session to look at in terms of how he traces history, historical birth of cultural studies of the discipline in academia.

And how the different strands of investigation which inform cultural studies (( )) (00:42) and then how semiotics comes into being as a major investment as a major participator in cultural studies. He draws in Barthes quite a bit and last session that we covered in a lecture that we just had before this. He looks at ideology as a mechanism, ideology as a very surreptitious and subterranean mechanism which appears you know outside the threshold of consciousness.

You are not conscious of ideology while you are replicating and while you are internalizing it, while you are consuming it sometimes unquestioningly and entry on Marx (( )) (01:19) Marx and Engels and of course then later on he draws an Althusser in terms of how ideology

can be a psychological internalization which appears below consciousness, it does not so come at the threshold of consciousness.

But appears below consciousness as a system of thought, system of practices, rituals. So the last session he stops at the point where it begins he formulate hegemony and how he draws in Gramsci's understanding of hegemony as sometime more of control, discursive control which is obviously in keeping with the dominant ideology. So hegemony and ideology are quite connected at a discursive level.

And sometimes could organically so and we saw how in the previous section when he talks about Marx and Engels, their formulation of ideology was quite clear that the mental domination and the economic domination they go quite hand-in-hand, so whoever whichever group, whichever sessions of people they control the economy, they control the money, they control the distribution of wealth.

They also axiomatically tend to control the distribution of mental thought processes; you know which inform culture at a collective level. So by thought processes I mean a collective thought processes. So whichever group has more (()) (02:36) has wields more power, more authority, more agency financially and economically. They tend to wield more power; you know mentally as well as ideologically.

So hegemony is very important term in cultural studies not least because it helps us understand how certain kinds of domination comes into being, come into being. So domination has a discursive strategy, domination has an ideological strategy; domination has a linguistic strategy, cultural strategy of course.

Hegemony is that kind of node, the modus operandi's if you were of domination. How does domination work, how does nomination operate? You know ontologically as well as functionally. So this section is very interesting take on hegemony and it draws at Gramsci's work quite a bit because Gramsci was one of the first theorists perhaps the first theorists who systematize an understanding a study of hegemony has a collective activity.

So it opens to the quotation which should be on a screen, the quotation from Brecht from this text called the Short Organum for the Theatre and the Brecht of course is a known was

profoundly political theatre writer and he talks about how collective consciousness is formed in this theatre and how it can interrupt that collective consciousness through different kinds of style and the Brechtian style of theatre is quite different from the Aristotelian style of theatre.



The Brechtian theatre is very anticathartic. It relies more on interruptions, it relies more on breaks, it breaks the fourth wall, it addresses the audience directly, it moves away from a seamless representation of events and it so highlights its own constructed quality, it highlights its own discursive quality. So when you are watching Brechtian theatre you profoundly and immediately aware that you are watching an artifice.

You know a literary artifice, a theatrical artifice, so the artificiality of the theatre, the theatrical production process is highlighted constantly in Brecht's over of work and sometimes that informs the plot, the way plot of Brechtian theatre sometimes relies on this highlighting of artificiality okay. So this section where Brecht mentions society cannot share a common communication system, so long as it is split into warring classes. That is the beginning of the session on hegemony that Hebdige is looking at.

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The term hegemony refers to a situation in which a provisional alliance of certain social groups can exert 'total social authority' over other subordinate groups, not simply by coercion or by the direct imposition of ruling ideas, but by 'winning and shaping consent so that the power of the dominant classes appears both legitimate and natural' (Hall, 1977). Hegemony can only be maintained so long as the dominant classes 'succeed in framing all competing definitions within their range' (Hall, 1977), so that subordinate groups are, if not controlled; then at least contained within an ideological space which does not seem at all 'ideological': which appears instead to be permanent 'natural', to lie outside history, to be beyond partic



So he defines and gives a provisional, a working definition of hegemony in this particular section where he says the term hegemony refers to a situation in which a provisional alliance of certain social groups can exert total social authority over other subordinate groups, not simply by coercion or by the direct imposition of ruling ideas, but by the winning and shaping consent.

So that the power of the dominant classes appears both legitimate and natural. So we are back to this very common practice of legitimizing and naturalizing power. So what we are looking at is two forms of domination, one is by domination, one is by coercion where you are aware that this is domination your way that this is something which has been forced upon you. The other most surreptitious, more subliminal and perhaps more successful form of domination is to consent where you become a consensual consumer of domination.

You became a collaborator of domination, you are happy to be dominated because you realize I mean you made to realize through a very interesting mental system, a very interesting ideological system that this particular domination is legitimate, natural and perhaps benevolent. So this idea this narrative of legitimization, benevolence, naturalization needs to become very important categories of domination.

Especially a domination at a colonial level domination, at a racial level domination, at a gender level you know patriarchy operates to consent in more ways than one. So consent becomes a very important discursive condition of legitimization and naturalization. This is Stuart Hall saying this but obviously any idea; any study of domination, any study of hegemony would require an attention to these two different strands of control, coercion and consent.

So hegemony can only be maintained so long as the dominant classes succeed in framing all competing definitions within the range. So that subordinate groups are if not controlled then at least contained within an ideological space which does not seem at all ideological which appears instead to be permanent and natural to lie outside history, to be beyond particular interests. So this is how domination work, this is how hegemony works when subordinate groups are control and contained within one monolithic ideological system.

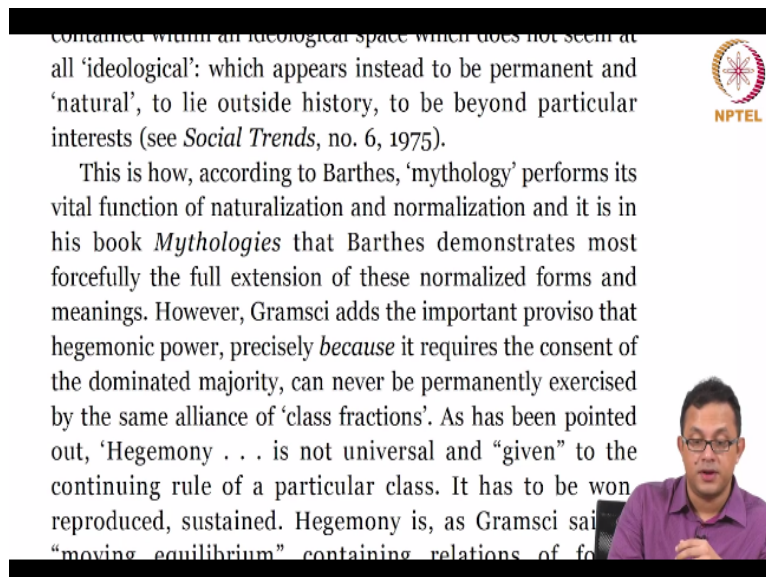
And more importantly that ideological system must not appear ideological in the first place that something which we have discussed extensively already that the appearance of this ideological quality must not be there and it must appear natural, seamless, spontaneous, organic and hence legitimate by default, naturalized by default. So this process of naturalization is something which is a sine qua non.

An essential condition of any kind of ideological coercion, any kind of ideological consent, any kind of ideological hegemony. So hegemony requires this you know effacement of this constructed quality of ideology, hegemony requires a legitimization, a serial legitimization of course. Hegemony requires appearance of permanence and naturalness and this appearance of permanence and naturalness are very important for the purpose of our discussion over here.

For that to lie outside history to beyond particular interest, it should not appear topic wise same in a way for any grand narrative. So if you look at any grand narrative, it must not appear particular, it must not appear topical, it must appear to be outside of history, it must appear to be timeless in quality, something which transcends immediate micro historical interest.

Something which is permanently good, permanently benevolent, permanently given, permanently naturalized, permanently legitimize okay. So this is the long and short of how hegemony operates as an ideological practice which is something that is highlighted in this section.

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contained within an ideological space which does not seem at all 'ideological': which appears instead to be permanent and 'natural', to lie outside history, to be beyond particular interests (see *Social Trends*, no. 6, 1975).

This is how, according to Barthes, 'mythology' performs its vital function of naturalization and normalization and it is in his book *Mythologies* that Barthes demonstrates most forcefully the full extension of these normalized forms and meanings. However, Gramsci adds the important proviso that hegemonic power, precisely *because* it requires the consent of the dominated majority, can never be permanently exercised by the same alliance of 'class fractions'. As has been pointed out, 'Hegemony . . . is not universal and "given" to the continuing rule of a particular class. It has to be won, reproduced, sustained. Hegemony is, as Gramsci said, "moving equilibrium" containing relations of fo

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This is how according to Barthes mythology performs its vital function of naturalization and novelization and it is in his book *Mythologies* that Barthes demonstrates most forcefully the full extension of these normalized forms and meanings. And this particular book had been referred to already by Hebdige in early section *Mythologies* by role of Barthes, why this is quite clearly how you know the study the Barthes gives us a semiotic study.

But of course is a profoundly political study as well, why say is that how these ideas of naturalization and normalization take place in society to different semiotic systems to different forms of you know seamlessness, different forms of normalization and this is how mythologies are formed and mythologies are by definition unquestionable. So how does something become a myth?

How does something become you know myth which is subscribed to by a collective by different kinds of people who participate in order to consume it consensually. So this consensual you know consumption of myths is something that Barthes highlights you know insistently and very persuasively and very compellingly in this particular book *Mythologies*. However, Gramsci adds an important proviso that hegemonic power precisely because it requires the consent of the dominant majority, the dominated majority sorry.

That is a consent that is where the consent must come from the dominated majority can never be permanently exercised by the same alliance of class fractions.

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his book *Mythologies* that Barthes demonstrates most forcefully the full extension of these normalized forms and meanings. However, Gramsci adds the important proviso that hegemonic power, precisely *because* it requires the consent of the dominated majority, can never be permanently exercised by the same alliance of 'class fractions'. As has been pointed out, 'Hegemony . . . is not universal and "given" to the continuing rule of a particular class. It has to be won, reproduced, sustained. Hegemony is, as Gramsci said, a "moving equilibrium" containing relations of forces favourable or unfavourable to this or that tendency' (Hall *et al.*, 1976a).

In the same way, forms cannot be permanently normalized. They can always be deconstructed, demystified, by 'mythologist' like Barthes. Moreover commodities can



As has been pointed out, hegemony is not universal and given to the continuing rule of a particular class. It has to be won, reproduced, sustained. Hegemony is, as Gramsci said a moving equilibrium containing relations of forces favorable or unfavorable to this or that tendency. So hegemony according to Gramsci is a more complicated process, the more complex phenomenon which must be acquired.

And this process of acquiring hegemony is a way the process of consolidating hegemony, it requires collaboration from the (( )) (10:58) component, the cultural component, the ideational component. They all must come together to create this consensus which then informs hegemony which is a moving equilibrium. It contains relations of forces, favorable or unfavorable to this or that tendency.

So tendency, forces, micro forces, these micro categories become very important in hegemony and obviously what Gramsci is offering is a very complex, an almost cognitive understanding of hegemony by which these micro tendencies, these micro tensions are highlighted constantly. So hegemony does not appear just as a monolithic given, it is actually a summation, it is actually a combination of different components of different categories which come together.

Class for instance, economy, language, culture, religions all these things come together and it contains creates a moving equilibrium and its creation of moving equilibrium is something which is highlighted by Gramsci throughout his discourse. In the same way, forms cannot be permanently normalized.

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containing rule of a particular class. It has to be won, reproduced, sustained. Hegemony is, as Gramsci said, a “moving equilibrium” containing relations of forces favourable or unfavourable to this or that tendency’ (Hall *et al.*, 1976a).

In the same way, forms cannot be permanently normalized. They can always be deconstructed, demystified, by a ‘mythologist’ like Barthes. Moreover commodities can be symbolically ‘repossessed’ in everyday life, and endowed with implicitly oppositional meanings, by the very groups who originally produced them. The symbiosis in which ideology and social order, production and reproduction, are linked is then neither fixed nor guaranteed. It can be prised open. The



They can always be deconstructed, demystified by a mythologist like Barthes. So you know this is the whole point of textuality and this is something which I may have already mentioned and this goal is that no text is permanently normalized, so every grand narrative is obviously textual in quality but then it becomes a grand narrative precisely by effacing its

textuality, effacing its constructed quality, concealing its constructed quality very successfully.

That is the part of the package, part of the condition of becoming grand narrative. So forms cannot be permanently normalized. They can always be deconstructed as every form can be deconstructed, demystified. So deconstruction also requires a former demystification. Demystification is like taking away the mythological component, taking away the myth of meaning, taking away the myth of dominant meaning.

So that is what demystification is. So when Barthes for instance when he offers his book on *Mythologies* what he is essentially doing is he is deconstructing myths, he is deconstructing the grand narratives which inform myth-making, myth formation or the meaning making which is invested into this idea, this map of myths. Moreover, commodities can be symbolically repossessed in everyday life.

And endowed with implicitly oppositional meanings, by the very groups who originally produced them. So this idea of repossession is obviously an act of appropriation, so any commodity can be repossessed with different semantic value right. So when you repossess something, you give a different semantic value at a collective level. Say a commodity can take up different semantic registers at different points of time.

So for instance just to give you an example, a very common popular example of say a hoodie jacket right. A hoodie jacket is something which is originally used by people who belong to a subordinate group not elite but then a hoodie jacket can then be appropriate and become an elite symbol. It becomes a bit of a cool symbol. So the idea of the cool commodity is very important especially in the study of subculture as Dick Hebdige offers over here.

The (( )) (14:10) of the coolness of a commodity is precisely because of his flexibility, plasticity as commodity through which you can be possess and repossess and given different semantic registers at different points of time. The symbiosis in which ideology and social order, production and reproduction are linked is then neither fixed nor guaranteed. So this symbiosis almost organic symbiosis between production, reproduction and social order ideology.





So ideology of course is a combination of all these things, but this symbiosis is neither fixed and not guaranteed. This symbiosis was textual in quality, it can be deconstructed, it can be demystified and it can be reproduced, repossessed or re-appropriated with different linguistic and cultural and ideological registers. It can be prised open.

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FROM CULTURE TO HEGEMONY 17

consensus can be fractured, challenged, overruled, and resistance to the groups in dominance cannot always be lightly dismissed or automatically incorporated. Although, as Lefebvre has written, we live in a society where '... objects in practice become signs and signs objects and a second nature takes the place of the first – the initial layer of perceptible reality' (Lefebvre, 1971), there are, as he goes on to affirm, always 'objections and contradictions which hinder the closing of the circuit' between sign and object, production and reproduction.

We can now return to the meaning of youth subcultures, for the emergence of such groups has signalled in a spectacular fashion the breakdown of consensus in the post war period. In the following chapters we shall see that it



The consensus can be fractured, challenge, overruled and resistance to the groups and dominance cannot always be lightly dismissed or automatically incorporated. So any consensus can be overruled, any consensus can be fractured, any consensus which informs the consent about hegemony can be fractured. So when he is saying consensus can be fractured, challenged, overruled and resistance can be you know dismiss, cannot be dismiss is likely incorporated what he is saying is that consensus to his textual in quality.

So this entire idea of consent, the other component of hegemony, it is a question on consent. So consent at a collective level, it can be changed, it can so be fractured, it can be overruled, overturn. So consent can become dissent very quickly to a certain phenomenon, to a certain event, to certain practices, certain rituals, certain forms of knowledge.

So this is a very interesting cognitive, psychological as well as cultural study of consent at a collective level and this is what I mentioned the great inception of this course if you remember that and one of the beauties of this course that it draws in so many disciplines. So it draws on psychology for instance, it draws on political science, it draws on obviously I mean a study of culture, this is why it is called cultural studies.

But the point is if we are to do our complex reading of culture, if we are to offer or formulate or systematize a complex reading of culture which is what culture studies is. It must be entail a degree of interdisciplinarity. It must bring in together different disciplines which can be a dialogue (()) (16:32) with each other in terms of looking at culture as a complex phenomenon okay.

Now he mentions Lefebvre, Henri Lefebvre who is a space theorists, but a very important for the purpose of arts and cultural studies because he talks about how space becomes discursive in quality or space becomes you know stylist, they can stylize in quality and how space obviously is coded at a semiotic level which makes it ideological, political and subversive sometimes simultaneously.

Although as Lefebvre has written we live in a society where objects and practice become signs and signs objects and a second nature takes the place of the first. The initial layer of perceptible reality you know there are as he goes on to affirm, always objections and contradictions which hinder the closing of the circuit between sign and object, production and reproduction.

So Lefebvre gives a very complex understanding of signs and objects right. So objects become signs, signs then become objects and the second nature takes the place of the first but then he also mentions there are objections and contradictions which you know resists any kind of closure, the closure of the circuit. So the circuit over here is obviously circuit of meaning making, the circuit of signification.

And this circuit of signification must resist any closure and it does not really having a closure, it always has objections and contradictions between sign and object, production and reproduction. So there is always a schism between production and reproduction, something is lost, something is gained. So every act of production, every act of reproduction, every act of appropriation is by default.

An act of misappropriation is either over preparation or sort of you know insufficient appropriation and so this is something which even Homi Bhabha talks about at a different level. So we have some structural (()) (18:23) mimicry at a colonial level in very similar terms. So this is again a very poor structures way of looking at meaning production where

you sign between the meaning and the object and sign and the objects always a slippage, it is always you know a resistance to its closure of the circuit.

So circuit or meaning making or circuit of signification must always be slippery by default. It is a production and reproduction, it always has a schism between them likewise the sign and the object too has you know have schisms between them in terms of and it is not a seamless process of signification. It must always be slippery and must always be and there obvious must be a shadow between the sign and the object.

And that shadow must take on different appropriations and different linguistic and semantic registers. So this idea of Lefebvre is very important because Lefebvre is obviously giving a very poor structuralist idea of meaning making, meaning process, mythologization and this is something that Barthes seems to anticipate in a more structuralist study which is *Mythologies*, but if you look at later Barthes works when he tends to become more post-structuralist.

Then, he is talking about the slippage between sign and the object, between signifier and signified and the slippage always produces more and more meanings, produces multiplicity of meanings, which resists any closure at the level of the semantic circuit. The semantic circuit does not have any closure at all and must just become more and more slippery, (( )) (19:53) in quality.

So we can now return as Hebdige says, we can now return to the meaning of youth subcultures. This is what the book is about, youth subcultures. There are different subnarratives, different subtexts that operate within a particular umbrella term of culture and so youth subculture becomes a very important category, a very important subcategory, a micro category in cultural studies.

Because youth subculture is where this act of appropriation excuse me and misappropriation, over appropriation, anxiety to appropriate, they operate at most visibly because you know this also an aspirational quality about appropriations. There is always an anxiety about this appropriation. There is always a sense of loss about this appropriation. So youth subculture is becoming very fertile, very feck in field of study from cultural studies for us interested in cultural studies.

For the emergence of such groups has signaled in a spectacular fashion, the breakdown of consensus in a post-war period. So this idea of the breakdown of consensus, this is something which you have heard before; however, especially when you looked at Leo Todd when you looked at the idea of the loss of the public space post-war period, so post Second World War in the public space of the period.

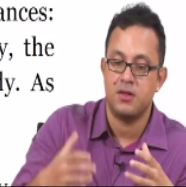
There is no consensus at a collective level in the public space which is a (( )) (21:15) way of looking at society where there must be you know a public space, there must be a project of consensus, there must be an agreement, consensus were collective level at an ideation level of culture to operate. So that is why Hebdige talks about modernity as an unfinished project which is something which is contested by Leo Todd and the postmodern condition which we have already covered.

But then we have a similar kind of an illusion over here where Hebdige says quite clearly that his breakdown of a consensus happens the post-war period right. So there is no consensus in the post-war period, there is no public space in the post-war period as a result of which we have these different micro subcultures which come into being which contest, which subvert and which also informs study of culture that we consume today.

In the following chapters, (( )) (22:05) laying out the map of the book over here. In the following chapters, we should see that it is precisely objections and contradictions of the kind which Lefebvre has described to find expression and subculture.

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we can now return to the meaning of youth subcultures, for the emergence of such groups has signalled in a spectacular fashion the breakdown of consensus in the post-war period. In the following chapters we shall see that it is precisely objections and contradictions of the kind which Lefebvre has described that find expression in subculture. However, the challenge to hegemony which subcultures represent is not issued directly by them. Rather it is expressed obliquely, in style. The objections are lodged, the contradictions displayed (and, as we shall see, 'magically resolved') at the profoundly superficial level of appearances: that is, at the level of signs. For the sign-community, the community of myth-consumers, is not a uniform body. As Volosinov has written, it is cut through by class:



Class does not coincide with the sign community.

However, the challenge to hegemony which subcultures represent is not issued directly by them. Rather it is expressed obliquely in style. The objections are lodged, the contradictions has displayed and as we shall see, magically resolved at the profoundly superficial level of appearances. That is at level of signs, so superficiality becomes a very important condition if a post-modernism as we may have seen already in Leo Todd and some of the other text we have covered so far.

Because at a superficial level, we see the slippage of sign, we see the play of signs most spectacularly you know how signs become an objects, objects become sign and this all happens of a superficial level which is what makes this all and the whole exchange, a whole semiotic exchange, so postmodern or poststructuralist in the first place. So the profoundly superficial level of appearances is where you know signs operate at the level of signs.

That is what a slippage between the objects and the commodity, between the commodity and a semantic register they come into being and that is how cultural myth-making is formed at a very superficial level. So in a sense what we see over here in Dick Hebdige's analysis is quite true because the spirit of post-modernism which sometimes becomes a celebration of superficiality.

That particular superficiality can be subversive in quality but it can also sometimes be complicit in quality, complicit in the status quo, complicit and deconsolidation understanding of culture. So this entire ambivalence between being complicit and being subversive at a

superficial level is what categorizes post-modernism as a movement, a display between superficiality you know being subversive and superficiality being complicit.

And we are never quite sure how to map all the differences between the two, so in that sense post-modernism is never completely subversive neither they are completely complicit in quality and that is something which this ambivalence is what informs post-modernism as a spirit as a movement in general. For the sign-community as Hebdige goes on to say, for a sign-community the community of myth consumers is not a uniform body.



So there is a lack of uniformity even within the consumers. So the people who consume the myths, people who consume different kinds of you know sign systems, myth systems and they are not uniform in quality. So different kinds or different orders of consumption in the same object, the same mythology of the same commodity.

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that is, at the level of signs. For the sign-community, the community of myth-consumers, is not a uniform body. As Volosinov has written, it is cut through by class:

Class does not coincide with the sign community, i.e. with the totality of users of the same set of signs of ideological communication. Thus various different classes will use one and the same language. As a result, differently oriented accents intersect in every ideological sign. Sign becomes the arena of the class struggle. (Volosinov, 1973)

The struggle between different discourses, different definitions and meanings within ideology is therefore always, at the same time, a struggle within signification: a struggle



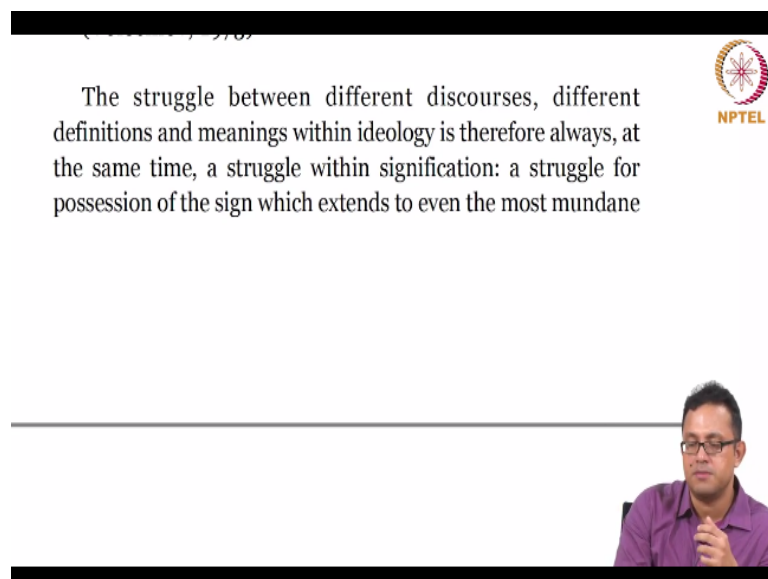
As Volosinov has written, it is cut through by class. So class becomes a very important factor in terms of how we attach ourselves to sign. So our class position, our location and culture, how to use a phrase from Homi Bhabha is dependent on our class position. So what is the class position and how does it make us? Does it make us privileged consumers, does it make us poor consumers, does it make us unprivileged, underprivileged, subordinated, subjugated consumers.

It depends on location and class and it is more complex from that as well as there has been more factors which come in apart from just class but Volosinov a way highlights the class

location in terms of the myth consumers. Class does not coincide with the sign community that is with the totality of users of the same set of signs of ideological communication. Thus, various different classes will use one and the same language.

As a result, differently oriented accents intersect in every ideological sign. Sign becomes the arena of the class struggle. So the last sentence beautifully written at the same time quite compelling in terms of his content. So sign becomes arena of the class struggle. So how do you deal with signs? How do you appropriate signs? That becomes arena that becomes the eigen space for class struggle.

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The struggle between different discourses, different definitions and meanings within ideology is therefore always, at the same time, a struggle within signification: a struggle for possession of the sign which extends to even the most mundane

Because it depends on the class location, it depends on you know a particular you know background, a particular location, a particular agentic situation and a particular class. The struggle between different discourses, different definitions and meanings within ideology is therefore always at the same time a struggle within signification. So what we see over here is a very interesting dialogic relationship between discursivity and the semantic register.

Discursivity and signification right, so struggle between different discourses between different definitions and meanings within ideology is a struggle with signification. How do you identify its signs? How do you miss identify its signs? How do you appropriate signs? And that these appropriations, these misappropriations become quite discursive in quality, not least because it depends it reveals your location in class.

It reveals your location in a particular societal structure. A struggle for possession of the sign which extends to even the most mundane areas of everyday life. So how to possess a sign? How to consume a sign? So signs become commodities over here and how do you negotiate with those commodities, how do you negotiate, how do you navigate with signs, how do you consume signs and what does this consumption do to agentic self?


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areas of everyday life. To turn once more to the examples used in the Introduction, to the safety pins and tubes of vaseline, we can see that such commodities are indeed open to a double inflection: to 'illegitimate' as well as 'legitimate' uses. These 'humble objects' can be magically appropriated; 'stolen' by subordinate groups and made to carry 'secret' meanings: meanings which express, in code, a form of resistance to the order which guarantees their continued subordination.

Style in subculture is, then, pregnant with significance. Its transformations go 'against nature', interrupting the process of 'normalization'. As such, they are gestur



Does it increase the agency itself? Does it undermine your agency? Never quite know. To turn once more to the examples used in the introduction because safety pins and tubes of Vaseline. So this was the reference which was used by Hebdige rather beginning to spoke safety pins and tubes of Vaseline, two banal commodities wherein safety pins and Vaseline tubes and you do not really think much of them in normal parlance.

But I mean what he is offering over here is how these things these commodities can take up different multiple linguistic and semantic registers which can then become different kind of culture signifies depending on the act of appropriation. We can see that such commodities are indeed open to a double inflection to illegitimate as well as legitimate uses. So you know the same object the same sign can have an illegitimate appropriation.

It can have a legitimate appropriation depending on how the inflation operates. These humble objects can be magically appropriated, stolen by subordinate groups and made to carry secret meanings. Meanings which express in code, a form of resistance to the order which guarantees the continued subordination. So how these things become stolen and by stolen he means appropriated and over appropriated, misappropriated.



How subordinate groups that carry secret meanings right, so secret meanings mean double meaning. So this doubleness of meaning, this multiplicity of meaning is what makes entire active preparation right very interesting. So same object safety pins or Vaseline tubes that can be appropriated legitimately by the normal commonsensical and amused with what common sense within brackets because that is obviously comes with ideological investment.

And also non-commonsensical hence illegitimate appropriation and how the difference in appropriation can actually generate difference in meanings at a semantic level. So it depends on the act of appropriation, so it all comes down to the verb, the act, the activity. So in a sense it is something similar to what Butler said about gender and how do you appropriate certain semantic code, how do you appropriate certain kind of social code determines your gendered location in a particular society in a particular point of time.

So what particular cues coming out trolled in my lectures throughout this particular course but that is deliberate because what it does it talks about it highlights the topicality, it highlights the location, the local quality of any narrative right. Hence, particular is so important because it just effaces, it just goes against and deconstructs to a certain extreme, the grandness of meaning, the grandness of the signification.

So consistently highlighting and consistently underlining the topicality or the immediacy or the micro quality, the constructed quality of any act of appropriation or any act of textualization okay. So meanings which express in code, a form of resistance to the order which guarantees their continued subordination.

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can see that such commodities are indeed open to a double inflection: to 'illegitimate' as well as 'legitimate' uses. These 'humble objects' can be magically appropriated; 'stolen' by subordinate groups and made to carry 'secret' meanings: meanings which express, in code, a form of resistance to the order which guarantees their continued subordination.



Style in subculture is, then, pregnant with significance. Its transformations go 'against nature', interrupting the process of 'normalization'. As such, they are gestures, movements towards a speech which offends the 'silent majority', which challenges the principle of unity and cohesion, which contradicts the myth of consensus. Our task becomes, like Barthes', to discern the hidden messages inscribed in code on the glossy surfaces of style, to trace them out as 'maps of meaning' which obscurely re-present the very contradictions they are designed to resolve or conceal.



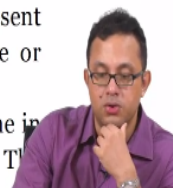
Style in subculture is, then pregnant for significance. The style becomes a very important semantic register which also becomes that cultural and political in scope. Its transformations go against nature, interrupting the process of normalization. As such, they are gestures, movements towards a speech which offends the silent majority which challenges the principle of unity and cohesion, which contradicts the myth of consensus.

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Style in subculture is, then, pregnant with significance. Its transformations go 'against nature', interrupting the process of 'normalization'. As such, they are gestures, movements towards a speech which offends the 'silent majority', which challenges the principle of unity and cohesion, which contradicts the myth of consensus. Our task becomes, like Barthes', to discern the hidden messages inscribed in code on the glossy surfaces of style, to trace them out as 'maps of meaning' which obscurely re-present the very contradictions they are designed to resolve or conceal.



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Our task becomes, like Barthes to discern the hidden message inscribed in code on the glossy surfaces of style, to trace them out as maps of meaning which obscurely represent the very contradictions, they are designed to resolve or conceal. So the maps of meaning become (()) (30:56) spaces where the different contradictions you know as a result are concealed at the same time.

So our job as cultural studies students for using semantics, if you are using semiotics, it is a study style but style becomes then according to Hebdige the superficial level of signification where the different contradictions, different tensions are concealed and resolved and highlighted that is why style becomes a very important cultural metaphor, a culture signifier. Style becomes an index of ideological investment in no ways in one which is what makes a study of style such an important category of you know investigation according to Hebdige.

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majority, which challenges the principle of unity and cohesion, which contradicts the myth of consensus. Our task becomes, like Barthes', to discern the hidden messages inscribed in code on the glossy surfaces of style, to trace them out as 'maps of meaning' which obscurely re-present the very contradictions they are designed to resolve or conceal.

Academics who adopt a semiotic approach are not alone in reading significance into the loaded surfaces of life. The existence of spectacular subcultures continually opens up those surfaces to other potentially subversive readings. Jean Genet, the archetype of the 'unnatural' deviant, again exemplifies the practice of resistance through style. He is as convinced in his own way as is Roland Barthes of the ideological character of cultural signs. He is equally oppressed by the seamless web of forms and meanings.



Academics who adopt a semiotic approach are not alone in reading significance into located and the loaded surfaces of life. The existence of spectacular subcultures continually opens up the surfaces to other potentially subversive readings and they can do more subversive readings if you study subcultures because subcultures are those cultures those micro cultures which are beneath the dominant culture.

And which like post-modernism as I just mentioned can sometimes become you know complicit, dominant culture and sometimes can become subversive to the dominant culture and its entire ambivalence between complicity and subversion is what makes subcultures as an important category.

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Nothing. This order. . . had a meaning – my exile.  
(Genet, 1967)



It is this alienation from the deceptive ‘innocence’ of appearances which gives the teds, the mods, the punks and no doubt future groups of as yet unimaginable ‘deviants’ the impetus to move from man’s second ‘false nature’ (Barthes, 1972) to a genuinely expressive artifice; a truly subterranean style. As a symbolic violation of the social order, such a movement attracts and will continue to attract attention, to provoke censure and to act, as we shall see, as the fundamental bearer of significance in subculture.

No subculture has sought with more grim determination than the punks to detach itself from the taken-for-granted



And as a references on Genet that you know Hebdige mentions and then he talks about how as a semiotic violation of social order, a movement attracts and will continue to attract attention to provoke censor and to act as we shall see as the fundamental bearer of significance in subculture. So any movement of subversion, any movement of consolidation will always attract attention, provoke censor and to act.

Sometimes it can be a trigger for activity, sometimes it can be you know censored if it goes against entire dominant culture but that becomes the significance of subculture at a cognitive as well as at a cultural level.

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see, as the fundamental bearer of significance in subculture.



No subculture has sought with more grim determination than the punks to detach itself from the taken-for-granted landscape of normalized forms, nor to bring down upon itself such vehement disapproval. We shall begin therefore with the moment of punk and we shall return to that moment throughout the course of this book. It is perhaps appropriate that the punks, who have made such large claims for illiteracy, who have pushed profanity to such startling extremes, should be used to test some of the methods for ‘reading’ signs evolved in the centuries-old debate on the sanctity of culture.



No subculture has sought with more grim determination than the punks to detach itself from the taken-for-granted landscape of normalized forms. So the punk subculture sometimes

something that Hebdige is quite interested in and because the reason being is where the punk subcultures detached itself from the taken-for-granted landscape of normalized forms. It goes against the seamless landscape of normalization at a cultural level.

The punk subculture becomes constant reminder of the constructed quality, the artificial quality of culture. It also highlights its own artificiality. It becomes a spectacular artifice in its own way, nor to bring down upon itself such vehement disapproval. It constantly mocks itself, it constantly disapproves itself vehemently and as a result of it comes through a poststructuralist performance according to Hebdige.

We shall begin therefore with the moment of punk and we shall return to that moment throughout the course of this book. It is perhaps appropriate that the punks who have made such a large claims for illiteracy who have pushed profanity to such startling extremes should be used to test some of the methods for reading signs evolved in the centuries-old debate on the sanctity of culture.

So he talks about the appropriation of using, the appropriate quality of using punks because you know he says the entire idea of the punk subculture, it sets out to deconstruct the centuries-old debate and the sanctity of culture. So entirely the sacral culture, the sacrality of culture is resisted and deconstructed by the punk movement which constantly keeps so highlighting its own sort of subversive, spectacular, superficial shallow quality.

And shallowness and superficiality become very important components and it is acts of subversion especially when it comes to the punk subculture and I need to show the punk subcultures example of how the subversion takes place. So that is the conclusion of the introduction of this particular book Subcultures by Dick Hebdige but what it does is not shown in the summary.

It is brains of attention back to some of the things, some of the components, some of the issues which we have covered already and which we began with at the beginning of this course and then we touch upon those issues throughout on this course as we dealt with some of the texts written by some of the writers that we examined. So ideology, hegemony or common sense, these become very important categories of investigation especially in cultural studies and after this we move on to Catherine Belsey's little investigation of common sense.

And how common sense a detective novel becomes a very useful example of looking at culture especially a very gendered use of culture, very gendered sense of culture which we will cover and Belsey spoke Critical Practice which is a text which will take up after this but Hebdige is a very important figure in a study of in cultural studies discipline because it gives you a historical sense of cultural studies as a discipline.

How it came into being, he talks about different strands within cultural studies, he talks about different ideological and the different disciplinary investments and cultural studies from psychology, semiotic, structuralism etc and then he is one of the first he is one of the most prominent writers who keeps flagging up who keep flagging up naturally, the very, very sort of interdisciplinary quality of cultural studies.

It draws in psychology, it draws in film studies, it draws in popular culture, it was a magnificent section on David Bowie and this particular book those of you interested and the idea of you know Bowie as a subversive figure in music in the 70s and 80s phenomenon, you should read this particular book is a massive study of Bowie and I find that very, very interesting as well.

But at a moment general level it gives us a sense of how ideology operates and understanding of culture, it gives us a sense of how hegemony operates in the study of culture and how hegemony, ideology, common sense, you know consent, cohesion so all these things come together and you know collaborate towards consolidation of culture and then how the consolidation is actually very topical, very temporal in quality.

And he draws in Gramsci at the end to corroborate the temporalities of such you know consensus and he says quite clearly that such consensus can be fractured, overruled, overturned but different phenomena but different movement and you know those instances of overturning and overruling they highlight the brain forth to us, the textuality of such consensus at a semantic level and also a collective cultural level.

So this particular book not least an introduction that we have covered, it is very important text for us in cultural studies, one which keeps reminding us what are the different components or different discursive investments and culture and how we should be we as

students of cultural studies should be examining those investments at textual, semantics as well as at a collective level.

And because these things are effective not just at an academic arena but also at a daily immediate lived reality of existence which we habit and consume and internalize every day. So with that we conclude Dick Hebdige's introduction to Subculture which again as I mentioned is very important text for us, it is very important super reminder and this is why I chose to study it at this point in this course where you are running up.

Because it helps to summarize and go back to and rehearse some of the things which we have set out at the very inception of this course and after this move on to Catherine Belsey's Critical Practice where we look at the idea of opacity and transference here things which have been talked about already by Hebdige but you know Belsey gives more detailed examination of those things.

And how she was example of Sherlock Holmes a very interestingly Sherlock Holmes as a detective figure, how Sherlock Holmes becomes a very important example of realism and also the crisis in realism which is an index of common sense as a construct as an ideological construct which is the text that we will take up in the next lecture Catherine Belsey's Critical Practice, but with this we conclude Dick Hebdige's text. Thank you for your attention and I will see you at the next lecture. Thank you.