

## New Approaches To Subcultural Study

However, subcultures, like social movements, are part of the same process of identity construction through opposition, and should also be viewed as both cultural and political. In post-modern theories of identity construction, identity is created through the re-contextualisation of images, becoming unstable and almost disappearing in the flux and fluidity of contemporary society. But are identities (subcultural or otherwise) really as unstable as post modern explanations would have us believe? This is important; subcultural identity has previously been dismissed as post modern and therefore, ultimately, as nihilistic.

However, the subculturalists themselves appear to be saying that their understanding of their own identities is modernists in nature. Although they do construct their identity, and the way it is projected to others, they do so by reference to an 'inner core'; their identity is not as fluid as unstable, or as performative, as some would have us believe. Further, they view their participation as not only empowering but also radical.

Subcultures, although often held as examples of post modern identity construction, may actually represent modernist identities, according to the perceptions of the subculturalists themselves. Further, by avoiding 'radical constructivism'; through an awareness of the limits to the process of construction we can see that identities may not be so fluid after all. The perceptions of the subculturalists themselves position their activities as both empowering and radical; rather than being apolitical their activity is part of a process which includes zines and webpages, whereby the 'political'; is extended into new realms.

Further, as identity becomes the site of conflict, so the bodies of individuals become both a resource and the object on which domination is focussed.