GIRLS AND SUBCULTURES
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Earlier in this issue it was pointed out that sub-cultures "provided for a section of working class youth, *mainly boys,* one kind of strategy for negotiating their concrete collective existence" (our emphasis). The absence of girls from the whole of the literature in this area is quite striking, and demands explanation. Very little seems to have been written about the role of girls in youth cultural groupings in general. They are absent from the classic sub-cultural ethnographic studies, the 'pop' histories (like Nuttall, 1970), personal accounts (like Daniel and McGuire, eds., 1972), or journalistic surveys (like Fyvel, 1963). When they *do* appear, it is either in ways which uncritically reinforce the stereotypical image of women with which we are now so familiar - for example, Fvvel's reference, in his study of Teddy Boys, to "dumb, passive teenage girls, crudely painted" (1963): or they are fleetingly and marginally presented:

> It is as if everything that relates only to us comes out in footnotes to the main text, as worthy of the odd reference. We come on the agenda somewhere between 'Youth' and 'Any Other Business'. We encounter ourselves in men's cultures as 'by the way' and peripheral. According to all the reflections we are not really there.
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> (Rowbotham, 1973: 35)

The difficulty is, how to understand this invisibility. Are girls, in fact, for reasons which we could discover, *really* not active or present in youth sub-cultures? Or has something in the way this kind of research is done rendered them invisible?

When girls are acknowledged in the literature, it tends to be in terms of their degree of, or lack of, sexual attractiveness. But this, too, is difficult to interpret. Take, for instance, Paul Willis' comment on the unattached girls in the motor bike sub-culture he studied:

> What seemed to unite them was a common desire for an attachment to a male and a common inability to attract a man to a long term relationship. They tended to be scruffier and less attractive than the attached girls. (1972)

Is this, simply, a typical and dismissive treatment of girls reflecting the natural rapport between a masculine researcher and his male respondents? Or is it that the researcher, who is actually studying motor-bike boys, finds it difficult not to take the boys' attitudes to and evaluation of the girls seriously, reflect it in his descriptive language and even adopt it as a perspective himself, within the context of the research situation? Willis does comment on some of the girls' responses to questions - giggling, reluctance to talk, retreat into cliquishness, etc. Once again, these responses are complex and difficult to interpret. Are they typical responses to a male researcher, influenced by the fact that he is a man, by his personal appearance, attractiveness, etc? Or are the responses influenced by the fact that he is identified by the girls as 'with the boys', studying them and in some way siding with them in their evaluation of the girls? Or are these responses characteristic of the ways girls customarily negotiate the spaces provided for them in a male dominated and defined culture? We must be able to locate and interpret these responses, which are extraordinarily complex, before we can understand the experiences and positions which are being mediated through them. For example, girls - especially young girls - may *retreat* from situations which are male-defined (where they are labelled and judged sexually) into a 'groupiness' or cliquishness of which "giggling" is one overt sign. In other situations (for example, in the classroom) group solidarity between girls may push them into a more aggressive response, where they use their sexuality to open avenues of approach to the young male teacher, or to embarrass him or undermine his authority. The important point is that both the defensive and the aggressive responses are structured in reaction against a situation where masculine definitions (and thus sexual labelling, etc.) are in dominance. We therefore have to interpret these responses before we can define properly the territory in which girls really operate, the spaces in which they are, sexually as well as socially located.

What follows is simply a first, tentative attempt to sketch some of the ways we might think about and research the relationship between girls and the sub-cultures. In doing so, we adopt some of the perspectives sketched out for boys in other parts of the journal: for example, the centrality of class; the importance of the spheres of school, work, leisure and the family; the general social context within which the sub-cultures emerge; the structural changes in post-war British society which partially define the different sub-cultures. We must, however, add the crucial dimension of sex and gender structuring. The question is then, how does this dimension reshape the analysis as a whole? It has been argued that class is a critical variable in defining the different sub-cultural options available to middle and working -class boys. Middle class male sub-cultures, for example, offer

more full-time 'careers', whereas working-class sub-cultures tend to be restricted to the leisure sphere. This structuring of needs and options by class must also work for girls. Thus it is probably easier for girls to find alternative careers in, say, the hippie or drop-out (i.e. middle class) sub-cultures than in, say, Skinhead culture. But then, in general, boys are more likely to take up sub-cultural options than girls. Such an analysis suggests that what is true for boys' subcultures - e.g. the structuring effect of class - is similarly true for girls, *only more so*. This assumes that the sub-cultural patterns are, roughly, the same for boys and girls, only girls are necessarily, *more marginal* on every dimension.

It may be, however, that the *marginality* of girls is not the best way of representing their position in the sub-cultures. The position of the girls may be, not marginally, but *structurally* different. They may be marginal to the sub-cultures, not simply because girls are pushed by the dominance of males to the margin of each social activity, but because they are centrally into a different, necessarily subordinate set or range of activities. Such an analysis would depend, not on their marginality but on their structured *secondariness*. If women are 'marginal' to the male cultures of work (middle and working class), it is because they are central and pivotal to a subordinate area, which mirrors, but in a complementary and subordinate way, the 'dominant' masculine arenas. They are 'marginal' to work *because* they are central to the subordinate, complementary sphere of the *family*. Similarly, 'marginality' of girls in the active, male-focussed leisure sub-cultures of working class youth may tell us less than the strongly present position of girls in the 'complementary' but more passive sub-cultures of the fan and the fan-club. (We attempt, in the note following/ to represent this complementary and subordinate kind of analysis in rough diagrammatic form.)

Bearing this general argument in mind, we can now try to identify a number of key questions to which subsequent work can be addressed. (1) Are girls really absent from the main post-war sub-cultures? Or are they present but invisible? (2) Where present and visible, were their roles the same, but more marginal, than boys; or were they different? (3) Whether marginal or different, is the position of girls specific to the sub-cultural option; or do their roles reflect the more general social-subordination of women in the central areas of mainstream culture - home, work, school, leisure? (4) If sub-cultural options are not readily available to girls, what are the different but complementary ways in which girls organise their cultural life? And are these, in their own terms, sub-cultural in form? (Girls sub-cultures may have become invisible because the very term 'sub-culture' has acquired such strong masculine overtones.)

Are girls really absent from sub-cultures?

The most obvious factor which makes this question difficult to answer is the domination of 'sociological' work (as in most areas of scholarly academic work) by men. Paradoxically, the exclusion of women was as characteristic of the new 'radical' or sceptical theories of deviance as it had been of traditional criminology. The editors of *Critical Criminology* argue that the 'new deviancy theory' often amounted to "a celebration rather than an analysis of the deviant form with which the deviant theorist could vicariously identify - an identification by powerless intellectuals with deviants who appeared more successful in controlling events" (Taylor, Walton and Young, 1975). With the possible exception of sexual deviance, women constituted an uncelebrated social category, for radical and critical theorists. This general invisibility was of course cemented by the social reaction to the more extreme manifestations of youth sub-cultures. The popular press and media concentrated on the sensational incidents associated with each subculture (e.g. the Teddy Boy killings, the Margate clashes between Mods and Rockers). One direct consequence of the fact that it is always the violent aspects of a phenomenon which qualify as newsworthy is that these are precisely the areas of subcultural activity from which women have tended to be excluded. The objective and popular image of a subculture as encoded and defined by the media is likely to be one which emphasises the male mambership, male 'focal concerns' and masculine values. Or, as is the case with hippy subculture, when women do appear as part of the moral panic generated, it is usually in the relatively more innocuous roles - e.g. as sexually permissive.

Female invisibility in youth subcultures then becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, a vicious circle, for a variety of reasons. It may well be that girls/women have not played a vital role in these groupings. On the other hand the emphases in the documentation of these phenomena, on the male and masculine, reinforce and amplify our conception of the subcultures as predominantly male. Our 'way in' to the relationship between girls and subcultures is not an easy one. Secondary evidence suggests, for example, that there *were* small groups of girls who saw themselves as Teddy Girls, and who identified with Teddy Boy culture, dancing with the Teds at the Elephant and Castle, going to the cinema with them and apparently getting some vicarious pleasure from relating the violent nature of the incidents instigated by the Teddy Boys[1]. - But there are good reasons why this could not have been an option open to many working-class girls.

Though girls participated in the general rise in the disposable income available to youth in the 1950's, girls' wages were, relatively, not as high as boys'. More important, patterns of spending would have been powerfully structured in a different direction for girls from that of boys. The working class girl, though temporarily at work, remained more focussed on home, Mum and marriage than her brother or his male peers. More time was spent in the home. Teddy boy culture was an escape from the family into the street and the cafe, as well as evening and week-end trips 'into town'. Girls would certainly dress up and go out, either with boy-friends or, as a group of girls, with a group of boys. But there would be much less 'hanging about' and street-corner involvement. In the working-class parental value system, boys were expected to 'have fun while they could' (though many working class parents regarded Teddy boy kinds of 'fun' as pretty peculiar): but girls suffered the double injunction of 'having fun' while not 'getting yourself into trouble'. The sexual taboo, and the moral framework and 'rules' in which it was embodied continued to work more heavily against girls than against boys. While boys could spend a lot of time 'hanging about' in the territory, the pattern for girls was probably more firmly structured between being at home, preparing (often with other girls) to go out on a date, and going out. Boys who had, sexually and socially, 'sown their wild oats' could 'turn over a new leaf' and settle down: for girls, the consequences of getting known in the neighbourhood as one of the 'wild oats' to be 'sown' was drastic and irreversible.

There was certainly more attention than, say, in pre-war youth culture to the teenage leisure market and its accompanying manifestations (concerts, records, pin-ups, magazines), and girls as well as boys would have shared in this. But many of these activities would have been easily appropriated into the traditionally defined cultural space of a home or peer-centred girls' 'culture' -operated mainly within the home, or visiting a girl-friend's home, or at parties, without involving the riskier and more frowned-on path of hanging about the streets or cafes. There was room for a good deal of the new teenage consumer culture *within* the 'culture of the bedroom' - experimenting with make-up, listening to records, reading the mags, sizing up the boyfriends, chatting, jiving: it depended, rather, on some access by girls to room and space within (rather than outside) *the home* - even if the room was uneasily shared with an older sister.

This would lead us to suggest that girls were present, but in marginal or at least highly patterned ways, in Teddy boy sub-culture: but that - following the position outlined above - their 'involvement' was sustained by a complementary, but different sub-cultural pattern. The point can be made more concretely by saying that, whereas the response of many boys to the rise of rock-and-roll in this period was themselves to become active if highly amateur performers (the rise of the skiffle groups), girl participants in this culture became either fans or record

collectors and readers of the 'teenage-hero' magazines and love-comics. There were no teenage rock-star oriented 'love comics', such as emerged in the 1950's, for *boys* (though some boys may have covertly read their sister's!) Equally, there is no single record of a *girls'* skiffle group.

The picture is compounded if we take an equally 'hard' male-oriented working-class sub-culture of two decades later - the Skinhead groups of the 1970's. To judge from the popular sensationalism of the media, commented on above, the media image of Skinhead culture is primarily masculine. Actually there *are* small groups of 'Skinhead girls'; and, though their numbers are not large compared with the boys, their presence at football matches in an active role - traditionally, a massively male-oriented sport and occasion - may be significant. Moreover, whereas the 'girl-friends' of the Teds looked and dressed quite differently from the boys they were going out with, *some* Skinhead girls *do* look, dress and act in rather similar and supportive ways to their Skinhead boyfriends. There is some slight evidence to suggest a greater direct participation by a few groups of girls in this male-defined and focussed working-class sub-culture in the 1970's than, perhaps, would have been the case in the 1950's. But it is not sufficiently documented to build much of a hypothesis on. Certainly, there is more press coverage asking questions about the involvement of girls in gang and group activities (including violence) now than there was in the period of the Teddy Boys. But this may merely reflect the general increased visibility of women, and the greater attention to the question of the position of women generally in the culture now than was the case then. Again, it is difficult to decide whether the role of girls in the sub-cultures has actually changed, or whether their role has simply become more publicly visible. Certainly, a paragraph like the following, with its implicit attribution of a causal connection between violence and the rise of the women's movement, could not have appeared in the 1950's:

> Why are women, traditionally the gentler sex, so ready to resort to force? Is it simply that society itself is becoming more violent, or is it part of the fight for equality, a sort of 'anything a man can do I can do better'?
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> (Berry, 1974)

If we wanted to begin, tentatively, to sketch in some of the things which form a sort of bridge between the relative absence of girls from Teddy Boy culture (except 'secondarily') and the small indication of a 'presence' of girls in Skinhead culture, we would need to touch on at least four inter-mediate features. First, there is the emergence of a 'softer' working-class sub-culture, in the mid-1960's, in which girls *did* much more openly and directly participate (though they remained, of course, subordinate to the boys). This is the Mod sub-culture (discussed

more fully below) in which (a) there were, clearly, Mod girls as well as boys; and (b) the boys and the girls in the Mod styles seemed to look more like each other, based partly on the fact that (c) Mod styles, and the Mod preoccupation with style and appearance made even Mod boys, in the eyes of their Rocker competitors as well as their own, more 'feminine'. Secondly, is the appearance, in the later 1960's of a middle class sub-culture - the Hippies - in which some girls and women played an active and visible role (though, again, we would argue, remaining in a subordinate position). Thirdly, there is the growth - no doubt related to the Mod and Hippy styles, as these came to be diffused and defused through the fashion trade and image-business - of 'Unisex' styles, with clothes designed to be worn equally by girls or boys, and the accompanying blurring of the sexually-distinct fashion images. Fourthly, there is the rise, within the pop industry itself, of the deliberately 'feminine', camp, or bi- and trans-sexual singer and star. These form certain important inter-mediary positions in the path which girls have taken from total invisibility to a 'relative' visibility in the sub-cultures between the 1950's and the 1970's. Again, this is extremely difficult and complex cultural material either properly to document or to interpret. It would be important, in any more substantive interpretation, to note *both* the relative shift in the visibility of girls in relation to the sub-cultural trends, *and* the fact that, no matter how visible and active a small group of girls become, or how much the sex-based images are blurred, the relative subordination of girls in the sub-cultures remains. As any study of the iconography of Mick Jagger, Garry Glitter or Dave Bowie would soon reveal, it is possible for male pop stars to be both 'more feminine' and 'aggressively male chauvinist' at one and the same time, within the same image. The feminising of the male image may in no way signal the complementary liberation of the female from the constraints of the feminine image.

The fact that, despite these surface shifts in the provided culture, the root attitudes towards the position of girls in the sub-cultures may not have changed all that much in two decades, is evidenced in the sexual attitudes of the Skinhead boys quoted in *The Paint House* (Daniel and McGuire, eds., 1972). There is nothing new about the kinds of crude typing in use in, say, the boys quoted in the "Jilly Crown, the Certified Whore" chapter. What we don't know is how the girls themselves respond to this kind of labelling - again, typically, no Skinhead girls contribute to *The Paint House*.

In short, the evidence about how active and present girls are in the main post-war sub-cultures is difficult to interpret finally, one way or the other, on what is presently known. Certainly, the weight of the evidence we have suggests that the

majority of girls organise their social life almost as an alter-
native to the kind of 'qualifications' and risks which direct
entrance into the boy culture (sub or mainstream) involves.
Though the girls know that where sex is concerned boys 'have
it easy', they don't have a sense of solidarity with girls who
are ranked among the boys as having 'cheapened themselves',
as the following quotation illustrates:

> It's always like that you know -it's not fair - but you have
> to watch who you're going around with.   Yeh - there's one up
> the club, I'm not saying her name but she's a proper one; she
> walks past and says, 'alright Tina'? - But she's one person
> I wouldn't go around with 'cause you'd get a name for yourself.
>   ('Tina', teenage girl[2])

It may, then, be a matter, not of the absence or presence of
girls in the sub-cultures, but of a whole alternative network of
responses and activities through which girls negotiate their
relation to the sub-cultures or even make positive moves away from
the sub-cultural option.

Where girls are visible, what are their roles?   And do these reflect the general sub-ordination of women in the culture?

Three selected images will have to do duty here - where girls
clearly are present, but where the way they are present suggests
the way their cultural subordination is retained and reproduced.
The first is the image of the Motorbike girl, leather-clad, a
sort of sub-cultural pin-up heralding - as it appeared in the
press, certainly - a new and threatening sort of aggressive
sexuality.   This image was often used to herald the new sexual
permissiveness in press and media.   But it is important to note
how this presence was encoded in a purely sexual (albeit new,
modern and bold) way: the pan stick lips, the blackened eyes,
the numb expressionless look and the slightly unzipped leather
jacket.   This sub-cultural image was only a hair's breadth
away from, on the one hand, the new sexuality of advertising and
the modern fashion trade, on the other hand, the classic fetishism
of the pornography trade.   Within this apparently new sexual
permissiveness the real sexual subordination of the Motorbike
sub-culture was mystified.   In the general Motorbike culture,
a girl remained excluded from the central core of the culture:
she depended on the offer of a pillion seat by a boy rider, to
enable her to share in the particular sub-cultural highs - the
'ton-up' or the week-end away.   Few girls penetrated to the
symbolic core of the sub-culture - the motorbike itself, a
technical knowledge of the machines, their limitations and
capacities. A girl's membership of the group was dependent on
the boy she was with - it was always tentative, easily resulting
in her expulsion from the group, depending on the state of her
relationship with the boys.   In the tighter versions of the
motorbike culture - in Hell's Angels groups, for example - the
whole focus of the group was overwhelmingly masculine: a *machismo*

culture of hard men.   Only the few women who could be as hard
as one of the boys could gain entry - and then only if she were
the leader's woman or a sort of 'Mama' to the chapter as a whole.
Hunter Thompson suggests, in *Hell's Angels* (1967),that Angels
frequently treated most women as sexual objects: they were either
'Mamas' or objects of the gang-bang.   The content and images
of relationships in this sub-culture may have been new and highly
deviant: but the way Hell's Angels tended to divide the female
world,into women-with-hearts-of-gold-who-looked-after-them and
prostitutes,is a binary opposition as old and traditional as the
hills.

As we suggested above, Mod culture and the high visibility
of girls within it is probably more relevant to our argument.
Girls have always gone out to some kind of work in the brief
space between school and marriage; but, in the early sixties,
there may have been more late-teenage girls at work, and there
were certainly new kinds of occupations opening up, especially
'glamorous' jobs in the boutique, cosmetic and clothes trades,
and secretarial jobs, which, though in fact ultimately routine
and dead-end, had a touch of dressing-up and going to work 'in
town' about them, at least in the big cities.   In the boutique
trade, glamour and status often compensated for poor wages.   The
changing economic and occupational structure may have helped
girls in these kinds of jobs to take a more active part in the
consumerism of Mod culture.   But this greater involvement was
also structured culturally.   The mod ethos of individual 'cool'
could be more easily sustained, by girls, at home, in school or
at work, without provoking direct parental or adult reaction,
than a more aggressive and abrasive sub-cultural style.
Parents and teachers knew that girls looked 'rather odd, these
days', with their white, drawn faces and cropped hair, but, as
Dave Laing remarked of the Mods, "there was something in the way
they moved which adults couldn't make out" (Laing, 1969).
This relative fluidity and ambiguity of the culture meant that
a girl   could be 'around',without necessarily being directly
coupled with any one Mod boy: she could 'be a Mod', in a Mod
couple, in a crowd of other Mod girls, or even alone.   Particip-
ation had much to do with clothes, appearance and the stylised
look - like her male counterpart the Mod girl demonstrated the
same fussiness for detail in clothes, the same over-attention to
appearance.   Mod girls may have become more visible because boys
and girls in the sub-cultures looked more alike - it was probably
the diffusion of Mod styles which led the fashion trade to the
Unisex device.   But, as we have suggested, it may also have been
because the sub-culture, as a whole, as compared with either Teddy
boy or motor-bike culture, looked, as a whole, rather 'feminine'
- and this image was reinforced by the smartness of the Mod and
his preoccupation with style and consumption and looks, his
general stylishness.   It is impossible to tell at this stage

why harshly chauvinistic attitudes, common elsewhere, seemed not to be so prevalent in Mod groups: but this is certainly the prevailing general impression. The position of Mod culture at the more feminine end of the sub-cultural spectrum may reflect simply their opposition to the other, 'harder', more masculine sub-cultures around them (the source of much Mod/Rocker competition). It may reflect the upwardly-mobile character and orientation of the sub-culture as a whole. It may have something to do with the greater relative confidence of the girls involved - a confidence which can't have been unaffected by the emergence, at about this point in time, of the Brooke clinics and the increase in the availability of the Pill for unmarried girls over sixteen. Of course, we can't say precisely what groups first took advantage of these facilities, but their availability must have enhanced the sexual confidence, at least of those who made use of them: and, as we've suggested, for girls in and around a male-focussed sub-culture sexual confidence is calculated to have an impact on social and cultural confidence.

The general tendency for girls to become more visible and relatively autonomous in Mod sub-cultures must be taken together with the continuing hold of the basic material and social structures pre-determining the lives of the girls and constraining and limiting this relative visibility/autonomy/space. As has been suggested, mod sub-culture may have enabled some participants to live out certain 'imaginary relations' to those constraining conditions, but not to transcend them. The 'relative autonomy' of Mod girls reflected their short-term affluence, but the jobs which provided the extra cash afforded short-term satisfactions, few career prospects, no opportunities of overtime bonuses nor wage-scales increasing much beyond the age of twenty. Longer, if not better educated, she had probably, none the less, been exposed mainly to the sort of Newsom thinking designed to 'interest the girls' as part of the 'early leavers' curricula: domestic or feminine subjects, child care, training in personal relationships, commercial and clerical practice ... (see Newsom, 1948; 1963). There is nothing to suggest that participation in Mod sub-culture sharply loosened the bonds between mothers and daughters, or significantly undermined the girls' self-conception and orientation towards marriage and the family.

The term 'Hippy' is, of course, an umbrella term, covering a variety of diverse groupings and tendencies. The aspect which is of most direct relevance here, is the point through which most girls would have entered or been drawn into one or other part of this amorphous culture - that is, through the middle-class student culture. There is available, for middle-class girls, a more obvious amount of unstructured, yet legitimate, space, lying somewhere between the confines of the actual Hippy sub-culture and the mainstream middle-class culture (sixth-form or student culture).

Thus for the middle-class schoolgirl, or first year university student, the flat, whether to live in or to visit, symbolises this gain in negotiated territory which cannot be penetrated by parents, and which because of the relatively unstructured nature of student life likewise cannot be forbidden. The middle-class girl student has more time, a more flexible timetable, three or four years during which marriage is positively discouraged, and finally, a softer environment, a more total experience not so strictly demarcated into work and leisure, which allows for the development of *personal* style.

On the other hand, given this flexibility, it would seem fair to say that there was remarkably little shift, both within this peripheral culture and within the main body of Hippy subculture, away from those roles which are traditionally female. The stereotypical images we associate most with Hippy culture tend to be those of the Earth Mother, baby at breast, or the fragile pre-raphaelite lady. Again, of course, we must be aware of the dangers of accepting uncritically the images which emerge via press coverage, as part of a moral panic, though the chances are that this panic itself represents the double bind - sexual permissiveness linked with motherhood may be more palatable than aggressive feminism. Certainly, as in more conventional areas of music, it is almost always as singers that "hippy" women have managed to exist and that, presumably, thanks to the uniqueness of the female voice. Given this, the types of images generally available seem to be very limited; the few women who have made it in this sphere usually fit either the gentle/lyrical/introspective image of, say, Joni Mitchell or the agressive/butch/whisky-sodden type associated with Janis Joplin or Maggie Bell.

However, it would be misleading not to acknowledge the space which the underground provided for alternative occupations/life-styles in which women have figured quite highly. *Spare Rib* as an 'alternative' publication can be firmly placed within this context and Caroline Coon of *Release* was one of many women working in the information/aid/relationship centres which sprang up as part of the counter-culture.

Do girls have alternative ways of organising their cultural life?

Some of what has been conjectured above may lead us to the conclusion that the majority of girls find alternative strategies to that of the boys' sub-cultures. The important question , then, may not be the absence or presence of girls in the male sub-cultures, but the complementary ways in which girls interact among themselves and with each other to form a distinctive culture of their own. One of the most significant forms of an alternative 'sub-culture' among girls is the culture of the Teeny Bopper. While this is in no way a new phenomenon (the girl/pop idol

relationship has been in existence for the last twenty years), it is one of the most highly manufactured forms of available youth culture - it is almost totally packaged. Evidence of this can be cited throughout the entire pop trajectory, but what is significant about the Teeny Bopper syndrome of the 70's is that it was directed expressly at an even younger market i.e. ten - fifteen year old girls, too young even to have heard the Beatles, and who were certainly not turned on by the new heavy rock (E.L.P., Yes, Led Zeppelin or Deep Purple) which their elder brothers and sisters listened to so avidly. The attractiveness of this market with its quick turnover potential (Mark Bolan this week, David Cassidy the next) offered ailing American film and broadcasting companies a chance to boost their profits too, Screengems and M.G.M. in particular.

Even in relation to so manufactured a network we can locate a variety of negotiative processes at work amongst the girls themselves.

a) Teeny Bopper culture can easily be accommodated, for ten to fifteen year old girls, in the home, requiring only a bedroom and a record player and permission to invite friends; but in this capacity it might offer an opportunity for girls to take part in a quasi-sexual ritual (it is important to remember that girls have no access to the masturbatory rituals common amongst boys). The culture also offers a chance for both private and public manifestations - the postered bedroom or the rock concert.

b) Teeny Bopper culture is sufficiently flexible to allow anybody to join; it does not operate any exclusion rules or qualification on entry - thus differing greatly from the girls' school environment, where participation in certain activities demands a fair degree of competence and money.

c) There are no risks involving personal humiliation or degradation, no chance of being stood up or bombed out. Some Teeny Bopper girls we have talked to show a remarkable awareness of the fact that boys are all out for 'the one thing', and that girls lose all the way along in that game. Involvement in Teeny Bopper culture, then, can be seen as a kind of defensive retreat away from the possibility of being sexually labelled, but also as displaying a high degree of self-sufficiency within the various small female groupings; "we have a great laugh with the girls".

d) The obsession with particular stars, Donny Osmond etc., can be viewed as a meaningful reaction against the selective and authoritarian structures which control the girls' lives at school. That is, "obsessions" can be a means of alienating

the teacher, and, if shared, can offer a defensive solidarity, especially for those who are conscious of themselves as being academic failures.

While there may certainly be elements in Teeny Bopper culture which enable girls to negotiate a space of their own, it has also to be said that the relationship between the girls and the idols conjured up, and, as far as one can tell, reciprocated, is suffused with fantasy elements - the displacement- and to some degree de-sexualising of what are patently commercial and sexually -manipulative icons of the Teeny Bopper market. Here the element of fantasisation and fetishisation which is present, at all times, to some degree in the heavy involvement - boys and girls - with the 'presentational images of commercial pop culture, is raised to a peculiarly high and powerfully charged pitch. There seems little doubt that the fantasy relationships which characterise this resistance depend for their very existence on the subordinate, adoring female in awe of the male on a pedestal. The culture also tends to anticipate the form of future 'real' relationships, and in so far as these are articulated in the magazine articles and stories, directs the girls hopefully towards romance and eventually an idealised version of marriage. All the way through the teenybopper spectrum then, the dialectic is, as it were, tighter. The small, structured and highly manufactured space that is available for ten to fifteen year old girls to create a personal and autonomous area seems to be offered only on the understanding that these strategies also symbolise a future general subordination - as well as a present one.

CONCLUSION

Our focus in this piece, then, has been one which tends to move away from the Subcultural group phenomena simply because, in our view, the sub-cultural group may not be the most likely place where those equivalent rituals, responses and negotiations will be located. We feel that when the dimension of sexuality is included in the study of youth subcultures, girls can be seen to be negotiating a different space, offering a different type of resistance to what can at least in part be viewed as their sexual subordination. So, although it could be the case that female youth culture corresponds, in form if not in activities to *non-sub-cultural* male groupings, comprising of anything from five to ten boys who "hang around together", we would tend to agree with Jules Henry who, describing the American teenage experience, points out that:

> As they grow towards adolescence, girls do not need groups, as a matter of fact for many of the things they do, more than two would be an obstacle. Boys flock; girls seldom get together in groups above four whereas for boys a group of four is almost useless. Boys are dependent on masculine solidarity

within a relatively large group.   In boys' groups the emphasis
is on masculine unity;   in girls cliques the purpose is to shut
out other girls.   (1963)

We would add that girl culture, from our preliminary investi-
gations, is so well insulated as to operate to effectively exclude
not only other 'undesirable' girls - but also boys, adults,
teachers and researchers[3].

FOOTNOTES

1.   See also the role played by girl 'gang' members - described by
_   Patrick (1972)- in carrying weapons for male members to dance
     halls, etc., and in providing support for them against the police
     after incidents.
2.   This quotation is taken from a series of interviews currently
     being carried out among fourteen year old girls in a Birmingham
     Youth Centre.
3.   The girls we have spoken to at the Birmingham Youth Centre
     constantly make jokes among themselves for the sole purpose
     of confusing or misleading the researcher who may well be
     infringing on their territory by asking personal questions,
     or whose presence at the weekly disco they resent.   For example,
     one group of three fourteen year olds explained to us that the
     fourth member of their 'gang' had male genitals.   The 'joke'
     lasted for about ten minutes with such seriousness that we were
     quite convinced until one of the girls said 'Dickie' came from
          Middlesex.   The girls shrieked with laughter and the interview
          came to a halt.

A NOTE ON MARGINALITY
Rachel Powell and John Clarke

It is clear from everything said in the previous article that
the analysis of the forms of girls' involvement (or non-involvement)
in subcultures poses certain important theoretical questions which
have not yet been fully answered.   In this note we want to focus
on a concept which we believe is employed by even those analysts
who are concerned to give a symmetrical account of the situation
of young girls.   That concept - used implicitly and in an unar-
ticulated way - we would tentatively describe as *marginality*.
Marginality applies both to the theoretical constructions employed,
in a quasi-analytical form, and to the perceptions of "reality".
In the former mode, it is as if the social totality, and subcul-
tural activity within it, can be explained in terms of what men
do, and *then* the activity of girls can be explained through a
further, more subtle subdivision of categories.   In the perceptual
mode, women's *real* activities are seen to take place in the same
structural-cultural nexus as those of men, but in every instance
women's participation is perceived as peripheral to the major
tensions, conflicts and negotiations that compose a specific class
situation.   We believe this model (if, indeed, it is substantial
enough to be called a model) is inadequate.

Diagrammatically, it suggests a series of concentric circles:
the further out the circle, the more marginal its inhabitants are
to the hub of the dominant culture - the world of the middle class
male adult.   Thus:

Diagram A

223