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BA English Honours | Semester VI | ENG6CJ305

Introducing Cultural Studies

Module 4: Subcultures, Space, Resistance, and Globalization • Comprehensive Notes

Chapter 4: Subcultural Resistance, Spatial Practice, and Global Flows

Culture is not static; it is physically contested in everyday urban spaces, subcultural fashion, and global flows of transnational capital, technology, and migration.

4.1 Dick Hebdige: Subculture and the Meaning of Style

In *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (1979), Dick Hebdige analyzed British youth subcultures (Mods, Punks, Rastafarians). Hebdige demonstrated that subcultures deploy **bricolage**—appropriating mundane commodities (safety pins, bin liners, motorcycle jackets) and recombining them into subversive semiotic challenges against bourgeois normality, until commercial capitalism commodifies and neutralizes their threat.

4.2 Michel de Certeau: The Practice of Everyday Life

Michel de Certeau explored how ordinary citizens navigate consumer society through everyday practices (walking in the city, reading, cooking). Distinguishing between the **strategies** of powerful institutions (grids, zoning, surveillance) and the guerrilla **tactics** of the weak (shortcuts, poaching, improvised pathways), de Certeau reveals everyday life as an active arena of silent resistance.

Advanced Critical Theory, Hermeneutics & Literary Praxis

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1. Hermeneutic Paradigms and Textual Mechanics

Critical inquiry into Module 4: Subcultures, Space, Resistance, and Globalization reveals how textual forms construct meaning through complex aesthetic strategies and structural choices:

- **Structuralism and Semiotic Deconstruction:** The organization of signs, tropes, and syntactical structures establishes narrative authority while simultaneously revealing internal fissures. Binary oppositions embedded within the discourse—such as center versus margin, tradition versus modernity, and subjective interiority versus objective reality—are systematically problematized through textual slippages and ambiguous signifiers.
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- **Ecocritical and Spatial Dynamics:** Physical topographies, built environments, and non-human ecologies function as active participants in the narrative economy. Space is never neutral; rather, it reflects socio-economic stratification, environmental exploitation, and geopolitical borders that delineate belonging and exile.

2. Historiographical Context and Reception Theory

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3. Comparative Aesthetic and Thematic Matrix

The following analytical matrix summarizes key comparative dimensions across traditional interpretive paradigms and modern critical frameworks relevant to Module 4:

Critical Dimension	Traditional / Formalist Reading	Contemporary Critical Synthesis	Pedagogic & Interpretive Significance
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