

flamboyantly enact stereotyped roles. In boxing the rules of the contest are external to the match, in the sense that they designate limits beyond which it must not go, while in wrestling the rules are very much *within* the match, as conventions that increase the range of meaning that can be produced: rules exist to be violated, quite flagrantly, so that the 'bad guy' or villain may dramatically reveal himself as evil and unsporting and the audience be whipped up into vengeful fury. Wrestling thus provides above all the satisfactions of moral intelligibility, as good and evil are clearly opposed. Investigating cultural practices from high literature to fashion and food, Barthes's example encouraged the reading of the connotations of cultural images and analysis of the social functioning of the strange constructions of culture.

The other source of contemporary cultural studies is Marxist literary theory in Britain. The work of Raymond Williams (*Culture and Society*, 1958) and of the founder of the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, Richard Hoggart (*The Uses of Literacy*, 1957), sought to recover and explore a popular, working-class culture that had been lost sight of as culture was identified with high literature. This project of recovering lost voices, of doing history from below, encountered another theorization of culture – from European Marxist theory – which analysed mass culture (as opposed to 'popular culture') as an oppressive ideological formation, as meanings functioning to position readers or viewers as consumers and to justify the workings of state power. The interaction between these two analyses of culture – culture as an expression of the people and culture as imposition on the people – has been crucial to the development of cultural studies, first in Britain and then elsewhere.

Tensions

Cultural studies in this tradition is driven by the tension between the desire to recover popular culture as the expression of the people or give

voice to the culture of marginalized groups, and the study of mass culture as an ideological imposition, an oppressive ideological formation. On the one hand, the point of studying popular culture is to get in touch with what is important for the lives of ordinary people – their culture – as opposed to that of aesthetes and professors. On the other, there is a strong impetus to show how people are shaped or manipulated by cultural forces. How far are people constructed as subjects by cultural forms and practices, which 'interpellate' or address them as people with particular desires and values? The concept of *interpellation* comes from the French Marxist theorist Louis Althusser. You are addressed – by ads, for instance – as a particular sort of subject (a consumer who values certain qualities), and by being repeatedly hailed in this way you come to occupy such a position. Cultural studies asks how far we are manipulated by cultural forms and how far or in what ways we are able to use them for other purposes, exercising 'agency', as it is called. (The question of 'agency', to use the shorthand of current theory, is the question of how far we can be subjects responsible for our actions and how far our apparent choices are constrained by forces we do not control.)

Cultural studies dwells in the tension between the analyst's desire to analyse culture as a set of codes and practices that alienates people from their interests and creates the desires that they come to have and, on the other hand, the analyst's wish to find in popular culture an authentic expression of value. One solution is to show that people are able to use the cultural materials foisted upon them by capitalism and its media industries to make a culture of their own. Popular culture is made from mass culture. Popular culture is made from cultural resources that are opposed to it and thus is a culture of struggle, a culture whose creativity consists in using the products of mass culture.

Work in cultural studies has been particularly attuned to the problematical character of identity and to the multiple ways in which identities are formed, experienced, and transmitted. Particularly