Violent right-wing groups have emerged in the German youth scene since reunification in 1990. By the early 1990's, many groups of people have had to face racist violence and harassment as a threatening part of everyday life.

With the social, political, economic, demographical and ideological changes which have taken place across Europe, especially since the fall of the Communist systems in Eastern Europe, it becomes essential to consider their impact on individuals.

A psychosocial approach to the subject of right-wing youth violence in Germany is adopted and will reveal that the concepts of identity formation have undergone changes not unlike the progressive changes of social structures after the second World War. Key sources for this thesis are works by Alfred Adler, Theodor W. Adorno, Bruno Bettelheim, Erik Erikson, Sigmund Freud, Erich Fromm, Stuart Hall, Dick Hebdige, Kenneth Kenniston, David Riesman and others. This approach will support the argument that youth violence is a side effect of developmental capitalism, the root causes of which emanate not from cultural contexts but rather from a variety of factors which lie within social structures. Subcultures absorb individuals who cannot function amid the dynamic
social changes of capitalist development. Youth anger and anxiety is expressed as racist violence as young people seek someone to blame for their isolation from mainstream society.

An analysis such as this one inevitably leads to larger issues regarding Germany's historical past, right-wing extremism in Europe and the International Nazi Cooperation network, which to some extent has also triggered and supported racist and right-wing youth violence.
Right-Wing Youth Violence in Reunited Germany

by

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A THESIS

submitted to

Oregon State University

in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the
degree of

Master of Arts

Completed August 16, 1996
Commencement June 1997
I understand that my thesis will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my thesis to any reader upon request.
Acknowledgments

Thoughts and observations presented in the pages ahead are the product of many stimulating discussions with faculty members, fellow students and friends over the last three years. I would like to thank particularly Dr. Frank Unger for his input from a political science perspective. Many thanks to my parents and sisters for their support and, most of all, to Stefan for his first-rate encouragement.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YOUTH VIOLENCE IN GERMANY’S HISTORY</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deviant Youth in the Era of Emperor William II</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deviant Youth in the Weimar Republic</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deviant Youth under the Hitler-Regime</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deviant Youth in Post-War Germany</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RIGHT-WING YOUTH GROUPS IN REUNITED GERMANY: THEIR SYMBOLS AND THEIR TARGETS</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Debate on Cultural Texts and their Influence on Social Behavior</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Oi’ Music is “Warrior Music”</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXPLANATIONS LINKED TO RIGHT-WING YOUTH GROUPS</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Socio-Economic Situation after Germany’s Reunification</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible Consequences of an Abortive Individualization Process</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Concept of Identity Formation</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excursion: An Ex-Neo-Nazi Talks</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Modified Identity Concept</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE ROLE OF THE INTERNATIONAL RIGHT-WING NETWORK</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDICES</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A List of German Right-Wing Labeled and Prohibited Bands</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B Skrewdriver Lyrics</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix C Advertising Record Companies on the World Wide Web</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For this is the journey that men [and women] make:

to find themselves.

If they fail in this,

it doesn’t matter much what else they find.

(Michener, *The Fires of Spring*)
INTRODUCTION

This thesis is a cultural study of the phenomenon of youth violence. "Cultural study" is defined as an exploratory research endeavor regarding the expressive and communicative media which serve as vehicles of social change. The focus of this cultural study centers upon the historical and sociocultural contexts of youth violence in pre- and past-unification Germany.

The rate of violence among youth has increased in Europe’s cities and the rate of racist violence has reached alarming levels. By the early 1990’s, many groups of people had faced racist violence and harassment as a threatening part of their everyday lives. This situation was accompanied by political, economic, social and demographic changes which took place across Europe, and to an even larger extent, in Eastern Europe. The main focus of this thesis will be upon the emergence of violent right-wing groups which have emerged in the German youth scene since Germany’s reunification in 1990.

Over the last seven years, the rate of violent activities committed by young right-wing radicals has increased. The targets of this violence are dark-skinned Germans, dark-skinned foreigners, Turks, immigrants and their descendants, asylum-seekers, refugees, members of minority groups on the basis of skin color, religion, ethnic, cultural or national origin, the elderly, the homeless and the disabled. Three particular incidents of mass violence against foreigners have been regarded as the most obnoxious examples
committed by racists and neo-Nazis: The first was at Hoyerswerda, East Germany, during late September, 1991; the second was at Rostock, East Germany, during late August, 1992; and the third was at Mölln, in Schleswig-Holstein, a few miles west of the former East German border, on 23 November, 1992. In Hoyerswerda, Skinheads attacked Vietnamese former factory workers and asylum-seekers; a bloody battle ensued between Skinheads and left-wing anarchist radicals, with the police trying to separate them. Local people gathered to watch, and the police and media reporters argued that most of them were sympathetic to the Skinheads. In Rostock, gangs of aggressive youth -- two hundred to three hundred of them -- set a building of Vietnamese guest-workers on fire. The Vietnamese were evacuated to safety, but the following day, a battle between the police and the rioters raged for hours. In Mölln, two young Skinheads threw firebombs into two houses, both inhabited by Turkish families. Nine people were injured and three others died.¹

The current situation in Germany is characterized by social, political, economic, demographical and ideological changes and represents a development that takes place all over Europe, especially since the fall of the Communist systems in Eastern Europe. Violent actions have been accompanied by an increase in support for right-wing organizations, not only in Germany, but also in Austria, France, Italy and Russia.² The increase of racist violence has invited the inquiry of cultural critics, ethnologists, historians, political scientists, sociologists, psychologists, and the public. In the US, the discussions about the situation in Germany, especially in the press, often seem highly emotional because of Germany's historical past. High levels of racist violence are often
explained in terms of "national character." For example, the violent attacks in Hoyerswerda and Rostock, Germany were sometimes interpreted by other Europeans as indicative of a re-emergence of "the true German," or as, "the Germans showing their real faces." In their direct and general forms, explanations like these may represent in themselves ethnocentric or racist ways of thinking.

While part of this analysis will focus on Germany’s socioeconomic situation, and therefore on explanations regarding the macro-level of the discussion, it is crucial to analyze individual motives and group dynamics in order to better understand why young people decide to carry out violent right-wing attacks.

It has also been argued that youth violence finds its root cause in popular culture. Especially, politicians seem eager to look for an easy explanation for the phenomenon of youth violence. However, traditional cultural critics, in line with the Frankfurt School, have convincingly argued the possible consequences of cultural texts on social behavior, such as Theodor Adorno’s 1941 influential essay, “On Popular Music.” “Text” refers herein to the written commentary, documentary and/or terminology of particular cultural activity domains, such as drama, film, music, poetry and dance.

Opponents of the Frankfurt School model discuss social behavior as a response to social structures. They describe forms of youth expression as a "search for a style," which "...is really part of a deeper search for a meaning and identifiable pattern in life." With respect to right-wing youth violence, it is challenging to take a closer look at the meaning of the subculture’s ‘Oi’ music and its glorification of violent acts. It is crucial, however, to include in the discussion the development of different theories on identity
formation, which have undergone changes not unlike the progressive changes of social structures after the second World War, in order to get an overview of the many factors involved when searching for the causes of right-wing youth violence.

But, a project such as this one inevitably leads to the consideration of larger issues regarding Germany's historical past, right-wing extremism in Europe and the network of the International Nazi Cooperation, which to a certain extent has also triggered and supported racist and right-wing violence among youth.

Main sources for this thesis are works by Alfred Adler, Theodor W. Adorno, Bruno Bettelheim, Erik Erikson, Sigmund Freud, Erich Fromm, Stuart Hall, Dick Hebdige, Fredric Jameson, Kenneth Kenniston, David Riesman and others. A psychosocial approach to the subject of right-wing youth violence will be adopted. This approach will support the argument that right-wing youth violence is a side effect of developmental capitalism and that it does not find its root causes in cultural texts, such as music, for example. Subcultures absorb individuals who cannot function amid the dynamic social changes of capitalist development. Youth anger and anxiety is expressed as racist violence as young people seek someone to blame for their isolation from mainstream society.
INTRODUCTION


YOUTH VIOLENCE IN GERMANY’S HISTORY

The phenomenon of youth “deviance” in Germany is not new. Forms of deviant youth groups can be found during the Wilhelminian Society (1888-1918), the Weimar Republic (1919-1934), the Hitler Regime (1934-1945) and the post-war period. Groups emerge analogously to occurring changes in social structuring.

Deviant Youth in the Era of Emperor William II

From the end of the nineteenth century to the beginning of World War I academic discussion focused on the disciplinary proceedings of male proletarian youth in big cities. The perception of youth as a danger to society during this era resulted from a very strong delineation of class structures. Adolescents coming from the lower class were described as non-conforming and threatening to Wilhelminian society. Benno Hafeneger cites Walther Classen, a reform pedagogue (1906), on the prototype of a deviant adolescent in Jugend-Gewalt: Zwischen Erziehung, Kontrolle und Rezession. “He grows up to be a mean scoundrel, defiant, lazy, impertinent. He lies, skips school, smokes cigarettes in church and steals apples. In street fights he appears to be the club-swinging leader. Despite all this he is not a bad guy. His comrades say he is really a nice guy after all.”

Whoever behaved in a hostile manner against order, regularity, work and duty, was non-conforming and deviant in Wilhelminian society.

The process of industrialization involved structural changes in German society. With the emergence of urbanization, youth became more and more the object of
educational reform. The political notion of proletarian youth as dangerous and threatening helps explain the development of a new academic interest in the situation. Explanations for deviant youth had previously existed on a medical basis only. Suddenly the state, the church, the sciences and society at large began to show high interest in the matter. Social problems were transformed into academic problems. Theories regarding the loss of authority within families, the loss of authority within institutions (state, church, military, sport) as well as first, milieu-connected theories were discussed.

Deviant Youth in the Weimar Republic

In the 1920’s, and especially in the last years of the Weimar Republic, academic discussion was concentrated on recalcitrant and neglected youth and deviant behavior, violence, delinquency and non-conformist movements. In the discussion on causes of deviance, social scientists linked various psychological factors to each other, recognizing new theoretical bases, concepts and approaches to analysis. The development of the concept of identity and its formation became central topics in academia. Freud’s theories in psychoanalysis were joined by Carl Gustav Jung’s and Alfred Adler’s psychoanalytic theories on identity formation.

In Weimar Germany, discussion focused on the emergence of “gangs,” or “wild cliques,” which showed high potential for aggressive behavior towards society at large. A notable change of perspectives began to occur in the psychosocial discussion. For the first time, “integration through education” symbolized a change of attitudes towards the perception of deviant youth. Provoked by social, cultural and political upheaval, as well
as drastic changes in the bourgeois society of the Weimar Republic, the discussion gained a new perspective.

Gangs in the Weimar Republic consisted mainly of lower class male youths who, within their organizations, reacted against the social, cultural and political context of their society. Hafeneger argues that gangs in this period were discussed by sociologists and psychologists as being "...a product of the situation in the Weimar Republic which is determined by social disintegration, economic crisis, unemployment, catastrophic living conditions, bad nutrition and health situation, social and political polarization as well as financial problems on the sides of the state and its communities."5

Psychologists put emphasis on the perception of individuals and their problems rather than on the perception of state, church, political parties, or the Weltanschauung in which the individual had to fit.

Deviant Youth under the Hitler-Regime

The perception of deviant youth in the totalitarian state under Hitler included a new context. Young people who did not belong to the so-called Hitler Youth were defined as deviant and declared to be subversive and illegal. Hafeneger points out in his work that such youth "...had to be gotten hold of, pursued and exterminated,"6 quoting an official writing published in 1941 by the youth leader of the German Reich. From the perspective of the Nazis, deviance and criminality was suspected among youth who organized themselves into groups, gangs or cliques outside the Hitler Youth Corps and
who were suspected to be either hostile to the “ideologies” of the state, homosexuals, Marxists or thieves.

The discussion about deviant youth during this period was ideological rather than academic. It did not allude to any approaches applied during the Wilhelminian Era nor to concepts of psychosocial cognition raised during the Weimar Republic. “Deviant” youth became the state’s enemy and had to be extinguished -- according to Nazi logic -- not by a sympathetic pedagogy but by separation and elimination from the “well adjusted” mainstream.  

Deviant Youth in Post-War Germany

In post-war democratic Germany the discussion on deviant youth followed the ideas and cognition theories which were developed during the Weimar Republic, while new terminology was used to describe homeless adolescents, neglected youth, teenage louts and youths participating in riots. In this time period, critics and scientists like Erik Erikson and Bruno Bettelheim researched the field of youth, its crises, the nature of identity and its connection to social structures. Inspired by the emergence of a variety of subcultures -- Hippies, Mods, Reggaes, Rastas, Rudies, Punks and Skinheads -- sociologists, cultural historians, and also members of industry began talking about the phenomenon of youth culture. Jon Lewis points out in the introduction to *The Road to Romance and Ruin: Teen Films and Youth Culture*, that “...today, in order to study youth culture adequately, we must focus on the essential paradox of youth as both mass movement and mass market.”
Historically, youth in post-war Germany were seen as the generation which experienced a Hitler Youth education during early childhood and now had to adjust to a democratic system in West-Germany and to a socialist system in East-Germany. In fact, this adjustment had been problematic for this generation because it demanded that they give up all ideologies that were pounded into their heads throughout childhood. The youth generation of the Nazi Regime had to repress these experiences of “lost childhood,” since the topic of Hitler was banished from public discussion. It was not until the post-war generation started questioning their parents and grandparents about what had happened during the war that the public started digesting experiences, which subsequently led to open discussion.

Different subcultures emerged under the new democratic system, which allowed free expression. In the new, fast-progressing mass market economy, industries took advantage of “target-marketed” youth in advertisements, television, music and movies. Political, psychosocial and public interest focused more on small group research and specific youth actions and power, rather than on living conditions, experiences and the expectations of youth. Reflection on social and political structures which affected the forms of expression of the youth culture and which might even have caused aggressive or violent behavior continued to be exposed, especially in the public discussion.

Youth in post-war West-Germany participated in the growing affluent society and in Germany’s economic miracle. Ideologies which developed under Hitler were either repressed or ignored, and the production of material wealth became more and more important. The developing ideology of materialism, however, did not seem to call for
rebellion on behalf of the young. Nevertheless, youth riots occurred in this time period, especially after concerts, sport events, fairs and movies. Property was destroyed and conflicts with authority increased. Violence, though, was directed against property, members of other cliques and against the authorities, but not against members of minority groups on the basis of skin color, religion, and ethnic or national origin.

An extreme type of violence appeared during the 1970's with the radical leftist Baader-Meinhof Gang in Germany, now known as the Red-Army Faction. To understand this more modern form of terrorism it is necessary to understand the socio-political climate of the 1960s. This generation had grown up with no memory of World War II, and in the United States and Western Europe, many of this generation were in college. In the United States, for example, social protest was a common consequence of the civil-rights movement. College-age young people became conscious of many social and economic wrongs. After 1965, with the heavy American involvement in the Vietnam War, students found a new reason for protest. In Western Europe as well, college students joined in protests and campus sit-ins against the war and demanded reform in their institutions of higher learning. Another aspect of the modern world caught the attention of the young. It was the existence of the Third World, underdeveloped countries, where millions of people lived in brutal and endless poverty. They blamed this poverty on the industrialized nations, since so much of the Third World had once been colonized by Europe. What the younger generation wanted was to change everything all at once, and this yearning led eventually to the formation of small bands of people devoted to change by violence.
The German Baader-Meinhof Gang, for example, adhered in its organizational form to terrorism and anarchism. The chief tenet of anarchism is that government and private property should be abolished. Also part of anarchism is the notion that the people should be allowed to live in free associations, sharing work and its products. Accordingly, Baader-Meinhof’s acts were directed against the German democratic system.

The historical development of youth violence is important for the subsequent discussion on its correlation with capitalist progress. Forms of youth deviance often are interpreted as a youth problem and not as a society problem. History shows, though, that there was a connection between the ongoing changes which took place in social structures and the increase in youth deviance. Present forms of deviance continue to change, corresponding with social changes and fostering a growing tendency among adolescents to use violence. Violence is an extreme form of expression which inevitably attracts the public’s attention. It raises the legitimate questions, “To what situation shall violence draw attention? What conditions provoke this extreme form of expression? Who is to blame for the release of anxiety in violence?”
ENDNOTES

YOUTH VIOLENCE IN GERMANY’S HISTORY


7 Here it is worth noting my parent’s autobiographical experience that school teachers used to punish students who were not members of the Hitler Youth by giving bad grades -- to mention just an example of subtle pressure.


RIGHT-WING YOUTH GROUPS IN REUNITED GERMANY: THEIR SYMBOLS AND THEIR TARGETS

Youth violence in today's Germany has increased. Violent actions among adolescents are not only found in racist and right-wing youth groups associated with the Skinheads or neo-Nazis, but also in left-wing, anarchist youth groups mainly associated with the Punks, or Antifa (abbreviation for "antifascist"). Another place where violence has become an every-day picture is the school. Violence in schools is a more autonomous form which can hardly be linked to political motivations, but it is related. Whereas motives might overlap in some instances with other groups, the symbols and targets of right-wing youth groups are rather unique.

Nazi Skinheads are a highly specific subculture. Members of groups are recognizable by their outfits. They wear either Doc Martens boots or Federal Army Paratrooper boots, brown or green bomber jackets, green or camouflage-printed army trousers, and they have special brands of sportswear. Their hair is mostly shaved. They use the swastika as one of their symbols. Their tattoos sometimes indicate to which brotherhood they belong. 'Oi' music is a central element of the Nazi Skinhead subculture, "...racially radicalizing and militarizing white youth," Eric Jensen points out in his essay, "International Nazi Cooperation: A Terrorist-Oriented Network." A number of British rock groups perform frequently in Germany and are popular with the neo-Nazis. A particular favorite is Skrewdriver, which has at times been banned from performing in Germany. Skrewdriver's lead singer, Ian Stuart, recently died in a car accident. The band's music, especially since Stuart's death, has become a legend to fans

An information record found on the World Wide Web, explains 'Oi' music:

Oi was a progression from punk. Skinheads who emerged after the two tone ska revival, but wanted a harder edge of music for the skinheads, never chart material and often to right (or left) wing for general acceptance. Still Oi was never about rock and roll fame trips. Oi! fans were too young to remember 1969 so this was their skinhead music in the post 80's. Oi! promoted Skinhead pride and passion, rather than the slacker anarchistic scruffy punks.³

A German group named *Böhze Onkelz* (Evil Uncles, deliberately mis-spelled) was a leading right-wing, "heavy metal" band whose songs were simple messages of hate. Recently, though, this group has undergone a transition which allows them to sell their music again in Germany, since a number of right-wing labeled bands were prohibited from performing or distributing their music in Germany (for a list of right-wing labeled and prohibited bands see Appendix A).

Major recording companies are *Rebelles Européens* in France and *Rock-o-Rama* in Germany. *Rock-o-Rama* was seized by the German authorities in early February 1993, including records, cassettes and CDs from the Nazi Skinhead music scene. *Rock-o-Rama* had functioned as distributor of *Skrewdriver* and other right-wing bands.
Some other names of German bands are: Störkraft (Destructive Force), whose most popular song, “Söldner” (Mercenaries), includes the lines: “He’s a skinhead and a Fascist/He’s bald-headed and a racist/Moral and heart, he has not/Hate and violence mark his face./He loves war and he loves violence/and if you are his enemy/I’ll kill you.”

These lyrics definitely represent the most important criteria a member of the subculture has to fulfill -- the outer appearance code, the coolness, he must be amoral, a racist, white, and dedicated to fight for the subculture; he must show patriotism and clear devotion to the group.

Other band names are Volkszorn (Public Anger); Blut und Ehre (Blood and Honor); Macht und Ehre (Power and Honor); Boots Brothers; Noie Werte (New Values); Volkstreue (people’s loyalty) and Endstufe (Final Step), whose most popular song among skinhead fans is titled, “Kanaken” (an insulting word for colored foreigners), and includes these lines: “They stink...they come here to Germany and live on the dole...They’ll just have to be killed...Stick them in the dungeon or the KZ (concentration camp)...Kill their children, defile their women, exterminate their race.”

Jillian Becker mentions in his work, Neo-Nazism: A Threat to Europe, the existence of pro-Nazi electronic games, which have been selling well on the black market since the 1980s. Becker relates: “...in a typical game the winner ‘cleans up’ Germany of its communists, Jews, Turks, ‘Ossis’ [Eastern Europeans] and blacks.”

Targets of right-wing youth groups are members of minority groups on the basis of skin color, religion, and ethnic, cultural or national origin. Targets are also buildings, properties and institutions because they represent these groups or their interests.
Two questions arise here. "What are the motives for adolescents to join right-wing or racist youth groups?" and "What conditions produce these motives?"

The Debate on Cultural Texts and their Influence on Social Behavior

Some politicians argue that the causes for youth violence are to be found in popular culture, John Davidson says in the article, "Menace to Society," published in the Rolling Stone magazine of February 22, 1996. Especially, politicians seem eager looking for a scapegoat to blame youth's violent behavior on. This draws attention away from actual issues, such as poverty, domestic abuse, social instability, social identity, education, politics, economy, race, gender, religion, and other issues, and it also promises votes.

The debate on violence and culture is likely to be a key issue in the US presidential campaign of 1996. In Davidson's article one reads that, "Republican presidential front-runner Bob Dole, conservative guru William Bennett, black activist C. DeLores Tucker and liberal Democrat Sen. Paul Simon all have attacked portrayals of violence, treating the link between art and reality as gospel truth." 7

Unfortunately, the political debate tends to ignore the nuances and uncertainties about cultural texts being a trigger for anti-social behavior and leaves out the investigation of other causes. With the presidential race heating up, however, the rhetorical battle is not likely to cool down any time soon. Dole is demanding in his campaign ads, "Hollywood, stop corrupting our children." 8 He has also said on the Senate floor: "Those who continue to deny that cultural messages can and do bore deep
into the hearts and minds of our young people are deceiving themselves and ignoring reality.”

At this point, it becomes inevitable to investigate the relationship between cultural texts and social behavior. Youth culture expresses itself through a variety of cultural texts, like movies, music, and dancing, for example. It continuously represents itself “...in terms of the products it buys, the art that defines it, and the art it defines as its own,” as Jon Lewis describes in his work, The Road to Romance and Ruin: Teen Films and Youth Culture.

‘Oi’ music embodies the kind of music right-wing youth listen to. It provides an interesting cultural text with respect to its meaning as “anthem,” or, “provocation.” As mentioned earlier, some politicians seem desperate to argue that this cultural text is ultimately responsible for young people’s violent behavior. It seems legitimate to examine the music’s potential as a stimulant for violent behavior; but to argue that the music is the ultimate cause ignores many other factors, whether psychological or social, that come into play when adolescents actually commit violent crimes.

Cultural critics often tie their arguments to cultural texts and the texts importance and influence on subcultural emergence. They seem to forget the social pre-conditions which enable the cultural text to emerge and then become influential. Hence, the following analysis of Skrewdriver’s lyrics will support the arguments made by cultural critics that the cultural text includes the power to stimulate ideologies and behavior, but it cannot be declared to be the root cause for right-wing youth group violent behavior.
‘Oi’ Music is “Warrior Music”

Looking at the lyrics of the British band Skrewdriver, one can argue that the texts are brutalizing and inciting to violence and racial hatred. One of their songs, “Before the Night Falls,” includes the lines:

They come here to this country from jungles and from trees/The traitors in the parliament give them a better deal/Spend the nation’s money, to cater to their needs/They all accept our charity, then bite the hand that feeds...European unity, the North teutonic dream/.../But now our once proud Europe, looks like a melting pot/But melting pots boil over, and it’s getting pretty hot/Chorus: Before the night falls, heed the White call... (see Appendix B)

It is obvious that “they” refers to the immigrants and asylum seekers who come to England from other countries and who form the so-called, “melting pot” -- a pot that includes all kinds of races, cultures and ethnic origins. The band proclaims that these people live on the country’s taxes and are not grateful at all. Instead, they “…bite the hand that feed.” The band accuses the British government of being traitors and of giving “them” preference. Skrewdriver calls for the “European unity” to defend their “teutonic dream.” The chorus urges not to wait any longer and invites the “Whites” to pay attention to what is going on, encouraging them to do something against this influx of foreigners.

Supported by fast, loud, and mainly simplistic music, this text becomes a powerful proclamation for its fans to act. Suddenly, the violent potential inherent to most of the fans gets channeled toward a common target, which nicely fits the scapegoat
position and which can be made responsible for all the things that went wrong in their personal lives. The music indicates a target and points at specific enemies.

*Skrewdriver's* song, "White Power," follows the same patterns. It also accuses the people and the government to just "...stand and watch" how the "...country is going down the drain." They are "...letting them come over," and now they "...have got the slum."

The chorus again, urges not to wait any longer to defend "White" interests: "White power, for England/White power, today/White power, for Britain/Before it gets too late."

Other *Skrewdriver* song choruses call for the same actions. "Europe Awake" demands that "Europe awake, for the white man's sake/Europe awake, before it's too late/Europe awake, Europe awake now."

The chorus in, "If You're White," includes the lines: "If you're white, you're all right/If you're white, today/If you're white, you're all right/If you're white, O.K."

A great many more songs support this clearly racist attitude of *Skrewdriver's* music and text that highly incite to violence and racial hatred.

*Skrewdriver's* long-term intentions are made very clear with the lead singer, Ian Stuart's, songbook introduction. He writes:

> These lyrics reflect my hopes for the white race in the future. Until the white people throughout the world awaken, these lyrics will remain as lyrics, and hopes, but eventually I believe that the situations forced upon white people, will bring about an awakening, the likes of which have never been seen before. Our people have been used as pawns by the capitalists, and put false hopes in the Communists, for far too long. I believe that the white man will arise and take back all that has been taken away from him. Taken not by force, but by typical Semitic deception. No longer will weaklings rule the white man by lies and deceit, but the warrior will make his comeback, and rule by strength, honesty and love for his race. It is up to you to make these lyrics come true. For all too long it has been the few, fighting for the survival of the white race. We have to become a mass movement to smash the twin tyrannies of Capitalism and Communism. Go out and join a Nationalist
party in whatever country you come from and help bring about the White National Revolution. White Man Awake.¹⁰

Ian Stuart Donaldson was one of the most important figures in the British right-wing scene, and it seems that despite or just because of his death he remained important to his fans. With his “Blood and Honor” organization he was one of the leaders of the violence-oriented part of the British youth culture that included also distribution companies, Erik Jensen points out in his essay. Skrewdriver cooperated with other bands in European countries. “In Sweden they had a faithful audience among the White Aryan troopers in the ‘Storm network’,” Jensen points out. In Germany they held concerts organized by Deutsche Alternative that put them in touch with German bands. “Deutsche Alternative,” so Jensen says, “...has good connections to the British National Party, who work together with ‘Blood and Honor’.”¹¹ After an incident in Cottbus, Germany in the fall of 1991, where excited youths ravaged the surrounding neighborhood after a Skrewdriver concert, the band was no longer allowed to perform in Germany.

Not only does Skrewdriver glorify the violence and the hatred against other races, it also reassures the subculture by giving it a form of self-confidence and pride in its beliefs. In the song “One Day,” for example, Skrewdriver admits that “...certain thoughts are now a crime,” and also enforces the belief that “...our strength has come from ideals many years old, a strength that has survived within our blood.” The history and the racial heritage, therefore, justify the battle and the existing ideologies among Skrewdriver fans. It serves empowerment and gives them the strength and self-confidence they need to realize their goals. Still, it is obvious that the fans provide an ideal ground for the
imposition of ideologies, since they already constitute a violence-fixated subculture. It should be clear that this violence has its roots in a much larger range of social processes and psychological and/or ideological motivations than just in music. The music simply plays its part in amplifying these processes.

In fact, Ingo Hasselbach, a former German right-wing leader, points out in his book, *Führer-Ex: Memoirs of a former Neo-Nazi*, that “...the basic requirement for indoctrination was youth.” Hasselbach claims that the purpose of indoctrination was “not to make them (youth) more violent but to take the violence that was in them already and channel it in a directed and political useful manner.”¹² He also mentions that his organization focused on teenagers whose minds were fully open to his organization’s cause and that they mostly looked for kids, fourteen- to sixteen-year-olds, wearing bomber jackets and Doc Martens boots, upon whom to impose their indoctrination.¹³

As I mentioned earlier, cultural criticism has mainly focused on the impact of cultural texts on social behavior and on the emergence of subcultures. ‘Oi’ music challenges the discussion since it does not fit the margins of a “popular” or a “mass cultural” text. This text is hardly available in general record stores. Currently in Germany, no record store is allowed to sell right-wing labeled music. In the US, this music is not prohibited, but in general, distributors do not want to deal with the eventual consequences of distributing this kind of music. The only way to obtain this music is either through anonymous record companies, which advertise on the World Wide Web (Resistance Records Inc., for example, see Appendix C), or through people who belong to the scene who have more information on how to obtain the music through other sources.
Nevertheless, ‘Oi’ music plays out Theodor Adorno’s notion of a “standardized” text in popular music, but to a different ideological effect. Adorno, a representative of the Frankfurt School, argues in his 1941 essay, “On Popular Music,” that a fundamental characteristic of popular music is “standardization.” Musical details are substitutable, and pre-given by the “Culture Industry.” “Listening to popular music,” Adorno argues, “...is manipulated by promoters and music itself into a system of response mechanisms.”

In the case of Skrewdriver, the listening is manipulated by the promoters of right-wing ideologies which confirm the listeners’ response mechanisms. Musically and textually, the songs are indistinguishable from one another and promote the same ideas over and over again -- racial hatred, white pride and the justification of violence. Thus, the standardization gives way to a unifying ritual that concludes in “authoritarian collectivism.” The problem with Adorno’s argument is that he takes for granted the transformation of a creative people into a passive mass. He argues that standardized music prohibits the effort to think or create. He does not take into account any social pressures which underlie this passiveness.

In the essay, “Listening to Popular Music,” published by David Riesman in 1950, it is stressed that the subculture has a considerable impact upon the adolescent listener. “What youth perceive in the mass media is framed by their perception of the peer group to which they belong,” Riesman argues and continues that, “...it is the pressure for conformity with the group that invites and compels the individual to have recourse to the media both in order to learn from them what the group expects and to identify with the
group by sharing a common focus for attention and talk."\textsuperscript{16} There is a "...fear to be caught liking what the others have decided not to like,"\textsuperscript{17} Riesman convincingly argues. He concludes that musical taste provides revealing clues to somebody's character. In other words, part of a pre-requisite of musical taste is the character of an individual which has been pre-determined by its social environment and upbringing -- parents, friends, education, etc.. This would support the argument that the cultural text is not solely responsible for violent actions, but that social pre-conditions determine whether a person is open to be manipulated by it or not.

In their 1964 essay, "The Young Audience," Stuart Hall and Paddy Whannel discuss teenage culture as a response to a "...frequently bewildering and confused social situation." This response in direct terms can contextualize a radical political energy. This radicality in some cases, as Fredric Jameson argues in his essay, "Reification and Utopia in Mass Culture," might just embody "ideological" and "utopian" elements; it explores the forbidden, but only to finally "recontain" them by reconciling the consumer to current power arrangements.

In the case of Skrewdriver, one has to deal with a radicality which not only explores the boundaries of the forbidden, but also encourages the crossing over of these boundaries and the acting out of an anti-social behavior. The "subversive" character of 'Oi' music revolts against the conventional values of a society. A youth minority, enthusiastic over Skrewdriver's, "White Power" song, is dangerous for society as a whole. As a consequence, the German government prohibited right-wing bands from performing and distributing their music, since they threaten the ideals of a democratic
system, especially with respect to human rights. This music resembles "warrior music" and has been, at least for the German government, no longer acceptable as a harmless subcultural sign or icon that functions as "semiotic guerrilla warfare," as Dick Hebdige argues in "Style as Homology and Signifying Practice." This cultural text goes beyond a discussion on semiotics. Instead, it resembles a real threat to democratic values which, at the same time, does not signify the cultural text to be a root cause for right-wing violent behavior.
RIGHT-WING YOUTH GROUPS IN REUNITED GERMANY: 
THEIR SYMBOLS AND THEIR TARGETS

1 Eric Jensen writes in his article, “International Nazi Cooperation: A Terrorist-Oriented Network,” that Skinheads are often tattooed with WP for White Power or FTW for Fuck the World.


3 Found on the World Wide Web: http://members.aol.com/skinheaduk/oi.htm


10 Found on the World Wide Web: http://members.tripod.com/~Wolfpack/skrew.htm


The Socio-Economic Situation after Germany’s Reunification

Tore Bjørgo and Rob Witte point out in their work, *Racist Violence in Europe*, that certain socio-economic situations nurture the levels of racist violence while others deny a connection between the two. It is important to mention the harsh socio-economic situation Germany was facing after reunification in 1990 that might have also played a role, since members of the population might have perceived foreign groups as unwanted rivals in the competition for scarce jobs and social resources. At the turn of 1992, unemployment rose by 325,000 to a national figure of 3.45 million. To be added to these figures are 2.1 million on job-creation schemes and 875,000 on short-time working: 6.4 million in all.¹ By 1996, the situation was even worse.

It should be noted that the political reunification had to deal with the extreme socio-economic differences between West and East Germany. Consequently, we have to talk about two societies differing above all in terms of socialization. West Germany is dominated by a society with individualization processes, while East Germany used to be dominated by repressive and authoritarian processes now replaced by new demands.² These differences have to be taken into account in any description. Wilhelm Heitmeyer, professor of Socialization Research at the University of Bielefeld in Germany, points out in his work, *Rechtsextremistische Orientierungen bei Jugendlichen*:

...adolescents in East German states now have to cope with a twofold transformation process: the first is the transfer from the planned to the individualized society. The second is the transformation of the
adolescent phase from an ambivalent role of repression and externally controlled security into an autonomous adolescent life-phase for which the adolescents are forced to take active responsibility with all its consequences.³

It is undeniable that individuals in the GDR grew up under authoritarian and repressive conditions which consequently led to fairly narrow world-views and stereotypical images of ‘good’ communist and ‘wicked’ capitalist systems. The GDR also liked to portray itself as anti-fascist and portray the capitalist systems as forms of fascism.⁴ In other words, being thrown into a society in which regimentation and a certain sense of security to individual lives is largely absent might trigger massive anxieties and insecurities.

In this context, a study from 1950 by Theodor Adorno is worth noting. The claim is made that individuals of a certain psychological orientation are attracted by right-wing ideas. Adorno argues in The Authoritarian Personality that the distinguishing characteristic of the authoritarian personality type is an “...inability to live with ambivalence,” a tendency to think in terms of stereotypes and fixed categories. The authoritarian personality entertains a “totalist” ideology in the sense of not being open to alternative information. Such a person systematically filters out any complicating factor which might oppose his simple world-view of stereotypical images.⁵ Adorno argues:

In the psychodynamics of the “authoritarian character,” part of the preceding aggressiveness is absorbed and turned into masochism, while another part is left over as sadism, which seeks an outlet in those with whom the subject does not identify himself: ultimately the outgroup. The Jew frequently becomes a substitute for the hated father, often assuming, on a fantasy level, the very same qualities against which the subject revolted in the father, such as being practical, cold, domineering, and even a sexual rival. Ambivalence is all-pervasive,
being evidenced mainly by the simultaneity of blind belief in authority and readiness to attack those who are deemed weak and who are socially acceptable as "victims." Stereotypy, in this syndrome, is not only a means of social identification, but has a truly "economic" function in the subject's own psychology: it helps to canalize his libidinous energy according to the demands of his overstrict superego.6

Adorno's article follows classic psychoanalytic descriptions and involves Erich Fromm's notion of the "sadomasochistic" or "authoritarian" character, which will be considered later this chapter.

An article found in the German magazine, Der Spiegel, in December 1992, supports Adorno's perception of the authoritarian personality. In the article, three 17-year-old, right-wing activists who, while rejecting Communism, yearn for the activities and "community feeling" of their days in the Young Pioneers (the former GDR equivalent of the Hitler Youth), give an informative account of their views. After reunification, they formed a right-wing comradeship in Radebeul (near Dresden) and in October of 1992, joined the National Offensive, a trans-regional, neo-Nazi organization. They call themselves National-Socialists, which they define to be, "closeness to the people; wishing the best for our people." They want to belong once again to a nation and live in a worthwhile national state. They are fearful of the "foreignization" of the German people. The flood of asylum-seekers should be stopped. Violence does not solve problems, but it does draw attention to them, they argue. They admit that the former ideologies of the GDR government gave them "false ideas," but that their life in the former GDR was at least more directed. They miss that life now, and they explain that in the West, everyone is preoccupied with becoming rich. According to the article, they miss the feeling of
community. Among themselves now (in their organization, they probably meant) they have a true community.⁷

Authoritarian education and state repression as practiced in the former GDR obviously limited the development of self-responsibility. The three 17-year-olds mentioned that they missed the guidance of the former GDR. Heitmeyer points out in his article, “Hostility and Violence towards Foreigners in Germany,” that “...when external guidance and controls fall away, hardly any internal orientations, such as meaningful and credible moral stances, are present. An anomie situation with a lack of standards and rules arises, so that anxiety and uncertainty easily give way to violence.”⁸

Erich Fromm uses the term, “authoritarian character” in his work, Escape from Freedom, in order to describe the phenomenon of people’s admiration of authority. He argues that the “authoritarian character” is the “human basis of Fascism.”⁹ Fromm uses the term in the context of sado-masochistic personalities who show a tendency to submit to authority, and, at the same time, want to be authorities themselves. Since “Fascist systems call themselves authoritarian because of the dominant role authority plays in their social and political structure...,”¹⁰ they are, according to Fromm, based on “authoritarian characters.”

The extreme economic changes which took place after unification in the former GDR caused another form of uncertainty. The closure of many companies which had contributed to social integration during the old system led to high unemployment rates and to the destruction of people’s life contexts. Before unification, everybody was assured of a job. Single parents, especially, had the comfort of assured child care while
they were working. In today’s Germany, this is not the case. The relationship between high unemployment rates and the increase in racist violence is not clear yet. But, statistics exist and show a mutual increase on both sides since 1970 in West Germany.11 Another argument for this relationship relates to the history of fascism in Germany. Unemployment during the Weimar Republic was one factor to fascism under Hitler.

Other sociological explanations directly associate the increase in ethnic violence to an increase in foreign minority groups -- both economic immigrants and asylum-seekers. This explanation assumes that there is a natural limit to the number of foreign immigrants a society can absorb. When this limit is exceeded, conflicts erupt. Tore Björgo, a Research Fellow at the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, and Rob Witte, a political scientist, point out in their introduction to Racist Violence in Europe, that people sometimes do believe there is a direct, causal relationship between the influx of asylum-seekers and an economic recession. “Racist organizations and parties,” maintain Björgo and Witte, “…are always quick to take advantage of such situations to channel public discontent and frustration towards ‘convenient’ objects of hate.”12

Finally, it has been argued that right-wing attitudes and racist violence are subject to cultural variables. It has been claimed that a high incidence of political violence may be attributed to “national character.” Bernt Hagtvet concludes in his essay, “Right-Wing Extremism in Europe,” regarding the perception of a “national character” explanation, that “…the low incidence of racist violence in the Netherlands can thus be attributed to the polite and hospitable qualities of the Dutch national character;”13 while for instance, the violent attacks in Hoyerswerda and Rostock in Germany are sometimes interpreted as the
re-emergence of “the true German.” or as, “the Germans are showing their real face (as was mentioned in the introduction).”

Historical legacies and political culture may play significant roles. But these probably operate more on the level of subcultures, where some sections of a society may embrace certain violent or racist traditions, while others distance themselves from it. Björgo and Witte point out that such explanations may sometimes lead to situations in which reality is adjusted to fit a nation’s cultural self-image. Explanations like these might incorporate themselves into ethnocentric or racist ways of thinking.

Possible Consequences of an Abortive Individualization Process

Since the unification, the former East German youth have had to cope with the conditions under which West German young people live. West-German youth were born into a society which is grouped around the process of individualization. But this does not necessarily mean that they are able to cope with it naturally. Wilhelm Heitmeyer describes this process which youth must undergo fairly clearly in his essay, “Hostility and Violence towards Foreigners in Germany.” He argues that, “...individuals not only can but also must shape their own path through life; in the final analysis, they have to bear the risks of failure alone. Anxiety engendered by the risk of failure and isolation as a result of increased individual competition is a major source of feelings of estrangement.” Social status and identity are no longer givens but have to be achieved through personal effort with a great risk of failure -- particularly in times of social and economic crises. The trend among young Germans to define their identity in terms of characteristics such
as, "race," and "nationality," might be seen as an attempt to solve this dilemma, Heitmeyer points out.

A related argument is found in the socio-psychological theories of Erich Fromm, who explains the advent of interwar fascism as an "...escape from freedom." He claims that political extremism is a response to the uncertainties and complexities which lie at the core of liberal-democratic societies. Modern society confuses the needs of younger citizens with its enormous variety of roles and expectations and its extraordinary freedom to select life-styles and careers.

The Concept of Identity Formation

In the context of individualization processes, it is crucial to outline the concepts of identity formation that have changed according to the demands of progressive social structures. One of the first concepts on identity formation was delivered by Sigmund Freud. Freud divided the structure of human personality into three components: id, ego, and superego. The id is the instinctual part of the personality and contains all the basic drives and emotions that come from the animal nature in humans. At the other extreme is the superego. It encompasses cultural values, ideals, and rules of conduct acquired from parents. The id is always in conflict with the superego. To mediate between the id and the superego, people gradually build a third structure, called the ego. The role of the ego is to see that the drives of the id are reasonably fulfilled without disturbing the superego. The ego is brought into play by anxiety, an emotion triggered by any potential conflict
between the id and the superego. If the ego is not strong enough to manage the conflict, the result is neurosis.

Although Freud's theories were initially rejected by the scientific community, he attracted a number of distinguished followers. Some of his students diverged from his psychoanalytic theories and started schools of their own. The Swiss psychiatrist, Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961), whom Freud hoped would take over his leadership in the psychoanalytic movement, eventually developed his own field of psychology, called Analytical Psychology. Jung introduced the terms, “introversion” and “extroversion,” as basic personality orientations. He was also one of the first to discuss what is now known as, “Developmental Psychology.”

Another of Freud's followers, who eventually started his own school of psychology was the Austrian psychiatrist, Alfred Adler (1870-1937). In his theory of individual psychology, Adler argued that the problem at the core of neurosis was a feeling of inferiority. In contrast to Jung and Freud, both of whom placed great emphasis on unconscious inner forces in human development, Adler was more concerned with the influence of social experience.

Another second generation of practitioners, called neo-Freudians, tried to expand upon Freud's original work by taking into account factors such as society and culture, or the general environment. One of them was the above cited psychoanalyst and social philosopher, Erich Fromm (1900-1980), who argued provocatively in Escape from Freedom, that freedom in and of itself is stressful. He claimed that in some societies the populace follows a dictator in order to be relieved of the stress of having to make
decisions. In *Escape from Freedom*, Fromm described various personality types that evolved out of the need to deal with freedom-caused anxiety. The "authoritarian character," the "destructive character," and the "automaton conform character," who adopts entirely the kind of personality that is offered to him by cultural patterns.

Another figure who has to be mentioned here is Erik Erikson (1902), who was an artist and teacher in Vienna before he became interested in the psychoanalysis of children. After entering psychoanalysis, he underwent training to become a psychoanalyst himself and moved to the United States in the early 1930's. Erikson's broad-based conception of human nature was the result of years of research with American Indians, returned servicemen, and adolescent offspring of wealthy families, as well as his literary and artistic interests. Like Jung, Erikson arrived at a view of individual development that included the whole span of human development. In his classic work, *Childhood and Society*, Erikson described eight stages of life -- infant age, age two to three, preschool years, primary school years, puberty, young adulthood, adulthood, old age -- which encompassed the whole cycle from birth to death. At each stage, the individual must resolve a psychosocial crisis in a positive way in order for healthy development to continue. Erikson argues in his essay, "Youth: Fidelity and Diversity," that as young people attempt to gain social influence, they struggle for self-definition. "It is the young who, by their responses and actions, tell the old whether life as represented by the old and as presented to the young has meaning," Erikson writes, "and it is the young who carry in them the power to confirm those who confirm them and, joining the issues, to renew and to regenerate, or to reform and to rebel."
Next to Erikson, the psychologist Bruno Bettelheim (1903-1990) has to be mentioned for his pioneering work in the treatment and education of emotionally disturbed children. Based on experiences in the concentration camps (Bettelheim was imprisoned during the German Nazi-Regime), the work examined human adaptability to stress. Bettelheim concerned himself with the relationship between social problems and the rearing of children. In his essay, "The Problem of Generations," he discourses on youth's search for identity:

As one delinquent youngster complained, "You can't live, if there's nothing to push against," what he meant is that you cannot test your own worth, your own strength and vitality, the very things you feel most dubious about as an adolescent, when all you can push against is a vacuum, or an adult society more than ready to give way, to act more youthful than even befits youth. Without something definite to push against, youth feels lost. Many causes are embraced by youth, not for the cause itself, but because in fighting for it, its strength can be tested against something. Hence youth favors causes that run against established order, even an ultraconservative cause, because nothing is quite so safe a testing ground as the well-established order.  

These presented concepts of identity formation might partially apply to the demands which social structures require individuals to face today. They are required to make decisions which bear success or failure. Adler would have argued that the result of such a decision could end in a feeling of inferiority. In Fromm's terms, this "freedom" might cause stress and anxiety which could effect the formation of personality. In Erikson's theory, this "crisis" has to be resolved positively in order to continue a healthy development. In other words, a "wrong" decision would cause failure and would, therefore, put a positive identity formation at risk. Finally, Bettelheim would argue that
youth naturally runs against an established order which would partly explain the emergence of various subculture groups in a society.

**Excursion: An Ex-Neo-Nazi Talks**

In this context it is worth looking at a recently published autobiography of Ingo Hasselbach, an ex-right-wing member and East German founder of the National Alternative Neo-Nazi Party, who got out of the movement in 1993. In an excerpt, “How Nazis are made,” published in *The New Yorker* (January, 1996), Hasselbach tells about his growing up in former East Germany, his motives for joining the right-wing group in East Berlin, and the purpose for founding the first neo-Nazi political party in former East Germany.

Hasselbach grew up as the son of members of the Communist elite in the looking-glass world of the German Democratic Republic. Rebelling against the state and his father’s communist ideology by joining a group of hippies and punks during his earlier years, he found himself in and out of prison. Reflecting the theories of Erikson and Bettelheim, Hasselbach points out, “My father’s voice was the state, and I directed all my rage at it, rather than at him. My rebellion against it (the state) was the ultimate personal insult to him. To my father, my friends and I were all children by seeds of capitalism.”21 Hasselbach’s hatred of the socialist and “anti-fascist” state grew exponentially during his stays in prisons, where, Hasselbach argues, “the German anti-Fascist state carried on with the methods and trappings of the German Fascist state.” He writes:
I'd seen enough pictures of Nazis to recognize that the GDR guards were dressed in a way that was reminiscent of the Nazi guard's black uniforms, peaked hats, and boots. The hypocrisy of it bothered me more than anything: If you're going to worship power, why not admit it? At least the Nazis had been straightforward in their brutality. These people insisted that they were beating you and locking you up for your own edification and for the sake of universal brotherhood.

In prison he learned a "life in a community without scruples." Again, the term "community" attracts one's attention, since this is a feeling that the earlier quoted former GDR teens do not have anymore and miss. A key point in the struggle of identity formation could be the crisis between community and individuality that needs to be resolved especially for youth of former East Germany. The demanded individualization process within capitalist society seems to be a crucial point in this context, since it obviously proves stressful for these adolescents. They are overwhelmed by the sudden gained "freedom" to take over decisions regarding their own lives. Individual careers in the former GDR depended on the authority's decisions and not on the individual's decisions.

Having grown up under the watchful eye of the Stasi (the GDR's secret police), and having been punished for teenage foolishness in the same prisons that housed murderers and Gestapo Chiefs, Hasselbach's "identity formation" was destined to lead to ambivalence and conflict. One of his cellmates, the former Gestapo chief of Dresden, persuaded him that a Jewish world conspiracy was bringing ruin and division to Germany. Upon his release from prison in 1988, Hasselbach learned that the protest culture within the GDR had split more sharply between right and left and that it seemed that the Stasi were favoring leftist punks over right-wing skinheads. This gave him one
last reason to become even more fascist, even though he had belonged at some point during his youth to the hippie and later, the punk cultures. “Gradually, the punks split permanently from the hippies, and I went with the punks,” Hasselbach writes, “The hippies had become too “good” for me. It wasn’t enough to protest just by waking up whenever I wanted, or sleeping with whomever I wanted. I wanted to go out and make a statement.”

Hasselbach made a statement and founded the country’s first Neo-Nazi Political Party in 1989. At that time, under the new East German government, headed by Hans Modrow, new political parties were being authorized so quickly that few questions were asked. For the next four years, he led a violent extremist group in street fighting, indoctrinating young members and plotting terrorist attacks. After unification, street fights continued, especially against anarchist groups who were devoted to fighting right-wingers. In earlier GDR times there had been no street battles, since the power of the state had been too omnipresent. Hasselbach mentions the two main anti-Fascist, or “Antifa” organizations, the Antifa Youth-Front and the Antifa Edelweiss Pirates (named after the youth resistance gangs in the Third Reich). Both groups dressed like punks, “...with green hair and rings everywhere, and wore Doc Martens boots with red laces or, Federal Army Paratrooper boots,” he writes.

Confronted with the fruits of his labors -- firebombed bodies of refugees, the anguished faces of survivors and his friendship to Winfried Bonengel, a German filmmaker who lived in France and who completed a film on the movement named, “We’re Back” -- Hasselbach began to doubt his politics. Secretly, he began to investigate
the Holocaust revisionism he and his Kamerads propagated, and finally learning the truth
of the lie he had been living, in 1993 publicly renounced the neo-Nazi movement.

The Modified Identity Concept

To the question, “Who are you?” one might answer, “I am the son of my father.”
Today the son and the daughter would answer, “I am who I am. I am responsible for
myself and I create myself through my own decisions and actions.”

The individual has become a central and responsible figure of his own life
formation. The project, “life” has become the center of individual planning and responsibility. Whether the project succeeds or fails is mainly dependent on the individual himself. Not the adjustment and toleration to given outside structures, but the free development of personality, has become the focus of modern social theories. This autonomy was only able to develop through fast progressing advancements, which will be mentioned here briefly.

First, advancements in medicine have made human reproduction plannable; and family planning as well as life planning are the responsibility of the individual. Second, the development of democratic governments has made the individual’s vote in political elections a key in power and authority. Third, a market-oriented economy has given individuals the option to decide for themselves and choose different products. And fourth, the job-market has opened for both sexes and has lead to greater independence, especially for women.
The process of identity formation in childhood and adolescence has obviously changed in the last decades. Expanded personal freedoms within progressed social structures means subjective autonomy for the individual and, conversely, the loss of feelings of security that came from "natural" membership in social groups. This subjective autonomy includes the demand for an ability to form independent opinions and judgments regarding choices in jobs, partners, numbers of children, world-views, political parties, products and social nets.

It is not difficult to understand that this development does not always find a supportive environment, and that it is not always determined to be successful and without risks. Nevertheless, the individuals are responsible for a successfully created life-style and they cannot blame anybody else for failure. Life is not any longer predetermined by external factors. Culture offers a variety of choices from which the individual has to select. These crucial and constant decision-making forces are particularly critical during adolescence. Society has become "optional" and asks for a mutable self, a "flexible type of approach," and "a handicraft mentality."25

With this diversity and endless number of choices, social critics see the danger of overwhelming the individual. The risks of failure are high and some members of society are not capable of fulfilling such demands. Confusion, forms of insecurity, helplessness, anxiety and alienation gain prevalence. Heitmeyer argues that the ambivalent individualization process can lead to problems when adolescents "...increasingly gain the impression that they are losing control over their own lives."26
Erikson wrote about the society of the 1950’s, in which it was typical for young people to have made choices regarding job, partner, religion and other aspects of life, by the end of adolescence (at approximately age eighteen). Today socially supported identity formation is not necessarily typical. Traditional biographies, life stages, customs and traditions seem to no longer exist. There does not seem to be a fixed point in life anymore where identity formation can be considered a closed case.  

Heitmeyer expands the theory of crisis within the individualization process by adding the critical point of isolation which might follow the experience of insecurity. In their struggle for certainties, adolescents may refer to unambiguous norm systems and may identify totally with their particular symbols and rituals, whether or not these norm systems (groups) may be left-wing or right-wing movements. A particular movement or organization might provide them again with the strength and self-confidence they are lacking and thereby relieve their individual burdens of responsibility. This adolescent struggle is taken advantage of by political parties and organizations who channel their crises into one or another form of fear or hatred -- in this context into the hatred of minority groups.

Empowered by association with organizations and political parties, violence is able to assume an important role. First, it guarantees attention from others (society, media, etc.), and second, it contributes to feelings of powerlessness by establishing others as even more powerless. Heitmeyer concludes in his essay that “...there is a very real risk that social, occupational, or political processes of disintegration will increase. They will lead to increasing violence, because when social responsibility and integration dissolve,
individuals no longer consider the consequences of their actions...and a further
destruction of life contexts attack the very core of identity formation.”28 This situation
inevitably attracts certain political parties and organizations which take advantage of and
use the seething violent potential within youth groups for their own purposes.
EXPLANATIONS LINKED TO RIGHT-WING YOUTH GROUPS

1 Numbers are taken from Racist Violence in Europe, p. 165.


4 “East Germany made only a nominal distinction between the Third Reich and the Federal Republic. It was all Western, capitalist Fascism,” Ingo Hasselbach says in his article, “How Nazis are made,” published in The New Yorker of January 8, 1996.


7 Der Spiegel, 7 December, 1992.


28 Heitmeyer, Wilhelm. “Hostility and Violence towards Foreigners in Germany.” p. 27.
THE ROLE OF THE INTERNATIONAL RIGHT-WING NETWORK

In Hasselbach's personal history he mentions that right-wing propaganda and training manuals during his time in the movement were distributed by extremist groups in the United States, where it is legal to print such materials under guarantees of the First Amendment. In comparison, Germany limits in its constitution the freedom of speech when it threatens democracy. Furthermore, it bans the dissemination of Nazi symbols and propaganda. Hasselbach also mentions having received from Nebraska via Internet handbooks for terror which described the ways to wage a terrorist war against a democratic government. At other times he received illegal mail via Denmark, since Denmark also has no constitutional limitations which prohibit the publication of extremist propaganda.¹

In this context, it becomes important to consider and examine the power of the international Nazi Cooperation. Historically, violent social acts have been accompanied by an increase in support for right-wing organizations. In Germany, Franz Schönhuber's Republican Party received 10.9% of the vote in Baden-Württemberg in 1993. Jörg Haider's Austrian Freedom Party gained 22.6% of the vote in Vienna's municipal elections in 1991; Jean-Marie LePen and his nationalist, Front National, received 14% of the vote in France during a round in the presidential elections in 1988. In Naples, Alessandra Mussolini, received 44% of the vote in mayoral elections in 1993. Also in 1993, every fourth Russian voter chose Vladimir Zhirinovsky's Liberal Democratic Party,
“making,” according to Bernt Hagtvet, “[an] overt anti-Semite the leader of the largest single party in the new Russian national assembly.”

Since growing violence has ties to right-radical youth cultures and the perpetrators are quite young, few are organized into political parties. They present, therefore, an inviting target-group for parties and organizations. Nazi skinheads, for example, are not organized in the conventional sense. They are composed of many smaller groups bound to certain localities and are linked together by a highly specific subculture that crosses national borders. European Skinhead culture and its links with violence is an “old” phenomenon and dates back to the end of the 1960’s -- English working-class youth’s reaction to increasing unemployment. Initially, skinhead culture was apolitical. Not until the late 1970’s was there any notable growth in politicization.

Today, however, an international, violence-fixated subculture exists next to a thoroughly organized Nazi network which tries to exploit its potential. The Nazi network does not necessarily cause the escalating violence found in the youth culture, but it seems to at least play a role in amplifying violent tendencies by distributing hate-propaganda throughout the world. Propaganda material for Germany came from Lincoln, Nebraska, and was distributed by the foreign activist group, National Socialist German Workers’ Party/Exile and Edification Organization (NSDAP/AO). The material included swastika stickers and small posters. NSDAP/AO, an acronym for Nationalsozialistische Arbeiterpartei/Auslandsorganisation und Aufbauorganisation, publishes newsletters, bulletins and other propaganda materials in at least ten languages.
In 1990, Gary Lauck, front figure of the American Organization, along with Michael Kühnen, front figure of the German movement, went into Scandinavia and connected with Sweden’s radical faction, Sveriges Nationella Förbund (Sweden’s National League). Erik Jensen points out in his article that “...this quickly led to the building of ‘The Nordic National Socialist Bloc’, with connections to the terrorist-oriented ‘Storm-network’ in Sweden and its Norwegian counterparts.”6 Later, connections were also established to Denmark’s Nazi Party, DNSB. In Germany, the Neue Front (New Front) group, under leadership of Michael Kühnen, who died of AIDS in April of 1991, was in close cooperation with Gary Lauck in the USA. Kühnen established contacts to the Spanish group, Circulo Español de Amigos de Europa (CEDADE), to factions of the Flemish-Belgian group, Vlaamse Militanten Orde (VMO), and to factions of the French Faisceaux Nationalistes Européens (FNE). Other connections can be found in Croatia, where Nazi groups supported HSP (The Croatian Justice Party) and its militia, HOS (The Croatian Liberation Community). Links to Iraq were noticed when France’s organization leader, Michel Faci, made an appearance with Saddam Hussein during the Gulf War.7

The outlining of this international net of organizations is important for the understanding of the different powers that are involved when we not only talk about the violent potential of right-wing youth groups and its causes, but also about the external influences on these subcultures. The importance of channeling this potential into political ideologies became very obvious in Ingo Hasselbach’s autobiography, as outlined in the chapter, “‘Oi’ Music is “Warrior Music”.”
THE ROLE OF THE INTERNATIONAL RIGHT-WING NETWORK

1 Hasselbach, Ingo. *The New Yorker.* pp. 36, 47.


CONCLUSION

The discussion of right-wing youth violence in Germany needs to be put into a frame of reference which is closer to the contemporary economic and social situation Germany is facing, now fifty years after the defeat of fascism. Much of the analyses found in the literature recognized similarities to the conditions during the Weimar Republic and the subsequent fascist government. But, little research exists concerning the multitude of events which have occurred since the 1950's.

The symbols and the victims of the postmodern outrage remind us of the perpetrators and crimes committed under the Hitler regime. Yet, it is essential to become aware that the powers at play are very real with regard to social, political, economic, scientific and technical changes that have taken place. Today's individuals have to apply their violent ideologies to this complex society in order to successfully become and stay members of postmodern society. The threat of isolation of individuals within this society is a large issue that has to be analyzed and treated in further research and social application.

Social integration is a vital component of life. Without it the individual is likely to respond aggressively. This form of aggression can be directed inwards or outwards. Right-wing violence represents the outward-directed form of aggression. Powerlessness, feelings of estrangement, isolation and anxiety naturally cause fear and incalculability of actions. In right-wing groups, the fear is channeled into hatred. Cultural texts, such as music, movies, and literature support the channeling process by serving as amplifiers.
They cannot be determined as ultimate cause for violent behavior, but under specific social conditions, cultural texts can confirm stimuli for violent crimes.

The necessary adaptability in our rapidly changing social, technical and economic environment is so complex and immense that it is necessary to rethink the possible consequences when this adaptability is dysfunctional. What will happen to isolated “members” of a never-ending advancing society? What will happen to this society when the “...destruction of life contexts [of its members] attack the very core of identity formation?”¹

At any rate, it is essential to carefully observe the social dimensions of progress in relation to right-wing youth subcultures and violence in modern Germany, and also to the “constellations and alliances which might threaten peace and democracy in Europe.”²
CONCLUSION


BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDICES
Appendix A: List of German Right-Wing Labeled and Prohibited Bands

Aufruhr, Blut und Ehre, Bomber, Boots-Brothers, Bollwerk, Brutale Haie, Commando, Pernod, Die Alliierten, Die wahre Pracht, Drom, Elbsturm, Endstufe, Entwarnung, Freikorps, Kahlkopf, Kettenhund, Kraft durch Froide, Kraftschlag, Kroizfoier, Landser, Legion Condor, Macht und Ehre, Märtyrer, Nahkampf, Noie Werte, 08/15, Offensive, OHL, Oi Dramz, Proissens Gloria, Querschläger, Rabauken, Radikahl, Radikahler Haß, Rheinwacht, Saccara, Skinfield, Sperrzone, Stöckel & Strapse, Störkraft, Stuka, Sturmrupp, Tonstörung, Triebtäter, United Blood, Volkstreue, Volkszorn, Werwolf, Wotans Volk

(Source: http://members.tripod.com/~Wolfpack/skrew.htm)
Appendix B: Skrewdriver Lyrics

Before the Night Falls

They come here to this country from the jungles and from trees
The traitors in the parliament give them a better deal
Spend the nation’s money, to cater to their needs
They all accept our charity, then bite the hand that feeds

Chorus:
Before the night falls, heed the White call
Before the night falls, when the reaper calls you

Our forefathers fought in two world wars, they thought to keep us free
But I’m not sure that in those wars, who was our enemy
The Zionists own the media, and they’re known for telling lies
And I could see, that it could be, we fought on the wrong side

(Chorus)

European unity, the North teutonic dream
To scoop to save humanity, leave Europe with the cream
But now our once proud Europe, looks like a melting pot
But melting pots boil over, and it’s getting pretty hot

(Chorus)

Europe Awake

Europe what have they got to do to make you come alive
What has happened to the heritage that once was yours and mine
A capitalistic economy, the communists roam the streets
The old people aren’t safe outside, what solution do we seek?

Chorus:
Europe awake, for the white man’s sake
Europe awake, before it’s too late
Europe awake, Europe awake now

We’ve got to get together soon, and take our nations back
The race board, and the traitorous politicians should be sacked
You can't turn on the t.v. because we know what we're going to see
Either moaning immigrants, or the lying C.N.D.

(Chorus)

We've got to get together now, and wage our nation's fights
If we don't act quickly, we're going to face the endless night
We've got to take our nations back, from all the traitorous scum
You'd better believe it, our day will soon have to come

(Chorus)

**Tomorrow Belongs to Me**

The sun on the meadow is summery warm
The stag in the forest runs free
But gathered together to greet the storm
Tomorrow belongs to me
Tomorrow belongs to me

The branch on the linden is leafy and green
The Rhine gives its gold to the sea
But somewhere a glory awaits unseen
Tomorrow belongs to me
Tomorrow belongs to me

The babe in his cradle is closing his eyes
The blossom embraces the bee
But soon says the whisper, arise, arise
Tomorrow belongs to me
Tomorrow belongs to me

Chorus:
Now Fatherland, Fatherland, show us the sign

Your children have waited to see
The morning will come when the world is mine
Tomorrow belongs to me
Tomorrow belongs to me
If You’re White

Read the papers, watch T.V., hear the media lie to me
On the radio, in the news, you’re all wrong except the jews
Doesn’t matter who loses face, if it’s against the chosen race
If you’re white, they’ll say you’re bad, they must think that we’re all mad

Chorus:
If you’re white, you’re all right
If you’re white, today
If you’re white, you’re all right
If you’re white, O.K.

They ban our marches, squash our rights, we’ll resist with all our might
There seems to be a moral lack, marches allowed for Reds and Blacks
They started riots, raised all hell, when thirteen men burnt themselves
Had their marches, told their lies, when another black committed suicide

(Chorus)

Well it’s our country, let’s take it back, give the race act men the sack
For the cause some go to jail, and this means that we must never fail
They’ll try and make you feel ashamed for everything our race is blamed
They’ll try and tell you day is night, but don’t forget that white is right.

(Chorus)
Appendix C: Advertising Record Companies on the World Wide Web

Resistance Records Inc., for example, advertises via its home page for a variety of right-wing bands and their music and enables its customers to order immediately CD’s or Cassettes by using a credit card. The customer can order on-line, by fax, or by mail. The Company also provides the web page visitor with the opportunity to actually listen to song samples of most bands and their music right away. Other Companies are: Perkerwood Records, MSR, Tuono Records, et al. which also advertise via the World Wide Web.

Web Page Sources:

http://www.resistance.com/music.html
http://www.resistance.com/tribute/index.html
http://www.resistance.com/BFG.html
http://www.resistance.com/NORTHUN.html
http://www.resistance.com/RAHOWA.html
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