Popular music exposure and consumption and Jamaican youth identity.

June Veronica. Degia

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POPULAR MUSIC EXPOSURE AND CONSUMPTION

AND

JAMAICAN YOUTH IDENTITY

by

JUNE VERONICA DEGIA

A Thesis
submitted to the
Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
through the Department of
Communication Studies in Partial Fulfillment
of the requirements for the Degree
of Master of Arts at
the University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

1988
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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my husband Jake and daughter Adjwoa, who gave me love support and encouragement all the way. Also, to Jim, Stephanie and Aunt Myrtle. Thank You.
ABSTRACT

This study probes into the feelings of a sample of Jamaican youth, to see whether exposure and consumption of popular music, contribute to the formation of their own identities and to investigate whether social class does play an important part in their feelings about popular music.

A case study method was used in an effort to understand the complex social phenomena of the youth popular music interaction in Jamaica. Direct observation was also used to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the youth popular music interaction in natural settings.

The study revealed that youth in Jamaica got early exposure to popular music via neighbourhood sound systems, radio, and television, and radio cassette players. Also that youth spend a lot of their leisure time interacting with music, either listening or dancing to it. Youth were influenced by reggae, the local popular music, despite the fact that some upper middle class youth expressed a preference for rock over reggae.
music.

The popularity of local over foreign music is a trend that ought to be encouraged by policy makers, the media and by those involved in the music industry.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

General Description of the Study

Hebdige (1983) views the rise of the affluent "teenager" in the 1950s as the introduction of the period of youth as a time of "fun." Conversely, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) claims in the following passage that youth today are less idealistic and more worried about how to get jobs than youth in either the 1950s or 1960s:

The key words in the experience of young people in the coming decade are going to be: "scarcity," "unemployment," "underemployment," "illegitimacy," "anxiety," "defensiveness," "pragmatism," and even "subsistence" and "survival" itself. If the 1960s challenged certain categories of youth in certain parts of the world with a crisis of culture, ideas and institutions, the 1980s will confront a new generation with a concrete structural crisis of chronic economic uncertainty and even deprivation. (UNESCO, 1981, p. 17)

In the island of Jamaica, where the worsening economic situation results in an unemployment rate of over 40% among youth, UNESCO’s prediction concerning
youth internationally, that "youth may become increasingly disillusioned with the value of work-centred lives and try more and more to establish self and group activities through leisure activities" may well be on the way to being fulfilled (UNESCO, 1981, p. 17).

Youth in Jamaica are exposed to both local and foreign popular music. "Reggae, a local indigenous music, competes for the attention of Jamaican youth with foreign, mainly American music" (Cuthbert, 1985). Michael Real (1982: p. 8) concludes that "popular music cannot be imported into a culture without changing that culture." The music industry is only part of the overall flow of communications from the west to Third World countries, which has increased with the development of advanced technology.

In Jamaica's population of 2.2 million, for example, it was estimated that by 1986 there were at least 7,000 satellite dishes installed in private homes. The country's one television station broadcasts 76% foreign programmes, (Brown, 1987) in part pirated from North American stations via satellite. The two local
radio stations, each broadcasting on AM and FM, present a better picture as they have a higher percentage of local programmes.

However, one station in particular is often criticized for playing a higher percentage of foreign popular music.

Research Problem

Music has been described as a form of inter-human communication "in which individually experienceable affective states and processes are conceived and transmitted as humanly organized non-verbal sound structures to those capable of decoding their message in the form of adequate affective and associative response" (Tagg, 1982, p. 40).

Music is a group phenomenon. Music by its very nature, that is, "its mode of performance and reception" (Tagg, 1982, p. 40), requires a group of people to communicate either within a group or between groups. As a result, most music and dance, therefore have "an intrinsically collective character not shared by the visual and verbal arts" (Tagg, 1982, p. 40). Tagg cites
cites the example of studies of subcultures used by North American radio to determine advertising markets which show that "music is capable of transmitting the affective identities, attitudes and behavioural patterns of socially definable groups" (Karshner, 1971, quoted in Tagg, 1982, p. 40). It is in this context that the youth/popular music interaction in Jamaica is being studied as a communication process.

According to Deanna Robinson, Director of a five year old research group which is studying youth and popular music, "a major building block for the construction of self, currently seems to be popular music" (1986, p. 9).

There is a need for more intensive research to be done in this area of cultural interchange in developing countries, to probe further into the findings of other empirical work such as that of Cuthbert (1985) who concluded from her survey of Jamaican youth and musical preferences, that working class youth identified with reggae, the local indigenous popular music, while upper middle class youth preferred rock - a musical form originating from North America and Europe.
The purpose of this study is to probe into the feelings of Jamaican youth and to see how popular music contributes to the formation of their own identities and to find out whether social class does play an important part in their feelings about popular music.

Another purpose is to find out the extent to which youth depend on the traditional media to get exposure to popular music (See Figure 1).

In the sample of youth studied, the data revealed that youth were influenced by reggae, the local music, despite the fact that some upper middle class youth expressed a preference for rock over reggae music. Also, the study revealed that youth used both traditional and non-traditional media to get exposure to popular music.

Primary data for this study were collected from youth ages 14 -15 years in urban Jamaica. I also observed actual instances of youth involvement with popular music in natural settings, such as record shops, school dance/fete, party, open-air-dances; and on minibuses. These observations suggested lines of questioning for me to pursue with youth during the in-
Figure 1

Popular Music Exposure and Consumption
and Jamaican Youth Identity

Identity

Delivery System

Pop Music

Exposure

Use

Consumption

Family

Social Class

Peers
depth interviews.

Interviews were conducted with eight (8) individual respondents, representative of significant groups in the society. The sample was comprised of four (4) working class students from Excelsior High and Vauxhall Secondary schools. Two middle class youth from Excelsior High and two upper middle class youth from Campion College completed the sample. Social class was defined according to the main wage earner's occupation in the household (Stone 1987, Richardson, 1982, Nettleford, 1978).

Research Questions

1. How do young people get exposed to popular music?

This question sought to find out the delivery systems youth used to get exposure to popular music and whether choice of delivery systems varied according to social class. Another aim was to find out whether youth listened to pop music as a main or secondary activity and how much control they had over the choice of music.
played at home. This question also probed into how youth consumed and used music. By consumption is meant the type of learning, if any, which was accomplished as a result of listening to pop music. Use refers to how music is employed in the daily lives of youth, that is, whether they are active or passive listeners to music.

2. How do musical preferences affect the life style of youth? This question attempts to find out whether listening to pop music affects the image, appearance, demeanour and argot of youth.

3. How does social class affect the musical preferences and life style of this group of Jamaican youth? This question sought to find out whether social class was a significant variable in youth’s preference of pop music as was the case when Cuthbert (1985) carried out her study in Jamaica.

4. How does identification with popular music affect their identity? This question probed
whether youth identified positively or negatively with local music and hence local culture and the part music played in the formation of their identity.

Research Design

This study focuses on 14 -15 year-old youth. A case study method was used in an effort to understand complex social phenomena, such as the youth/popular music interaction, while at the same time allowing the investigation to retain holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events (Yin, 1984).

To obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the youth/popular music interaction, youth were observed and photographed in their natural settings. Extensive use was also made of existing documents. The major documentary source was newspaper articles, as, in recent years, many press articles have examined popular music. Other print sources which deal, in the main, with either youth or popular music in Jamaica were also examined. Jamaican music analyst, Garth White, who has done extensive research on Jamaican popular music, was also
interviewed. The electronic media were examined for comments on youth/popular music interaction.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

A review of the literature reveals that research on the influence of popular music on youth identities has been done in western industrialized countries. However, in developing countries research on popular culture, music in particular, is generally sparse. To date, no intensive research has been done in Jamaica on the feelings of youth about popular music. I discussed the historical background of reggae, the local popular music and calypso/soca, a musical form originating in the Eastern Caribbean. A review was undertaken of the structure and main values of the Jamaican society, the educational and vocational opportunities available to youth in Jamaica, cultural identity and the formation of Jamaican youth identity.

2.1 Jamaican Popular Music

One part rocksteady, one part mento, a hint of ska tempo, mix well in the heat of West Kingston, bring to the boil with an increasing social consciousness, and you have reggae. (Jamaica Tourist Board)
Jamaica's popular music originated from the music and dance of 18th century slave society, which resulted in Afro-European forms of music in the Caribbean, or what Rex Nettleford calls, "the rhythm of Africa and the melody of Europe" (See Figure 2). Afro-Caribbean music is a further development of this Afro-European style, which comprises mainly dance music and is played during local celebrations such as the Trinidad carnival and the Jonkunnu masquerade and village dances of Jamaica (Walsh and Malm, 1984). The Jamaican mento and the Trinidad calypso are well-known forms of Afro-Caribbean music.

During the 1940s and 1960s, migration from rural towns to the city resulted in the formation of urban dance bands, which replaced their predecessors, the mento bands. The "growth of national and international transport and communication systems, greater migration and emigration by Jamaican labourers, had a marked influence on the music produced by these urban bands" (White, 1984, p. 48).

The various bands later gave way to the "sound system" as the primary means of entertainment. The Jamaican sound system was an inexpensive source
Figure 2

Evolution of Reggae Music in Jamaica

- Rasta Music 1930s
- American Rhythm & Blues
- Elements of African Traditional Music (18th century)
- Mento 1950s
- S K A Early 1960s
- Reggae Late 1960s
- Rock Steady with DJ/Dance Hall influence Mid-1960s
- DJ/Dance Hall 1980s
of entertainment which used powerful amplifiers to drive recorded music through a number of speakers. At first, the music played by these sound systems was largely American rhythm and blues, which was popular among the predominantly black masses. They provided entertainment at dances, house parties, and later, what became known as 'sessions' put on by individuals or groups/promoters. The 'dance' produced a particular kind of disc-jockey, peculiar to the Jamaican music scene. The sound systems' disc-jockey interacted with his audience and "spontaneously created rhymes and comments to fit the music... and often quite boldly gave his opinion on popular issues" (White, 1984, p. 58) similar to the Trinidad calypsonians.

Garth White (1984) points out that the development of sound systems and popular dance was also the prime medium for the young recording industry in Jamaica as it "encouraged the development of local electronic expertise ... and provided the market for the local music industry" (White, 1984, p. 60). The sound system was instrumental in disseminating local musical effort to a much greater degree than radio.
Jamaica's artists combined rhythm and blues with mento to produce their own music, the bluebeat or ska. Ska is described by Garth White (1984) as a "shuffle rhythm akin to that of mento but even closer to the "black beat" of the United State's R&B (Rhythm and Blues), with the accent on the second and fourth beats, often moving in a twelve bar blues-frame" (p.60). Ska also had strains of revivalism, kumina, pocomania and the rhythm of the Rastafarians.

Rocksteady music evolved from ska, as the intermediate phase between ska and reggae. "Though slower and stikier [sic] than the jumpy, somewhat raucous ska, rocksteady was replaced by the even tighter, more heavier, more African reggae" (Hebdige, 1987, p. 37).

Reggae became popular in Jamaica in the late 1960s. The reggae beat is heavily influenced by the beat and chants of the Rastafarian cult, the mento and popular music styles from the USA (See Figure 2). Many reggae musicians are also Rastafarians. Bob Marley was perhaps the most well known reggae musician as he internationalized reggae music. Another type of reggae
music which took shape during the late sixties was the
dub or DJ (disc jockey) "talk over."

In Jamaica, the DJ or dance hall style is perhaps
the most popular style. In the 1970s, the DJ was used
mainly as a vehicle for social commentary, but this is
no longer the case, as the lyrics of dance hall are now
often nonsensical or crude and derogatory to women, with
very few making social commentary.

In 1987, one DJ performer had two entries in the
top 10 and both were declared unfit for air play and
banned from the air waves. Jamaica's two radio
stations, Radio Jamaica and Rediffusion (RJR) and the
government-owned Jamaica Broadcasting Corporation (JBC)
both have different standards as to what is declared
unfit for air play, as there is no official policy.
So, sometimes, one record will be banned on one radio
station as being unfit for air play, while the other
continues to play it. There has been an orchestrated
call from members of the public and the church for these
performers to desist from using vulgar language.

There has also been a call by the newly formed
Jamaica Promoters Association requesting that artists not utter vulgarities and profanities during their live performances. A recent attempt to get artists performing at a live show to clean up their act resulted in the show flopping, as many regular patrons did not turn up because there was not going to be the usual "slackness" in the show (Gleaner, January, 1987).

Despite the criticisms levelled at the dancehall/DJ style music, an interesting development over the past few years is the amount of reggae being played over the airwaves, reversing the trend of the past five years (especially within the middle class) toward US (black and disco) music (Billboard, 9: 31 p. 27). A look at the 1986 RJR's top 100 chart and the Daily Gleaner's top 10 chart for March 27, 1987 confirms this trend (See Appendix B).

Pollster and journalist Carl Stone, (1987) in the last survey he conducted, found that 60% of adult Jamaicans prefer reggae music to foreign popular music, while 17% preferred the foreign product, and 23% had no preference. Despite the current trend in favour of reggae music, there continues to be among those
preferring the foreign product, a disproportionate concentration of middle class persons (Gleaner, August 31, 1987).

Reggae to some extent has also gained acceptance in some of the elite night clubs in up-town Kingston frequented by the middle class. In August, 1987, Norman Jackson, alias Tiger, a local DJ performer, created musical history in Jamaica when he became the first DJ to appear on a hotel cabaret stage. He made his historic performance before a capacity crowd at the Wyndham Hotel's Jonkanoo lounge in New Kingston. He was so well received by the audience that other DJs, such as General Trees and Péter Metro, have made similar appearances.

Reggae music has made a significant contribution to the development of Jamaica's indigenous culture. In 1978, Artistic Director of the National Dance Theatre Company of Jamaica and Professor of Extra Mural Studies, UWI, Rex Nettleford (1978) cited Jamaica's Music Entertainment Industry as an important part of the network of cultural action in Jamaica.
In the late 60s and early 70s, reggae music was described as message music which commented on the injustices in the society. This type of reggae did not appeal to the elites in the society as they felt threatened by it. The spiritual influence of Rastafari was also present in the music during this period. Many have attributed the present lack of spirituality in reggae music to the death of Bob Marley, the spiritual leader of reggae music, who died in 1982 (Hussey quoted in De Freitas, 1987).

Dick Hebdige, sociologist and reggae music analyst, has written extensively on reggae music in Britain tracing its roots back to the ghettos of western Kingston, Jamaica, and the circumstances surrounding its arrival in Britain. In his publication, *Reggae Rastas and Rudies* (1979), he links reggae music to youth subcultures and style in Jamaica and Britain. In Jamaica, it was the 'rude boy' phenomenon which emerged in the late 60s and 70s; while in England, the 'rude boy' subculture merged with the skinhead working class youth sub-culture. The common thread which united two alien cultures seemed to have been reggae music and a
dissatisfaction with the dominant values of British society, which failed to serve the interests of both black and working class British youth.

In his most recent book, *Cut N' Mix* (1987), Hebdige writes about Caribbean music, from calypso and ska through to reggae and its links with Caribbean cultural identity, particularly in Jamaica, Trinidad and Britain.

Hebdige acknowledges the fact that reggae records, especially those with a strong Rastafarian influence, are deeply concerned with the issues of black pride and black identity. These themes he says are similar to those expounded by the Griot group in Haiti during the 1940s. Hebdige is also of the view that the "social consciousness," which was a dominant theme in reggae music, particularly during the 1970s, grew up around the search for individual's roots. This resulted in many reggae musicians deliberately drawing on African traditions in their music.

Reggae is at present filled with the themes and "ridims" (patois for "rhythms") of the Rastafarian movement. The rastas stress pride in the African heritage. Indeed, in recent years, "roots reggae" with its references to "dread" and "ganja"
(marijuana) has even become something of a cliche. (Hebdige, 1987, p. 46-47)

Reggae is bound up with the idea of roots and culture. According to Hebdige, this is dynamic, as the roots are in a state of flux, constantly changing and growing.

Calypso/Soca

They want to license my mouth
They don't want me to talk.
But if it is blood, sweat and misery
We mean to fight till we get our liberty.
(Quoted in Hebdige, 1987)

Calypso, a musical form originating from Eastern Caribbean slave societies, is also popular in Jamaica. The word calypso means "to hide something."

Slaves were not allowed to express their opinions during slavery as this was considered subversive so they made up verses and rhymes with double meanings. "The Calypsonian challenges established authority, inverts normative systems to expose their underlying absurdity and injustice, and reveals the comic underpinnings and possibilities of situations that are usually taken
seriously" (Manning, 1986: p. 167-168). Calypso was used as a political weapon as it could spread opinions on different subjects very quickly. The early calypsonians developed a tactic whereby they would constantly change from English to French creole so as not to be understood by the French or British police.

By the early twentieth century, calypso singing became most popular between Christmas and Carnival time. In the 1930s, calypso music became influenced by North American popular music. At the outset, the music was played by string bands and the melody was played in a major key. Later on, wind instruments, fast tempos and the lively rhythm of the merengue were added. One branch of calypso with the addition of electric instruments has evolved into a new a new form soca. Soca gets its name from a merging of the two words 'soul and calypso.'

Calypso and reggae have similar origins. Both have African influences. However, calypso is essentially different from reggae as the beat is different. The
beat is faster than reggae. This is because calypso is dependent on cymbals, scratches and drums, while reggae has a slower, heavier beat as great emphasis is placed on the bass rhythms.

Musical Videos - The Jamaica Broadcasting Corporation (JBC)

There has been a dramatic increase in the number of local videos shown on television in Jamaica. As recently as 1986, the national television station, the Jamaica Broadcasting Corporation, was dominated by musical videos pirated from US and American stations via satellite. The opposite was true by 1987 when the TV stations began to show 100% local videos on most evenings. On average, though, local video represent between 60% and 80% of musical videos shown on the JBC (See Appendix B).

This increase appears to be due to the fact that local reggae artists have come to the realization that in order to compete in the local and overseas market place, well produced musical videos have to be included in their record promotion. Some local artists have voiced the complaint that when they make musical videos,
their record sales fall, as local fans tape musical video instead of purchasing their records.

According to a source from JBC this increase in the showing of local music videos is also a deliberate policy on the part of the station, which, in 1987, set up a committee to establish guidelines for selection of musical videos for broadcast. This committee includes a member of the Jamaica Federation of Musicians, producers and executives of the JBC. The committee’s function is to scrutinize the content and quality of both local and foreign videos, to ensure that they are fit for air play, and to ensure that more local videos are aired on JBC television.

Instead of being haphazardly used as fillers, musical videos are now programmed on JBC television. They are usually shown weekdays at the end of Morning Time and again at about 6.30 pm. On Saturdays the show is presented at 5.30 pm. Duration is usually five to ten minutes.

It is now a policy of the JBC that musical videos are not aired on television unless approved by the
producer or executive producer.

Youth and Popular Music

In a survey of 300 Jamaican youth, Cuthbert (1985) hypothesized that the higher the socio-economic status of youth, the greater the preference would be for foreign over local popular music. The results of that survey gave strong support to the hypothesis that socio-economic status correlated highly with musical preferences, while other variables such as sex, age and urban/rural residency did not.

Eighty six percent (86%) of the respondents in Cuthbert's study said that they liked to dance to popular music. The socio-economic variable was the only significant predictor of preference in dance music. Also respondents when asked to rank various types of music for listening purposes, ranked reggae first only if they were from the lower socioeconomic group. For the middle class respondents, disco, soul and reggae were the most popular. Upper Class youth preferred rock followed by soul, disco and reggae.

In Cuthbert's study, the sample was almost equally
divided between those to whom lyrics appealed most (41%) and those to whom music appealed most (42%). The remaining 17% said they liked the music and lyrics of songs equally well.

All groups got exposure to popular music from radios, while those from upper socio-economic groups listed tapes most often. The lower socio-economic groups placed parties after radio, followed by dance halls, record players and jukeboxes.

Despite the popularity of foreign music among upper socio-economic groups, Cuthbert concluded that "Jamaican youth do identify with reggae, and find music vital to their existence, despite the popularity of foreign music among the social elite" (Cuthbert, 1985, p. 388). In her view if outside musical influences were less, reggae music would increasingly reflect middle class reality and more easily become the national culture.
2.2 Structure of Jamaican Society

Four hundred years, four hundred years,
And it's the same philosophy,
Four hundred years, four hundred years,
And my people are still not free...
(Lyrics: Peter Tosh)

Since social class was found to be a significant variable in youth's choice of popular music (Cuthbert, 1985), an understanding of the structure of the Jamaican society would be helpful in understanding the main values of the Jamaican society, and in contextualizing the youth/popular music interaction.

Jamaica, like many other countries, has a more or less clearly defined class structure. The peculiarity in Jamaica is that the class system is linked in many ways to skin colour. In fact some writers argue that the two are synonymous (Nettleford, 1978). Although slavery came to an end over 300 years ago, the hierarchical structure of the society has remained more or less the same.

Census figures dating back to 1981, reveal that approximately 76% of the Jamaican population are African or black; 12% are brown or Afro-European; 1% are white
or European; 4% comprise other ethnic mixtures. However, in the 1970 census, racial identities were redefined (Stone, 1987), when the usual 76% to 78% of persons identifying themselves as black suddenly increased to 90% and those defining themselves as brown or Afro-European, suddenly declined from the usual 15 to 18% to a very low 6%. Brown persons had redefined their identity.

Stone attributes this to the upsurge of black militancy and black consciousness in the 1960s, which he said was a result of the doctrine of Rastafarianism and the Black Power Movement.

However, Stone notes that in the 1982 census, the pattern has reverted back to the pre-1970s, where those persons identifying themselves as black or brown have reverted to 75% and 18% respectively. Stone attributes this trend to the change of political climate and the change of government from PNP to JLP. Those people who identify with black consciousness and black militancy, support the People's National Party and Michael Manley.
Stone further concludes that as black people form the majority in the society, those who are fearful of them asserting themselves more in the society support the Jamaica Labour Party and Edward Seaga (Stone, 1987, p. 8).

The purveyors of "low culture" or the "little tradition" (Nettleford, 1978 p. 11) are of African origin, and are economically the poorest in the society. They comprise 90% of the population. (See Table 1)

**TABLE 1**

**ETHNIC ORIGIN OF THE JAMAICAN POPULATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Categories</th>
<th>Census %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African</td>
<td>90.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanese</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

100.0

Source: Statistical Yearbook of Jamaica 1976
Based on 1970 Census
Clerical jobs, the teaching and nursing professions and the security forces, management positions in public and private sectors are where a comparatively small middle class predominates (Stone, 1987, Richardson, 1980, Nettleford, 1978, Miller, 1967).

The Eurocentric upper class is a mixture of Jews, Lebanese, whites, Chinese and some "high brown" or "Jamaica whites." According to Nettleford (1978), "their different socio-cultural points disappear in the face of their shared international cultural pattern and one might add in the face of threat to their entrenched oligarchic position" (p.9).

According to political analyst and journalist, Carl Stone, in the post-independence period, the struggle in Jamaica has been over culture and identity, which he feels Jamaicans are on the road to achieving.

Black and African cultural expressions have largely replaced Eurocentric notions of culture, although large sections of the elite in the society continue to hold on to Eurocentric forms of cultural expressions.
Stone notes that in a recent survey he conducted, 60% of adult Jamaicans prefer reggae music to foreign pop music, while 17% preferred the foreign product and 23% had no preference. Among those preferring the foreign product, there was a disproportionate concentration of middle class persons. Therefore, 

The next round will have to do with the place of blacks in the ownership of the economy and will lead inevitably to blacks trying to muscle their way into ownership of parts of the big corporate economy which is now controlled by Jews, Lebanese, Chinese, whites and other ethnic minorities (Stone, 1987 p.8).

Stone sums up the current economic situation in Jamaica, as one in which very few opportunities exist "for the young, the ambitious and the energetic ... The gap between the rich and the poor is widening and as the traditional middle class salary earners get pushed down into working class poverty, we are fast becoming a nation of "have"s and "have-nots" (Stone, 1987, p.8)."
2.3 Main Values of Jamaican Society

The Jamaican population is made up of descendants of European masters, African slaves and the mixed offspring of both. Each group has its own cultural institutions independent of each other. "The advent of latecomers from India and Southern China as well as from Lebanon has only served to intensify the segmentation since they too have created definitive ethnocentric enclaves" in the society (Nettleford, 1978: p. 1). The process of indigenization began with the emancipation from slavery but this has a long way to go as certain groups within the society continue to perpetuate .

It also continues within the context of the old-style plantation system not only in terms of economic dependency, but also in terms of an abiding Eurocentrism, which puts everything European in a place of eminence and things of indigenous (i.e., native born and bred) or African origin in a lesser place (Nettleford, 1978: p.3).

A result of these diverse groups has historically left Jamaicans with many cultural options, i.e., "Any one individual from whatever group described above is
wont to opt simultaneously for more than one opportunity as suits his or her needs in a society that has never been too sure about itself or its identity..." (Nettleford, 1978: p. 11).

2.4 Language

Give me back me language and me culture,
Give me back me language and me culture,
Dey push dem from out of Africa
My poor father he was a witch doctor
Dey say he was a damn fool
And now dey have to push him in school,
Sing it children!
Give me back me language an me culture.
(Lyrics, Count Ossie and the Mystic Revelations of Rastafari Band).

The majority of Jamaicans speak patois or "Jamaica Talk" most of the time, even though the official language is Standard English. This dichotomy has a detrimental effect on many Jamaican children, whose first language is patois, and as a result of the examination system they are relegated to a low position in the educational system because of their inability to express themselves verbally or otherwise in Standard English.
Professor Rex Nettleford of the University of the West Indies is of the opinion that the use of English as the mother tongue in addition to patois can be seen on the one hand as cultural diversity, but on the other hand, he sees it as serving the purpose of final deculturation of masses of Caribbean people (Nettleford, 1978).

However, in Nettleford’s view, Jamaicans have reacted against any such move, (unconsciously on the part of some); this can be seen in the persistence of the Jamaican dialect in its various forms in every sphere of Jamaican society. This itself forms part of the politics of protest in several different groups in the society such as, the Rastafarians, a religious group and the DJ musicians, who are themselves products of the urban ghettos.

The Rastafarians use language in a different way. They refer to themselves as "I and I." This term is to show that God whom they call "Jah" is within them and also "we" when one Rastafarian is speaking for other "idren" (brethren). The letter "I" is added to many
words, such as "I-man" instead of man, "I-ternal" instead of eternal. Rastafarians also use their own play on words, for example, "downpressor" is used instead of oppressor.

According to Professor Edward Kamau Brathwaite, prominent scholar of Caribbean cultural forms, "Caribbean languages are more than lexicography, they are imagery, tone metaphysical symbolism, and possess the properties of sonq, dance, movement" (Brathwaite, quoted in Nettleford, 1978:17).

2.5 Religion

Jamaica is a country of diverse religious forms. Early efforts to deter the spread of ancestral African religions had the reverse result which was later reinforced during the post-emancipation period by other forms from West Africa, such as Shango in Trinidad, Cumpfuh in Guyana and Obeah all over the region. Also dating back to the post-emancipation period is pocomania, which had its birth in the Christianised Revivalism of its time.
The most predominant and prestigious religion in Jamaica is the Christianity with its many variations including fundamentalist, evangelical, missionary Baptist, Moravian, Wesleyan Methodist, Roman Catholic, Anglican and the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, a recent addition. Other religions which exist on a smaller scale include Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Bahai and Buddhism.

Rastafarianism, a religious expression with its origins in Jamaica, had its biggest impact on the young in Jamaica in the 1960s and 1970s. This doctrine will be discussed at length because "the Rastafari were the first in the new Jamaica to question the society's identity in terms of its racial and cultural antecedents" (Nettleford, 1978, p. 12) and to question Jamaica's perception of itself as an extension of Europe.

According to local culture pioneer Rex Nettleford, "Rastafarians have made the most enduring impact on culture over the past 25 years, and as such, Rastafari has gained for itself legitimacy as a major cultural force" (Nettleford, 1987: p. 1C). Its pervasiveness
throughout the society, although originating among the lower-classes, evoked great concern among the middle and upper classes as the tenets of this religion threatened their established values.

Rastafarianism promotes the late Emperor Haile Selassie as God, the land of Ethiopia as the black man's promised land, the West and especially Jamaica as Babylon, and themselves as Black Israelites: "A cultural response to social and economic deprivation here becomes the makings of a profoundly insightful religion, challenging in serious ways the theology of Christian orthodoxy, the religion of status and power" (Nettleford, 1978: 19-20).

The Rastafarian movement embraces the twin concepts of African redemption and the divinity of the late emperor of Ethiopia, Haile Selassie I, King of Kings, The Conquering Lion of Judah and to the Rastafarians the Christ Re-Incarnate. One of the reasons for their belief in the deity of Haile Selassie was that they saw his accession to the throne of Ethiopia in 1930 as fulfilling biblical prophecies concerning the imminent downfall of Babylon (the white colonial powers) and the
deliverance of the black races. Ganja (marijuana), an illegal drug in Jamaica, remains the holy and wisdom-giving weed to Rastafarians. These beliefs have been the main tenets of Rastafarianism since its inception in the 1930s.

The philosophy of Rastafari also complements the philosophy of Marcus Mosiah Garvey, founder of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), and who was politically active in the same era the Rastafarian Movement had its inception. Rastafarianism is seen as a reaction to the dominant white, Eurocentric ideology which continues to dominate Jamaican society.

In the 1960s and 1970s, during the era of the Black Power Movement, the Rastafarian philosophy penetrated all spheres of Jamaican society, affecting in particular the ideas of the young (Nettleford, 1978). Symbolic expressions of Rastafarianism prevail among the young. Notable is the wearing of "dreadlocks" — carefully matted hair and bright garb especially the colours red, green and gold — the colours of the Ethiopian flag — which are stamped on items such as badges, clothing, walking sticks and other accessories.
The dreadlocks, worn by some Rastafarians, were originally intended to reproduce the ethnic look of some East African tribes. Later on, Biblical references to Samson and Delilah were used to justify the Rastafarians unorthodox appearance. "The locks became one of the most sensational features of Rasta style" (Hebdige, 1979, p. 144).

Rastafarians have an unashamed commitment to Africa accompanied by a deep yearning for knowledge of the African the past, that is,

...the conscious reference to the self as black man rather than as negro, the unflinching expressions of wrath against an oppressive and what the Rastafarians regarded as a continuing colonial society, the campaign against police brutality suffered by the poor presumably because of their poverty and the maladministration of justice, the expressed bias for the humiliating "white bias" in the society though not necessarily for white people, the deprecation of the agonizing logic of a history of black slavery and white domination." (Nettleford, 1974, p.46-47).

These values of Rastafari were infused into the general philosophy of many Jamaicans especially during the period of heightened awareness of self in the 1960s.
These Jamaicans, according to one Rastafarian, had been "liberated from the obscurity of themselves" (Nettleford, 1974, p. 47).

Rastafarianism presented a challenge to Jamaican society as its philosophy shattered the myth of a harmonious, multiracial society when it gave voice to the inequities of the Jamaican social system in which the poor grew poorer and the rich more wealthy. By the late 60s, commentators who 10 years earlier had criticized Rastafari for such anti-nationalist views were themselves expressing these views (Nettleford, 1978).

It is important to discuss the main social groups which have affected the values of the Jamaican society historically; to see whether these values are different today. Also of interest is which group influences the identity of Jamaican youth.
2.7 Demographic Characteristics of Youth in Jamaica

Education

In Jamaica level of education determines the life chances of youth. It is therefore important to look at the educational and vocational opportunities available to youth and to see how leisure activities fit in to this scenario, especially with the high unemployment rate amongst youth.

Before 1957, secondary education was very limited in quality and range and was almost inaccessible to the poorer classes, especially in rural areas. Secondary education was largely concentrated in the urban parishes of Kingston and St. Andrew.

During the 1960s the government of the day implemented the 'New Deal for Education.' One of the major emphases of this 'New Deal' was the provision of a place for every student at the primary level.

Another priority was to provide greater post-primary opportunities for the population both in numbers and quality of institutions.
Infant education begins in Jamaica at age four and is offered in both public and private institutions. At the age of six, children are admitted to primary schools for six grades. At the age of 11+, students are selected to enter either high schools or secondary schools, based on their performance in the Common Entrance exams.

Apart from the government run primary schools, there are also privately-owned preparatory schools where the middle and upper-classes send their children.

Student placement in secondary or high schools determines life chances, as the students who gain places in high schools tend to go on to other tertiary institutions, while those who attend secondary schools generally leave at age 16 and end up in vocational careers. The illiteracy rate is high amongst those who graduate from these secondary schools and they generally join the ranks of the unemployed. Unemployment amongst youth is not peculiar to students who graduate from these schools, as since the beginning of the 1980s, there has been an increase in the number of students who graduate from the traditional high schools who have
problems finding jobs (Unemployment will be discussed in detail below).

**Tertiary Education**

Further education is offered at several Teachers Training Colleges, the Passley Garden Agricultural College, the Cultural Training Centre, the College of Arts Science and Technology (CAST) and the University of the West Indies (UWI). Community Colleges are located in certain parts of the island including Montego Bay, Brown's Town, Knox College in Clarendon and Excelsior School in Kingston. In general, successful completion of grade 11, which includes passing certain set exams, and providing there are available spaces, qualifies students for entry to programmes offered at these institutions, except UWI.

**Vocational Education**

Vocational education programmes are offered in technical high schools, and secondary schools as well as in vocational schools. The duration of the vocational courses varies from one to two years, depending on the
trade or level of skill required. Vocational courses are usually offered in carpentry, metalwork, plumbing, building, automechanics, home economics and commercial subjects.

The Human Employment and Resource Training Trust (HEART) was established by the government in 1982 ostensibly to check youth unemployment by coordinating, funding, monitoring and promoting training activities in Jamaica. Vocational Training programmes, which were formerly offered by institutions such as Youth camps and Industrial Training Centres, have been reorganized and these institutions converted into HEART academies. The declared objective of the HEART programmes is to give priority to the needs of the economy, by training youth in areas vital to the growth of the economy. Courses are provided in these (HEART) academies to train cooks, waiters, other hotel workers, secretarial and other commercial workers, construction workers, garment and craft workers, cosmetologists and beekeepers.

Several criticisms have been levelled at the HEART programmes. The main one is that young people are being
used as a cheap source of labour in the economy, generally displacing adults whose earning power is greater. A second criticism is that when their apprenticeship is over, many of these youth, instead of being taken on as permanent workers are replaced by a different set of HEART apprentices, resulting in their increased.

In 1985, the government launched another programme, the HEART/Solidarity programme. This particular programme focused on providing assistance for self-employment of youth who have left school and possess low skill levels. Under sponsorship, young people are provided with training in their chosen vocation, basic business skills and a loan to start their own businesses.

**Apprenticeship Schemes**

This scheme is operated by the Ministry of Youth and Community Development in two parts. A certificate is awarded to trainees who complete both the practical and theoretical aspects related to their trade. The apprentices are assigned to firms and are
allowed to attend classes at Technical High Schools, CAST or the Jamaica/German Automotive School on a day-release or part-time basis.

**Jamaica/German Automotive School**

This institution is operated by the Ministry of Youth and Community Development. The number of full-time students who graduated in 1986 fell from 79 to 30—a decrease of 62%. The decline was attributed to financial constraints (Statistical Institute, 1986).

These programmes, although they overlap in the number of training programmes provided, only cater to a minority of the youth in Jamaica. The total enrollment for 1984/85 was 8,586 and this increased to 13,766 in 1985/6. Latest demographic figures show that youth in the age group 15-19 number 263,123, and in the 20-24 age range, 212,874. This is from a total population of 2,190,357 (Statistical Institute, 1986).
Youth Unemployment

According to figures issued by the Statistical Institute of Jamaica, between October 1985 and October 1986, the level of unemployment decreased from 333,800 to 234,900, resulting in a fall in the unemployment rate from 25.6 per cent to 22.3 per cent.

Women and young people have generally experienced higher levels and rates of unemployment in Jamaica. In October 1986, the unemployment rate for women was more than twice that for men (28.1%) as compared with 13.3%. The unemployment rate for younger workers under 25 years was 40.1 per cent as against 14.7 per cent for those 25 years and over (Statistical Institute, 1986).

The reduction in unemployment among younger workers is said to be artificial, and results from some of those temporary measures, mentioned above, to address the unemployment level of youth. The HEART Trust also claims that since its inception in 1982, about 1,374 trainees have been placed in permanent employment. The so-called drop in unemployment rate among the age group 15-24 is, in my view, artificial, as the time frame for
these statistics may have included many young persons, who were serving their apprenticeship under the HEART programme for a limited time only.

According to Professor Carl Stone of the University of the West Indies, "the big unemployment problems Third World countries like Jamaica face are linked to the large bulge in the younger segments of the population" (Stone, 1987, p. 8). Unemployment might have several effects on youth as it is likely that youth will turn more and more to leisure activities or delinquency as a means of fulfilling otherwise empty lives.

2.7 Youth Self Concepts and Youth Identity

Self-concept refers to the individual's concept of themselves which denote the combination of what they think of themselves with what they believe others think about them and with their ideal of the person they wish to become (Phillips, 1973, p. 36). The period of adolescence is very important as it is during this time that the self-concept develops.
According to educator Professor Errol Miller (1980) of the University of the West Indies, who has done extensive research on youth self-concept in Jamaica, any aspect of Jamaica self-concept should take into account three factors: the legacy of a negative self-image, an emerging positive self-conception and the current self-ambivalence.

Both Miller and Nettleford (1978) have attributed the legacy of the negative self-image to the socialization that black Jamaicans received during slavery, colonialism and European domination in the Caribbean. The result of this negative self-image was the dominant view that people, goods, services and ideas originating outside of Jamaica were automatically believed to be superior to their equivalent originating within Jamaica.

Another assumption which resulted from this view of self (Miller, 1980) was that Caucasian features, European culture and western ways were superior to all others. "Concepts of beauty, style of life, tastes and habits are all evaluated within this frame of reference" (p. 83). Miller states that another
assumption which results from this view of self is that one's life chances are determined by the family one is born in, the high school one attends, the particular suburban locality one resides and whether or not one speaks English with a particular accent. "Since the dominant upper and middle classes are very small, this class context of self evaluation implies negative feelings on the part of the majority." (Miller, 1980, p. 84)

The effects of the Rastafarian movement on the young were most pronounced in the mid 60s in the phenomenon known as the "ruye boys or rudies." (Rude in this context meant anyone who is openly defiant of constituted authority). A report on The Rastafarian movement found that youth would be attracted to the movement as the tenets of Rastafarianism were close to the dialectics of Marxism, and the smoking of Ganja would be an added attraction to middle class youths in particular.

The report further predicted that this trend would "surely continue so long as Jamaican society fails to provide the young with significant ideals of
social justice for which to strive and opportunities for
Some analysts believe that the "rude boy" phenomenon
was a direct result of unemployment. In the 60s, it was
a largely urban phenomenon which was concentrated in
the depressed areas of Kingston, spreading to some of
the rural parishes. This subculture commanded adherents
among the majority of the urban lower class youth.

Violence was a feature of this group. Their anger
was at first directed against members of their own
'deprived' class until they acquired a higher
consciousness "to realize that it's not a member of the
suffering brother you should really stick up. It is the
big merchants that have all these twelve places and
living in to apartments - all fifteen - with the whole
heap of luxurious facilities" (Rude boy, quoted in
Nettleford, 1974 p. 96).

In recent times, Jamaicans have begun to adopt a
more positive concept of self. This, according to
Miller and others, started with Marcus Garvey and
Garveyism in the 1930s, culminating with political
independence in the early 1962. The Black Power movement
in the United States, during the 60s also had a positive impact on black Jamaicans. The 1970s also saw a number of significant economic, political, social and educational achievements on the part of black Jamaicans, especially among the young people forming their personalities in the post-independence period. (Miller, 1980, p. 84.)

Writing in 1980, Miller concluded that the emerging positive self-concept was not fully consolidated, especially so among the young. However, Richardson (1983) and Stone (1987) believe that the majority of black Jamaicans now have a positive sense of self-worth and take pride in the excellence of their indigenous culture.
CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Youth Identities and Popular Music

Research continues to show that world-wide teenage interest in popular music has a tremendous effect on their choice of leisure activities and the 'necessary tools' they strive to own, such as, transistor radios, record players, and tape recorders. Currently, popular music accounts for 65-90 percent of record sales, and youth ages 12-20 years account for some 75 percent of pop sales (Communication Research Trends, 5:1, p.1).

Popular music is perceived, and in some instances this is confirmed by research, especially in developed countries, to be the major symbol of youth subculture, and to have a tremendous impact on the values of youth (Frith, 1981). Popular music as appropriated by youth is seen as a major threat to traditional values.

British rock critic and sociologist of music, Simon Frith, believes that the role pop music plays in youth cultures will vary according to the concept of youth
espoused by a particular theory. "All young people occupy a similar transitional position, as they make their move from the family in which they are brought up to the economic and social system in which they must eventually fit; all young people have, in other words a marginal social status" (Frith, 1981: p. 195). He suggests several possible approaches as to how popular music can influence youth, including the functionalist, consumer, threat and counter-culture approaches.

In the functionalist approach the period of youth is viewed as a transition to adulthood (Communications Research Trends, 5:1, p.3). This functionalist theory distinguishes between the concept of youth in primitive society and in industrial society.

In primitive society "youth is a brief puberty rite," which signals the change to adulthood, whereas in industrial societies, youth is a period of training, and is longer, as it permits youth "to work through emotional upheavals and to test new adult roles, be rebellious in a limited way and question the society they wish to recreate" (Communication Research Trends, 5: 1, p.3).
Ironically, it is during this period when youth are trying to discover themselves, that they feel a sense of powerlessness and marginality.

As a result, youth may reject the values of adult society as thrust upon them by adult-controlled schools and youth clubs and turn more to their "independent peer group structure." It is within such a structure that youth can "experiment with adult leadership and competitive roles, and also defend their autonomy, status and self-esteem against their powerlessness as non-adults" (Communication Research Trends, 5: 1 p. 3).

In this contradictory situation in which adolescents find themselves, music has two basic functions. It symbolizes their inclusion in a particular group and also defines their identity. Music satisfies a variety of needs during this turbulent transition to adulthood, and as such is part of the socialization process "for maintaining the integration and equilibrium of modern industrial societies" (Communication Research Trends, 5: 1 p. 3). Frith (1981) criticizes the above concept of youth mainly
because it treats youth as homogenous, and disregards the individuality of youth regardless of social class, employment opportunities, and level of education.

The different youth groups' uses of music were different not because some youth groups were more resistant to commercial pressures than others, not even because some groups were more organised in subcultural terms than others, but because the groups each had their own leisure needs and interests... " (Frith, 1981: p. 212).

The "consumer" approach presents another view of youth where "the leisure industries, popular media and advertising detected in the new teenage affluence, a major new market and deliberately created a teenage identity, especially among working class youth" (Communication Research Trends 5: 1 p. 5). According to British researcher Dick Hebdige, by the mid-1960s youth culture had become largely a commodity selection, of publicly stated preferences... For youths in search of an expressive medium, goods could function symbolically as 'weapons of exclusion,' as boundary markers, as a means of articulating identity and difference (Hebdige, 1982, P. 78).

Frith (1981), however, concluded from his research
that teenagers are not so easily manipulated and questioned whether consumer styles dictated identity and values. Rock music, for most youth, is simply the enjoyable background for other leisure activities.

The threat approach views youth as opposed to the industrial work ethic. In the 1950s in America and Britain, the fear was expressed in various publications, such as "Blackboard Jungle" that "the younger generation was ushering in a hedonistic style of leisure use that threatened the work ethic and the whole structure of Western political economy" (Communications Research Trends, 5:1, p. 3). Teenagers were portrayed as delinquent and violent.

Frith (1978, 1981) criticizes the simplicity of these descriptions which imply that the difference between the successful working class teenager, 'the college boy', interested in work and the unsuccessful delinquent 'corner boy' was simply a matter of free choice and values. Frith posits the view that leisure is not guided by choice but by capitalist ideology, that is, people work in order to be free in their leisure time.
According to Frith, "the most obvious expression of the work/leisure relationship is the weekend: Friday and Saturday nights are party times just because there's no work to go to the next morning" (Frith, 1981: p. 251). This point of view suggests that leisure is not really free time at all, but an organization of non-work that is determined by the relations of capitalist production (Frith, 1981).

Another approach, which predominated particularly in the 1960s, views youth as counter culture (Frith 1981), where in the 1960s, youth attempted to transform society from the hypocrisy of sexual repression and an economic system that depended on war industries (Communication Research Trends, 5 :1 p. Frith, however, argues that for the great majority of youth, rock music has never been the conscious language of a counter culture. He concluded on the basis of his research findings that "music was a fully conscious counter culture only for those few who found this a symbol for rejecting their given class culture, whether middle class youth rejecting
conventional "success" or working class rejecting the street" (Communication Research Trends, 50: 1 p. 4).

Yet another approach sees youth as a separate subculture. It is argued by structuralists (Brake, 1985) that structural conditions in the society, which are often experienced as class problems, give birth to subcultures.

Brake (1985) defines subcultures as meaning systems, modes of expression or lifestyles developed by groups in an inferior position in society. This is usually a response to the dominant meaning systems and is an attempt by these subordinate groups to solve structural conditions in society. As a result, a subculture has to develop new group meanings, as well as a cluster of behaviour action and values which have meaningful symbolism for those involved.

One significant feature of subculture is its style, as the symbolic use of style is an important aspect of a reference group. Members of a subculture learn that the behaviour indicating membership in a particular group includes the kind of clothes they wear, posture, gait,
their likes and dislikes, their conversations and the opinions they express (Brake, 1985).

Style has several important indicators (Brake, 1985). It signifies a commitment to a subculture and also indicates that one belongs to a particular subculture, "which by its appearance disregards or attacks dominant values." Style is usually a feature of youthful subcultures. Brake, (1985) defines style as consisting of three main elements:

1. Image, appearance composed of costume, accessories such as hair-style, jewelry and artifacts.

2. Demeanour, made up of expressions, gait and posture. Roughly this is what the actors wear and how they wear it.

3. Argot, a special vocabulary, and how it is delivered (Brake, 1985: p. 12).

Brake concludes that "style at a subcultural level acts as a form of argot, drawing upon costume and artefacts from a mainstream fashion context and translating these into its own rhetoric" (Brake, 1985, p. 14).
Music and Socialization

James Lull, (1985) who has done extensive research on Rock 'N' Roll music in the US, posits the view that music plays a major role in adolescent socialization, "a hegemonic process that teaches young people society's norms or rules" (p.367). Children's early socialization experiences are controlled by parents, the extended family, television, school and youth groups. However, in adolescence, children begin to assume control of their socialization.

Through music the child is routinely exposed to alternative perspectives on abstract topics, such as international politics and conflicts, human and civil rights, and energy development. Pop and rock music also introduces activities involving interpersonal conduct that are often not endorsed by authority figures close to home. Music serves to legitimize an opposition that speaks to the concerns of adolescents. (Lull, 1985, p. 367)

Music also gives adolescents cultural alternatives to the values and lifestyles of the dominant culture, (Lull, 1985) which is omnipresent in the media, the home, work, neighbourhood and school environments.

According to Lull, music also introduces themes
which are of interest to adolescents, but which are usually ignored, refuted or down played by "mainstream institutions" in society.

In Lull's view, music is also considered a "symbolic weapon" against "oppressive human institutions." Rock 'N' Roll, with its fast beat and the public lifestyle of its creator, is particularly suited to this kind of expression by adolescents.

The role that music plays in the socialization process of adolescents is unique, as it is used in ways which cannot be duplicated by other cultural forms. "It enhances social gatherings and sexual encounters. It can be used with alcohol and other drugs to intensify personal escape and to reduce inhibitions" (Lull, 1985, p.368).

Many of the uses made of music are not peculiar to music. Uses such as companionship, passing the time, relaxation, reality exploration, and distraction can also be realized through other media. However, the use adolescents make of music is unique, in that music symbolizes the lifestyles and values of musicians, which
on the whole differ from those of, for example, television writers.

Another view put forward by Lull is that the use of music by adolescents enhances socialization to the values and lifestyle model embraced by it.

Music's impact takes place at a physical level (moving to the beat, dancing, initiating performers, etc.); an emotional level ("feeling" the music, romanticizing, relating its themes to the experiences of the listener); and a cognitive level (processing information). Music appeals to and facilitates basic desires to socialize, dance, speak in contemporary codes, and to have a constant audio backdrop for other activities. (Lull, 1985, p. 368)

The variety of content that music has also increases its utility as an agent of socialization for adolescents (Lull, 1985). This is due to the fact that music has a variety of themes which positively validate issues that adolescents are interested in, such as sex and drugs. Also, many adolescents view the more spectacular and shocking artists (e.g., punks, long-haired rockers, dreadlocked reggae performers) as idealized protagonists of a seemingly unrestrained way of life, a dramatic contrast from the reality of their
One way that adolescents show loyalty to these unconventional stars is by imitating them in dress, language, and attitude, by playing their records, and tapes, by covering bedroom walls with posters of favourite musicians, and by adorning themselves with promotional paraphernalia such as T-shirts, jackets, badges and jewelry (Lull, 1985).

Adolescents also have easy access to music. This is due to the availability of records, albums and tapes. Those young people who cannot afford to purchase records or pre-recorded tapes have access to dubbing tapes.

Another attribute of music is its flexibility. Songs can be played at the listeners convenience at any location. Music can be experienced at any volume levels which gives adolescents a certain autonomy. Listening to music loudly in a public place is a statement in itself. "Adolescents can assert independence dramatically by a display of audio strength that sends a message that the person who controls the music also controls the immediate environment" (Lull, 1985, p. 369).
The theoretical framework in this chapter was deduced from research conducted in western industrialized countries. Although some similarities do exist between developing and developed countries, there are many differences. Research in developing countries has yet to show how applicable these theories are to developing countries such as Jamaica, where factors including poverty and high unemployment, have to be taken into consideration.

3.2 Methodology

I have elected to use the single case study design because it is more adaptable to dealing with the multiple realities of youth and popular music interaction in Jamaica. Also, case studies best answer "how and "why" questions which are the focus of this study. Additionally, the case study approach is preferred when examining contemporary events over which the investigator has little or no control. Although the case study relies on many of the techniques of other qualitative research strategies, it adds two sources of evidence, direct observation and systematic interviewing.
It is Yin's (1984) view that the case study's unique strength is its ability to deal with a full variety of evidence - documents, artifacts, interviews and observations. The single case can also represent a significant contribution to knowledge and theory building and can help refocus future investigations in an entire field.

The primary methods were interviews and observations. The core data were comprised of transcripts of interviews, document analysis and field notes. Primary data were gathered from 14-15 year-old youth representative of significant groupings in urban Jamaica, since in previous studies, social class was found to be the most significant variable (Cuthbert, 1985). Open-ended questions were utilized and interviews tape recorded.

Data Collection

1. Actual instances of youth involvement with popular music in natural contexts, for example, places which youth in Jamaica frequent such as record shops, school dances/fêtes, parties, open air dances and minibuses
I also talked with youth in these settings. These observations in natural contexts suggested lines of questioning I pursued with youth during the in-depth interviews.

2. In-depth interviews were conducted by the researcher with eight individual respondents, representative of significant groups of youth in the society. These comprised four working class students from Excelsior High and Vauxhall Secondary schools; two middle class youth from Excelsior High and two upper middle class youth from Campion College. Socio-economic categories were based on the earnings of the main income earner in the household. Open-ended questions were used and all interviews were tape recorded. The framework for the interviews was based on elements identified in the literature, relating to the exposure and consumption of popular music (Lull, 1985).

Areas covered included:

a. Exposure — The amount of time spent in the presence of music.

b. Consumption — Any learning that is accomplished
as a result of exposure. Learning can have
cognitive and emotional dimensions.

c. **Use** - refers to how music is employed in the
daily lives of listeners. For example, are the
respondents passive receivers of music, or do
they dance to music (active receivers)? How is
music used in private situations in the family,
the peer group, in public settings? Do the
respondents control these situations or are they
imposed?

d. **Attributes of music** - Refers to the rhythm and
lyrics of music. What is important to each
respondent and for what reasons.

e. **Delivery Systems** - This refers to how music is
transmitted to the listener, i.e., the live
situations involved and the type of media used,
for example, records, tapes, radio, film,
television, video and sound systems. Live
situations include minibuses, school fetes,
parties, open-air dances and record shops.

3. Documentation consisted of examining mainly
mainly examining current newspaper articles on the state of popular music in Jamaica and its likely effect on youth.

4. Commentary on the nature of the youth and music interaction was recorded from the call-in shows on radio.

5. An interview was conducted with Jamaican musical analyst Garth White who has done extensive research on reggae music.

6. Journal entries, consisting of ongoing notes to myself about insights and new concepts which emerged during the course of the research, were used in the data analysis.

7. A questionnaire based on the main themes of the interviews was administered to the eight respondents to triangulate the findings on their feelings about popular music (See Appendix A).
**Data Analysis**

Data analysis utilized the inductive approach as described by authors such as, Carney (1987), Yin (1984), Loftland and Loftland (1984), and Miles and Huberman (1984). The inductive approach begins with the proposition that each social action has its own unique system. In order for the investigator to respond to these unique qualities, he or she has the responsibility to provide an interpretation from the respondent’s perspective. This means that the researcher has to discover and then adopt the respondent’s perspective.

Qualitative research is also preservationistic. That is, it attempts to preserve the individual within the context of the social setting. This is done by using the actual words, providing lengthy descriptions of performances and showing detailed representations of the artifacts used by the individuals observed. Naturally occurring behavior is the fundamental evidence in the arguments of qualitative research.
In qualitative research the researcher uses theory to focus its object of interest. The qualitative researcher's aim is not necessarily to verify theory but to add to theory grounded in its research findings.

Data was searched for themes and patterns. As themes and patterns emerged, a method of categorization and constant comparison which searched for synthesis was employed.

A "significant other," a person knowledgeable about the music and youth interaction in Jamaica, as suggested by Yin (1984) and Carney (1987), reviewed the draft case study report. In his interpretivism methodology, Carney's "significant other" is someone very close to the "informant," who is able to assess the accuracy of the informant's picture of reality.
CHAPTER 4

REVIEW OF FINDINGS

The respondents were chosen from schools located in different sections of Kingston. Vauxhall Secondary is located in a ghetto area of eastern Kingston, while Excelsior is located in a mixed income area of Kingston. Campion College is located in up town Kingston and is one of the elite schools. A teacher at each school selected the students according to socio-economic background.

The youth who participated in this study were chosen because they were within the 14-15 year-old age range and their socio-economic backgrounds. Socio-economic background was based on the earnings of the main income earner in the household.

The various "sites" that I visited to observe the youth/popular music interaction in natural settings are also described in detail below. These include: two open-air dances, minibuses, a birthday party, a school fete/dance and record shops.
4.1 Case: A

Christopher is a 14 year-old student who attends Campion College, a government-aided Roman Catholic school, which, because of its high standards, attracts many of the best students, and is one of the elite co-educational schools of uptown Kingston. His father is a businessman and they live in an upper middle class residential area in Constant Spring, Kingston. Chris owns a radio cassette player and a television set. There is also a satellite dish installed at his home. His favourite music is rock, (new wave) followed by reggae, soul and calypso. He finds rock music stimulating. Reggae requires a lot of concentration because of "the words, you could say it works on the mind, and calypso is just fun, like it makes you feel crazy or something. The beat catches you, makes you want to dance."

"His favourite soul singers are Gregory Abbott and Whitney Houston. His favourite rock group is Wham. Tiger, Admiral Bailey, General Trees and Chicken Chest are his favourite singers. In his opinion, a number of artists "just bring out fun in people, while some
lyrics, such as Tiger’s ‘Wanga Gut,’ teaches you not to be greedy, and ‘Can’t Tan Yah Soh’ teaches you that if you’re bad you can’t stay, you have to leave. Another reggae song that has meaning is ‘Nah Lej Yah Soh.’ It tells you that Jamaica is a nice island... ‘so don’t leave.’ It says that if they send him to go and work in foreign, he is going to come back here and live. In reggae, Tiger is teaching you a lesson.”

Soul music and disco he says, "are more pertaining to love. They talk to you about their lovers and who they want."

He sees calypso as mainly "spreading news. It is really more like gossip. There is this tune called ‘Curry Tobaca.’ This guy had an Indian girl friend, so she left him and he called her ‘Curry Tobaca.’ We in Jamaica hear news of this wealthy businessman Kirpilani in Trinidad. Most of the time calypsos have a political message as they tell you what’s going on in their countries."

Although Christopher has never been to a pop music concert (stage show), he had his own views about what
went on at them. In his view, reggae concerts in Jamaica brought people from different strata in the society together, "whether it be from the middle class or something it brings them all in. It's also a place where you go with friends. I don't think you would go there alone and feel comfortable."

His view of concerts in the U.S. is somewhat different. He thinks that there is more of a crowd at U.S. concerts and that people go there for different reasons. Sometimes they go to see their favourite performer or to hear the music or just to say they were there. He doesn't view the drug problem at concerts as serious.

His first exposure to the music that he likes is on MTV, a music channel transmitted by satellite from the U.S. In his view, seeing the music video first helps him to get the meaning of the song. He watches JBC television sometimes and thinks that the station plays an equal amount of local and foreign videos. He doesn't purchase records although sometimes at his request his father will buy records for him. He mostly borrows tapes from his friends and dubs them.
When he listens to reggae music he pays particular attention to the rhythm, whereas with soul, he listens to the lyrics. Christopher plays music loudly. When he is studying, he listens to soul music, and sometimes reggae. Reggae can be distracting as "sometimes the word get so complex, that you start trying to figure out what the person is saying." This is not so on all occasions as he memorizes the words of the music. This way he doesn't have to concentrate on the words.

He plays music almost 24 hours per day, when he is not in school. "I just love music. I just can't do without it." His biggest problem at home with the music has to do with the volume. "I blast it, I can't listen to music low. I have trouble there. My mom will burst into my room and turn it off. And after she leaves, I turn it up and she can't be bothered to come back."

He feels that music can influence someone to behave particular way. "Heavy metal, which is hard heavy rock, mostly electric guitar, gets you to be destructive. Some of them even get into devil worship. Rock and
reggae I don't think there is anything to worry about except with the drugs."

He doesn't always copy the particular style which his favourite pop singer wears. Only if the style suits him, and even then he would only wear it to a party.

Christopher feels that music does teach you about life. "Some of the reggae music, like some of the Bob Marley ... kind of expresses that life is hard, whereas disco music they tell me that life is easy." And in his opinion "some music gives you some pointers about relationships."

His father likes the soul music that he listens to, but only likes some of the reggae that he listens to. They also share the same interest in calypso. Generally, he feels that older people don't like the kind of music that their children play "because the music in their day was very sober. Nowadays it is not so and it's very influential." He thinks that some young people's life styles are affected by the music particularly in the U.S. "Not many of us are fortunate to afford the expense to change your lifestyle to be like your favourite singer."
Christopher doesn't think he will have a problem getting a job when he leaves school, because of the particular career that he intends to pursue. However, he is cognizant of the fact that it is not easy for most people to find jobs in Jamaica. He doesn't think that reggae music affects people's behaviour. He thinks it's to do with "where you grow up, which area of Kingston you live in, uptown as against living in a ghetto area."

Christopher doesn't think life is better in another country. However, he thinks the main reasons why Jamaicans migrate is because there are more jobs available in other countries.

4.2 Case: B

Rosemary is a 15 year-old student also attending Campion College. Her father is a Managing Accountant and she lives in an upper, middle class area. She owns her own radio and audio cassette player. There is a television and video recorder in her home.

Her favourite pop music are disco, reggae and soul, while her favourite performers are Wham, Whitney
Houston, Diana Ross and Janet Jackson.

Rosemary likes to listen to soul music because it helps her to think clearly. "It helps me to do my homework. It helps me to concentrate. Some people couldn't do this, but I can." She likes to dance to reggae, "anything with a beat I am just ready to dance to it."

Rosemary has never been to a pop concert. She is first introduced to the music that she likes from her friends, and when she hears it on the radio she will pay particular attention to it. "And then later on you see it on T.V., you just love it, you know you are tied to this song because of the beat and the words." She is first attracted to music by "its beat and then to the words to which she gives a lot of thought."

She doesn't purchase records. Her step-father usually does. "I usually tape music off the radio and I usually dub it from my friends. Then I play it over and over again until I get tired of it. Then I scrub it and tape more songs."
Rosemary listens to music constantly. She also turns up the music very loudly. "Well, on the weekend straight-through, even if I am outside I want to hear the music, so I turn it up... so I can say I listen to it all through the day unless I am watching TV. Her parents only complain if it is disturbing them. "They say something, then I just turn it down a little bit, then later on it goes right up."

Rosemary fantasizes while she listens to music. "If I listen to soul music, disco or reggae, I just turn on the ballet artist in myself and start pointing my toes, and twirling around doing twirls and stuff like that. And sometimes if I hear really good music fast I go into gymnastics, because that's one of my favourite sports."

Although she admires the clothes her favourite performers wear, she really wouldn't go out of her way to get what they have. "Sometimes I want to buy it, but then again it's expensive." Her mother influences her choice of hair styles, as she feels her mother has good taste.
The only type of music that teaches her anything about life is soul music. "There is a great deal of love in these songs. I only notice love in it."

Some music she prefers to listen to alone so that she can engage in her fantasy. However, "if I have this good tape, I would want to share it with somebody, to let them hear it. If I really think it sounds good I also want to hear what they think of it."

Her mother and grandmother like the kind of music she plays. "They sometimes tell me to turn it up, even Funanny. It is banned off the radio. That's how bad it is. It's number one in the charts, even though it's banned, they still like to hear it. However, when I sing it she says, 'Rosemary, please.'"

Rosemary thinks that young people are affected by popular music more drastically in the U.S. than in Jamaica, and gives the example of the boy who killed himself because his parents wouldn't allow him to do plastic surgery in order to look like Michael Jackson. "Young people in Jamaica cannot afford to be that way as it would be far too expensive."
Rosemary doesn't think she will have a problem getting a job as she wants to be a psychologist. If she doesn't meet the academic requirements she will become a hairdresser and have her own business. "If I really try my hardest to do what I want to do I can succeed." She is aware that jobs are hard to come by in Jamaica, which she attributes to overpopulation. Despite that she thinks there is something for everyone. She also believes that having no jobs causes crimes. She thinks too, that friends can influence you to commit crimes.

She is not sure that the quality of life is automatically better in another country. In her view, it depends on which country it is and how populated the country is. However, she concludes that since Jamaica is overpopulated, there may be another place that has jobs and needs Jamaicans.

4.3 Case: C

Patricia is a 15 year-old student at Excelsior High School, a government-aided school, located in eastern Kingston. Children attending this school come from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. Her father is a self-employed mechanic. She lives in a middle income
area of St. Andrew, near Kingston. She doesn't have a
satellite dish at home.

Her favourite music is soul and reggae. Her
favourite soul singers are Luther Van Dross, Gregory
Hinds, Stevie Wonder, Kenny Rogers and Lionel Ritchie.
Her favourite reggae singers are General Trees,
Lieutenant Stitchie, Tiger and Peter Metro. In her
view, soul music helps her to relax, which makes her
study better. "Reggae music is when I feel bored and
want something to do. I just listen to it, I feel like
dancing so I get up and dance."

She has been to one live concert in the U.S. and
one in Jamaica. In the U.S., she went to see Diana
Ross, while in Jamaica she saw General Trees. "Both
shows were very different. At the Dianna Ross show,
most people sat, while at the General Trees show, most
people were dancing."

She has attended fêtes held at her school at the
end of each term. This is the way she gets some
exposure to reggae music. At these fêtes the music is
usually provided by a disco called the 'Scull Bracers.'
"These are the kinds of sets that play here, it's a lot
different from a session, because with a session sometimes you have live artists, but with a fete it's just records, you just go in and enjoy yourself. It's like a party mostly.

Patricia listens mostly to the words and sometimes to the beat, "like General Trees 'Minibus.' He is talking about the minibuses and conductors and Lieutenant Stitchie, he is talking about 'size' about girls who won't wear the correct size shoes for their feet in order to make them appear small."

A good pop song for her "is how that song lets me react to certain things, like Luther Vandross and Gregory Hinds 'There is Nothing Better Than Love.' That is a very nice song. It tells you a little about loving one another and Whitney Houston's 'I Believe the Children are our Future.' That is telling some of the parents that they must be more careful about what they are saying to their kids."

She mostly dances to music or has it in the background while she is working or if the other children are not in the house she will play music in the living room. "My sister mostly likes soul music. Sometimes
she says that reggae music is garbage and I quarrel with her and tell her it's not like that. My brother, on the whole he hates soul music and mostly listens to reggae."

She also gets exposure to music on the minibuses. "Most of the buses I have been in like from Town to Havendale, there is a 35 and that bus plays mostly soul in the afternoon, and about 7 p.m. in the night going up to 10 p.m. they play reggae. The majority of the time you hear people saying that they want to hear songs like, 'Punaany.' But some of the time there are a few people who say they don't want to hear it and will come off the bus."

The beat of these banned songs appeals to her. "Because there are other songs that come off the same beat like 'Want Jehovah' and 'Want the Irish and Potato' and other songs." If she listens to the words carefully, she gets turned off the music.

Patricia doesn't think that her style of dress is influenced by her favourite performers as she dresses to suit the occasion: "If I am going to a party, I dress in party mood. On Saturdays when I come in from work, I
don't feel like going to church and my mother forces me to go to church on Sundays. Sometimes I will dress sloppy, like wear my jeans and T-shirt."

Patricia's next door neighbour is heavily influenced by her favourite performers. "She behaves weird, sometimes she dresses like a punk rock group in the States. She dyes her hair, starches it and wears it to school. When she is going out her clothes is half torn and all kinds of things. Most of the time she watches satellite television. She watches the musical videos. Almost every Saturday she has a new style. It's really crazy."

Sometimes her mother disapproves of the music she plays and calls it "boogoyaga" music. Her mother also complains about the loudness of the music. "I call it my wake up clock...and she complains about what kind of garbage this is? If the music is too low I don't get the force of the song."

Music has meaning for her as "soul music teaches you how to love and how to help each other in need. Reggae is telling you how some Jamaicans behave in
certain situations." Calypso doesn't have much meaning for her. "When I went to carnival up by U.W.I., it had nothing in it for me. It was just the beat and the carnival jumping up and down."

Depending on the mood she is in Patricia sometimes wants to listen to music on her own. At other times "I tend to want to have company around me when I am listening to music and we talk about the music and sometimes what we think about it."

She sometimes buys albums and cassette tapes although she finds them very expensive. The cost of the cassette tapes is dependent on the type of cassette and how recent the song is.

Patricia thinks that her chances of getting a job are good, as she wants to become a pilot and is taking the required subjects in school. She doesn't think this is the case with all young people who leave school. "Most of the time when they leave school they are at home because most of them do business subjects or arts subjects and the way it is in Jamaica the business market is very full. The line is very long." She
thinks the opportunities are better for earning more money in the U.S. as the business sector over there "is full of new ideas."

4.4 Case: D

Sean is 14 years-old and attends Excelsior High School, a government-aided school located in eastern Kingston. Children attending this school come from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. His father is an administrator in the Civil Service and his mother is a nurse. He lives in Norman Gardens in Eastern Kingston, a housing estate that has middle and working class residents. He owns his own radio and cassette player. There is a television set at home. He doesn't have a satellite dish and so he watches mainly local television.

His favourite music is soul and reggae. He doesn't have favourite singers, only favourite songs. He likes soul music because it relaxes him and he likes reggae because of the beat. Although he is attracted to music by the beat, he listens mostly to the words. "The words really help you to learn things, songs like 'We are the
World." The local songs help you with the everyday activity of life."

The performance of the singer is also important as he feels that this adds to the attractiveness of a song. "The words make the song a good song and how the musician moves his body to the song he is singing. In the 'Wanga Gut' video, Stitchie shows what a 'wanga gut' person would do and what causes that person to try to 'back-bite' his own friends."

He first hears the pop music that he likes at fetes and sessions. Fetes, he says, "are places you go to dance with members of the opposite sex", while at sessions, "you have live artists and records being played."

When Sean listens to music he usually dances to it. Music also helps him to concentrate and do his homework. He shares a room with his younger brother, and although he listens to his own radio, he and his brother do not have the same musical taste. "My brother sometimes does not want to listen to the music that I am listening to and he might turn off the radio or something like that.
He mainly likes reggae music.

He feels that reggae music, along with smoking and drinking at dances and sessions, sometimes brings out the worst behaviour in people. "When you go to dance and so on, reggae music to some persons means that you would want to exert yourself in a vile manner. Just like you have these bad men who become very hostile after they been listening to the reggae music, drinking and smoking and so forth."

Sean is not influenced by the kind of clothes that his favourite singers wear. "Normally these people tend to dress exaggerated in the wearing of their clothes. They spend a lot of money on needless things." He is not affected by the philosophy of Rastafarianism and he feels that young people are not affected either. "The Rasta business only influence adults, it don't influence children, most of those Rastas dress their children in their manner."

His parents do not like the music that he likes and prefer to stick to music of the past. When he listens to 'oldies' he wants "to get the radio as high as you
can because they tend to have a certain feeling."

Calypsos he feels is music for older people. He learns a lot from reggae music. "Most of the singers they tend to discriminate a lot against some people. Like they tend to discriminate against homosexuality, "thieving" and all evil, that's what I find fascinating about reggae music." Rock music he says "makes you feel crazy, but you don't tend to show it on the street or to other people."

He enjoys foreign musical videos more than the local ones. "The local music videos, sometimes they don't give you the feeling to dance or something, but the foreign music videos let you feel energetic. It's the beat of the music. They have more facilities to get at the beat and instruments to make it sound good."

Whether or not he listens to music with friends depends on the situation and the mood he is in. "When I am at home me and my friends tend to listen to the music, it's like it brings the friendship closer together. Most of the time I like to be with people. If you enjoy listening to the music too then I enjoy
being with you even more."

He doesn't purchase records, and he either buys or exchanges cassettes with friends in the same way that he exchanges video tapes.

Sean does not think that he will have a problem getting a job because he will have the necessary qualification. Some students he knows won't have their qualifications and so he thinks will have a hard time finding jobs. He thinks that there are more jobs available abroad than in Jamaica. Also the fact that there are more Universities abroad as opposed to only one in Jamaica is a distinct advantage. Jobs are scarce because there are too few business places. In his estimation, the economic situation will get worse "because everyday you have more people added to the population, there is no hope of improvement, if the economy does expand."

4.5 Case: F

Jackie is 15 years-old and also attends Excelsior High School which has been profiled in the two previous
cases.

The main wage earner in Jackie's family is her mother who works as a domestic helper. She lives in the Nannyville, Kingston, a low income area. She doesn't own her own radio or cassette player, but there is one in the house. There is no TV in her house but she has access to a neighbour's.

Her favourite music is soul and reggae. Music helps her to relax, particularly soul music. "If I want to think about anything, I just sit down and listen to the music and it stimulates my mind. Reggae music teaches you about everyday life, what kinds of things affect you. Calypso on the other hand, "gets you excited and energetic. It really don't have nothing to it."

She listens mainly to the words. "I like to listen to the words of Freddie Jackson, 'Have you Ever Loved Somebody,' 'The Sweetest Taboo,' Luther Vandross' 'Stop to Love' and 'So Amazing,' and Lionel Ritchie. They tend to bring out the best in me."

She likes to watch musical videos as it increases the meaning of the song for her. "When you see it on a
musical video, how the people respond to it, how he moves his body and generally what his song is all about."

Jackie believes that the reason the Jamaica Broadcasting Corporation (JBC) television shows more foreign than local videos is because they believe that Jamaicans are already aware of their own music. She thinks that they should show 50% of each. She feels that American music is technically better than local music because "they have synthesizers. They have the most up to date computer equipment for the music, so they get them right."

Music has an effect on her and makes her want to dance. "It depends on where I am, if I am at home I move my body to the music, but in the bus, I act polite."

She first hears the music she likes on the radio or in minibuses. "Some minibuses specialize in reggae, others specialize in soul and there are others that mix it. Most of them love to play reggae. Hardly any of them play soul. Some music have derogatory words and
is not fit for little children to hear, like 'You Want Funanny.' Although those pieces of music are banned from being played on the air, most of the Jamaican people like them. A minority of people call in (to the radio stations) and say that their children are travelling on the bus and they don't like that kind of music."

Jackie is concerned that many of the reggae songs portray women in a demeaning manner. "Most of the slack songs refer to the young girls of today and when you on the bus they think of you in the same way the song is saying of you. Sometimes it's just awful."

She is not influenced by the kind of clothes her favourite performer wears. "Some of them wear some crazy colours. Some of them have some crazy, kinky hair styles. And if you suppose to copy them, you wouldn't fit in your kind of society... how it fits you and how much you pay for it determines what you wear."

Some older people do not like the kind of music she likes. "My grandmother says she don't like the music because most of the musicians use drugs. She says it
doesn't come from them so she doesn't appreciate that kind of music."

She plays music loudly because "when the radio is low is like you not feeling the music."

Jackie has mixed feelings about listening to music with her friends. "It depends on the kind of people, because when you listen to the songs, they tend to talk it out. You don't get to hear what you want to hear out of it, but it's good when you have company. We kind of talk about a lot of things and you tend to hear new things about the music."

She doesn't think that she will have a problem getting a job when she leaves school. She thinks that "if you had more able-bodied people running the country, then the living and housing conditions would improve."

4.6 Case: F

Josseth is 15 years-old and attends Excelsior High School. The main wage earner in her household is a domestic helper. She lives in the Mountain View area, a part of Kingston occupied mainly by working class
people. She does not own a radio or cassette player but there is one available in the house. However, there isn't a television available in her house but she has access to watching local television.

Her favourite music is reggae and soul, "I like reggae music like the ones that General Trees, Tiger and Stitchie sing. I like reggae music because it keeps me occupied, like when I am bored I can listen to it and enjoy myself and sometimes, dance." Joseth hears music that she likes on the radio and at parties and get-togethers. She also borrows tapes from her friends or tapes music that she likes from the radio. She also hears it on the minibus. Music that is not fit for air play is sometimes played on the minibus.

Reggae has meaning for her as "reggae teaches you a lot about how people live and their attitude towards others." She listens to both the music and the beat of songs: "Words like in the song 'Wanga Gut' by Tiger, because the words describe certain kinds of people, bad-minded people. Because people should not be bad-minded and when he sings it, it should have some effect on them."
The mood she is in determines whether she wants company around her or not, while she is listening to music. "Because some of the music if I am angry it stirs up my anger, like reggae music."

Her mother mainly likes soul music while her father prefers reggae.

Josseth doesn't think that she will have problems getting a job. "I know this lady that has a business place and she tells me that when I leave school I can get a job at her place." She believes it is easier to get a job abroad than in Jamaica "because over here it is too poor the government can't afford to give you enough money."

4.7 Case: 6

Gary is a 15 year-old student at Vauxhall secondary School, a government school, which has an intake of students who failed to gain places in one of the local high schools. It is located in an eastern Kingston ghetto area and has students who come mainly from working class backgrounds. He lives in Franklyn Town, a working class area of Kingston. His father is a taxi-
driver and welder. Gary owns a radio but does not have cassette player although one is located in his home. There is a television set in his home and so he watches mainly local TV.

His favourite music is country and western because it tells him stories. His favourite singer is Kenny Rogers. Although he likes to listen to some of the music in the top 10, he doesn’t think some of them should be there, “like L.T. Stitchie singing about all kinds of things I don’t really waan talk bout.”

He has been to a stage show to watch General Trees and other DJ’s perform. “I liked it. Him was singing about all kinds of things like ‘Minivan,’ that was one of my favourite songs. General Trees shows you how people behave in a minibus.” He thinks that they perform well on videos, whereas at the stage shows “they mostly running up and down.” The people like it because they make a lot of noise an bawl out ‘forward.’”

Gary listens to his father’s audio-cassette tapes. His mother has a component set which he listens to as she plays it on Sundays while she is doing her housework. “She puts on Christian music.” He sometimes
goes to parties "but he doesn't like dancing."

He usually hears the songs that he ends up liking on 'sets' playing in the neighbourhood. "Sometimes they play some slack songs, sometimes they play some good songs. He is influenced by his father's choice of music. "My father love to buy country and western records. Sometimes, he buys Kenny Rogers, the one he sings about 'Twenty Years Ago'...My father buys plenty of this."

Songs have meaning for him. "Sometimes it gives me courage; that's not always. Kenny Rogers sing a song about fighting. This man whose father killed a man and before his father died, he told him not to do things that he used to do. Sometimes I feel like I am in the guy's place."

Gary is not influenced by his favourite singer. "I dress the way I want to dress, like Tiger dressing up in earrings and all them thing there, some a them will follow him and do all them thing there."

He says that he likes the foreign artists because "they perform a lot of soft songs that make me feel like
singing. Soft songs like Chrystal Gale sings makes you feel good." He listens to music by himself only.

He doesn't think that he will have problems getting a job, as he wants to join the army or be a policeman. "The only problem I will have is to pass the test to get in the army."

He doesn't think that there are plenty of jobs around. However, he believes that if young people work hard in school, they will find jobs when they leave.

4.8 CASE: H

Karen is 15 years-old and attends Vauxhall Secondary School, a government-aided school, which has an intake of students who failed to gain places in one of the local high schools. Vauxhall is located in eastern Kingston and has an intake of students from mainly working class backgrounds. She lives in the eastern Kingston a predominantly working class area. Her father is a bookbinder and her mother is a nursing assistant.
Her favourite music is reggae and her favourite performers are Peter Metro and General Trees. She likes the beat of reggae music and how the singers perform. She thinks that some of the music in the top 20 deserves to be there while others shouldn't be there "as they are not really clean. Yellowman is on the top 10 and the guy who sings 'Lady in Red.' It's just nice."

Karen hasn't been to a stageshow to see any of these singers perform, although she has seen them perform on television. She hears most of the music she likes on radio and "sometimes you hear music on the street and travelling in buses."

She sometimes buys records and has bought 'Wanna Gut,' 'Minivan' and 'Fifty Dollar Bill.' "I buy them because they have meaning, some people are really craven and they don't satisfy with things you give to them. Not everything you see people have you must grudge them for."

She does not copy her favourite performer's mode of dress, as she dresses to suit herself. "Most of my friends enjoy the kind of music I enjoy, but they don't
dress like the singers either. Some of them try to
dance the way the singer’s dance, that’s all."

She listens to music mainly on Saturdays when
she has the time. She sometimes listens to music in the
mornings and after school, as the radio is usually on in
her house.

Her mother does not like the kind of music she
plays, as she is a Christian. However, she doesn’t mind
Karen listening to her musical preference “but sometimes
the way that I turn up the radio loud upsets her.”

Karen thinks that too many foreign videos are shown
on television “and only sometimes they show the people
that I like. I think they should show more local than
foreign videos.”

She likes to listen to "soft" music by her self,
"but reggae music I like to listen to with my friends." She
doesn’t always like the songs her friends enjoy,
“like ‘Punaany.’ I don’t really like it because its
vulgar. They hear it on the streets, on the busses,
when they are going home, because it’s not fit for air
play. When you walking on the street, you hear music
coming out of people's houses or from record shops and a lot of school children stand at the record shops to hear the songs."

She thinks it will be hard to get a job when she leaves school, as she wants to be a secretary. Her sister she said managed to get a job as a telephone operator.

Observations in Natural Settings

My visits to the various research sites -- open-air dances, minibuses, a birthday party, a school dance/fete and record shops -- are described at length, because I was able to observe youth and adults from various social classes interacting with popular music in natural settings.

4.9 Rae Town

When I visited the Rae Town 'Oldies Session' in June, 1987, it had been going for just over four years. "Oldies sessions" is used to describe the venue because musical hits -- not necessarily local -- from
the 50s and 60s were the main attraction. The "Oldies Session" is held at a bar called Capricorn Inn located on Rae Street, Rae Town, eastern Kingston. The Inn became the place to go on a Sunday night, "like a weekly pilgrimage for hundreds of Jamaicans from all walks of life, as well as tourists, who almost outnumber the locals. Rae Town had become very popular especially for "uptown" people trying to find their roots" (Henry, 1987, p. 3).

Rae Street is located in eastern Kingston and is almost impassable on a Sunday night due to the large number of people assembled there. Although located in the ghetto area of Kingston, visitors from uptown wear their jewelry and carry their purses without fear, as each Sunday night Rae Town is safe, made secure by the residents themselves who police the area. This protection is offered to the people who visit Rae Town by the residents, because Rae Town's success ensures them a steady income each week as they peddle food, liquor and other commodities to the visitors.
I visited Rae Town on eight occasions during the period June to August, 1987. On those occasions youth were observed interacting with the music in several ways. Those youth who were visiting were there primarily to enjoy themselves. They ranged in age from 15 upwards and were quite distinguishable from the local youth, whose sole purpose was to 'hustle' a living.

The youth visiting the area were usually dressed in the very latest fashion originating from North America and Europe. Acid-washed and stone-washed jeans were very much in evidence. Their hair style also reflected the black North American look either jherri curled or cut in the latest in style. Those youths from the area either had their hair braided in its natural state or straightened using curling tongs. Cost is a factor in determining hair style as chemical straighteners and curls are very expensive.

Many youth stand very close to the huge sound systems (speaker boxes) and dance to the music. These are usually young working class boys, who show off the latest dance steps to each other. Youth and adults
alike sing along with the records being played, while they dance to the music. The dance steps originate from the grass roots, and reflects the African heritage of the majority. Hips move in a very erotic fashion and the tempo changes according to the type of music being played, as each has its own particular style.

Interspersed in the language of adults and youth are expressions such as "hol a fresh" and "she must wear her size" and "im is a boops," expressions popularized by reggae songs. Many of the youths who reside in the area are primarily concerned with making a few dollars. Some run errands such as purchasing food and liguor for patrons, others collect empty bottles and return them to the bar for a few cents or sell them the next day to help boost the family income.

Many of these youths who bob and weave through the crowd are as young as eight years old. Their clothes are for the most part clean but well-worn and some are barefooted. These youths spontaneously move to the music even while hustling. There is an unwritten rule forbidding begging in this location.
The music is played in several sections: oldies, soul music/disco and current reggae hits. Oldies predominate in the latter part of the night, while current reggae hits predominate in the early part of the night.

4.10 **Open-air Dance in a Local Shopping Centre**

Harbour View is a predominantly middle class area in Kingston with working class as well as a few upper middle class income earners resident there. Open-air dances are held in the local plaza, sometimes once a month or more, as a promotional gimmick by bar owners who want to attract more patrons.

These dances attract old and young alike. Children as young as six years old are seen at their parents' side, though youth and older people predominate. Adults and some youths see these dances as a chance to peddle their wares, while others are there to socialize and have fun.
Youth, mainly boys, dance in groups very close to the speaker boxes, and some choose to lean on these boxes. Although there are some youth wearing stone/acid-washed jeans, most are dressed in other casual fashions that they can afford. The only evidences of rasta style are bracelets and belts. Some of the older men and women, from an adjoining community (Bull Bay) -- who are rastafarians -- have their hair in locks and wear tams.

4.11 Minibuses

The main public transportation system in Jamaica is minibuses, which are small buses, imported mainly from Japan, with the capacity to transport (depending on size) 30 to 60 people comfortably. In reality, many more people are packed into these buses as the system is inadequate. The section of the population most affected by the inadequacy of the transportation system are the youth and children, as they pay half fare, and so are often the last to be transported.

One feature common to most minibuses is the capacity to play loud music. Much to the annoyance of
the older passengers, minibus's speaker boxes usually blare out the latest reggae hits, many of which are banned from air play because of their vulgar and crude lyrics.

The passengers have no say as to the calibre of music played on these buses as they are either the driver's or the conductor's choice. Much to the consternation of older passengers, youth will sometimes endorse the music being played or ask the driver to play a particular "tune" or shout requests to the driver to turn up the volume.

As a result, the two local radio call-in shows during the period under study, had many calls decrying the lyrics of these DJ style songs, which although banned from air play, are played on these buses. The main complaint was that DJ style songs were contributing to the moral degeneracy of Jamaican society, youth in particular.

Very often the music on these buses is so loud that the driver does not hear the passenger's request to
stop, which was the case in several minibuses I travelled in, and this started many quarrels between passengers and drivers. The routes I travelled on included the Harbour View to Downtown Kingston route and from Papine to Half Way Tree.

4.12 Birthday Party

The more affluent youth who can afford to have their own parties usually do so. These are mainly middle and upper class youth. This is a popular leisure activity among youth, who are either invited to these parties or who "crash" them. These youngsters get the opportunity to show off the latest fashion and dance steps. Depending on the size of the party a disco is hired, or a home component set is used.

I visited a birthday party held towards the end of June for a 14 year-old high school student living in a middle class area of Kingston. At this party, a component set was used to relay the music. Many of the youth provided tapes with their favourite music. Notably absent from the music played was the current number one song 'Punaany,' a vulgar song declared unfit
for air play by both radio stations.

However, several versions using the rhythm of the song were played and some of the youngsters did sing the words of 'Punaany.' I asked the 14 year-old host of the party why this record was not played and she told me that it was at her parents' request.

Most of the records played at this party were reggae, mainly DJ style music. A few calypso and disco songs were also played. Reggae tunes were no doubt the most popular at the party, as many youths got up to dance when reggae was played.

There were about forty youth present, more girls than boys. This may have been due to the fact that this girl attended an all girls' school. They danced in groups, but not necessarily in pairs.

The youth present were mainly from middle class areas. A few working class student was also present. Others came from mixed neighbourhoods like Harbour View and Vineyard Town.

Adults were present at this party which was highly
supervised.

4.13 **School Fete/Dance**

Cultural events at local secondary and high schools include annual barbecues and end of term fetes held usually at the end of the Summer and Christmas terms. These events are usually to raise funds for the school building and social programmes. At barbecues, young people from their respective schools show off their talents in dance and song. Artists, because of their large following in a school, sometimes donate their time free of charge to some of these events. At the fetes, disco operators or sound system operators with a reputation for playing the music that youth like, and who have a following at a particular school, are usually contracted to provide the music.

At the particular fete that I visited at one of the local girls high schools in June 1987, the disco operator played a variety of music including reggae, calypso and some disco. By far the most popular music was the DJ style songs, which set the youth to dancing. The songs which were excessively vulgar were
not played; instead, modified versions (instrumentals) were used. Boys and girls danced together, some in pairs, but most in groups. Many were clustered around the huge speaker boxes.

The style of dress again was predominantly North American. Stone-washed or acid-washed jeans were the most popular. Those who could not afford stone-washed jeans which sell at J$100.00 wore other casual clothes.

At these school fêtes, a cross-section of youths from different socio-economic backgrounds were present.

4.14 Record Shops

A cluster of youths are usually to be found rocking or dancing to music outside record shops. These record shops are located in various sections of the corporate area. These youth are usually unemployed or school children playing or on their way home from school.

On a Saturday in July, 1967, I observed youths in a record shop located in one of the uptown plazas in Kingston. These youths were mainly middle and upper class youths looking around the record shop, and some
requested the shop assistant to play versions of
different reggae songs. Very few purchases were made
during the time I spent in the shop.

One record shop which has a large sound system/
speaker box located at the entrance to the shop seemed
to attract a number of youth on the particular day
observed. The music from the sound system was usually
very loud and mainly reggae music was played. The youth
whom I observed outside the record shops were boys.
There were also some older youths, no doubt unemployed,
standing nearby.

A number of the songs being played were tunes
declared not fit for air play. Youth standing at a
nearby bus stop also danced to the music.

The youth I interviewed and observed were selected
on the basis of their age and socio-economic background.
The in-depth interview I conducted with youth dealt
specifically with questions relating to how they got
exposure to popular music and whether popular music
affected their lifestyles. Youth in natural settings
such as open-air-dances, the school fete, the birthday
party, minibuses and record shops gave me a more comprehensive understanding of the youth/popular music interaction.
CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS

Research Question 1

How do youth get exposed to popular music?

All of the respondents reported that they listened to popular music either as a main or a secondary activity daily and with greater intensity and frequency during the weekend. Sometimes they are passive receivers of the music, as they use it as background, while they are studying, doing their homework or getting ready to go to school.

In some instances where they don't have their own stereo component set, they have no control over the choice of music played. This was the position with Case 6 who had to listen to his parents' choice of music at home and, although he admitted to getting exposure to other types of music elsewhere, he was greatly influenced by his parents' choice of music, which was also his preferred music. Cases C, E, F and H did not
own their own audio equipment either, but admitted to having different musical tastes from their parents.

Case A, on the other hand, was totally in control of the amount of time spent listening to popular music, because he owned an audio cassette player, radio and television. Cases B and D also owned an audio cassette player and radio.

**Delivery Systems**

Cases A and B who are from upper middle class backgrounds were exposed to popular music using various delivery systems. However, they got most of their exposure from listening to the radio, from audio cassette tapes and from watching the Jamaica Broadcasting Corporation (JBC) television. Case A was the only respondent who watched Music Television (MTV), as there was a satellite dish installed at his home.

Cases C and D, who are from middle class backgrounds, got exposure to popular music from watching the Jamaica Broadcasting Corporation (JBC) television and listening to the radio and audio cassette tapes. In addition both cases E and D got exposure to popular
music from attending parties and fetes. Cases C and H mentioned that they got exposure to reggae music on minibuses. Case D also got some exposure to reggae music from attending "sessions." Cases E, F, G and H got most of their exposure from watching BBC television, listening to the radio, from neighbourhood sound systems and from travelling on minibuses.

All of the respondents listened to radio. Because of the increased amount of reggae music being played, they are more likely to choose reggae music as their preferred music. Also increased airplay gives legitimacy to reggae music as a form of cultural expression.

Only two of the respondents had ever attended a reggae concert or stage show. This is not surprising as the cost of attending concerts is prohibitive and also these shows begin late at night and end in the early hours of the morning. Moreover, because of level of parental control, many would not be allowed to attend these concerts.
All respondents got some exposure to popular music from watching musical videos on JBC television. With the increasing numbers of local videos being produced, JBC is now showing more reggae videos, which also adds to the legitimacy of reggae music.

My observations of two open-air dances, one held in the Harbour View shopping Centre and the other in Rae Town, saw a number of young people of various ages in attendance. At both locations there were several children under 10 years-old. However, at both locations the majority of youth were in the 10 to 20 age range. Most of the youth who attended the Harbour View dance were there solely to interact with the music and were accompanied by parents or older relatives. At the Rae Town dance some youth were there primarily to earn a living, while others were there for entertainment only.

The Harbour View dance had a cross section of middle and working class youth in attendance. The working class youth were from the surrounding areas.

Rae Town had a mixture of upper, middle and working class youth in attendance. Foreign youth who
were vacationing in the island were also present.

By attending open-air dances, like those in Rae Town and Harbour View, where most of the music played is reggae a wide cross section of youth were identifying with the music. Many adults present at these dances in Rae Town were middle class and have been described as trying to discover their roots.

Additionally, all the youth from middle and working class backgrounds got exposure to reggae music on the public transportation system. This they had no control over. Also, some youth either visit record shops or hang around outside them either dancing or listening to music.

Working Class youth have always had a lot of exposure to local music. However from my observation, it seems that more middle and upper class youth are getting more positive exposure via the media in particular. This has no doubt affected their perception of local music. This is borne out in the literature as researchers have found that the more exposure is
given to a particular type of music, the more it is preferred (Cross, H. & Holcomb, G. & Matter, W., 1967)

Uses of Music

Cases A, B, C, D and H used music as background to their studies, mostly while doing homework. This they found relaxing and stimulating, thus aiding concentration. Cases A, B, C, D and F said that they go together with friends to discuss the meaning of the lyrics of popular songs. According to Lull (1965) shared musical taste is a strong basis for friendship among adolescents. "Young people use music as a basis for forming impressions of each other and for constructing their social webs and daily activities" (Lull, 1965, p. 367).

As well as being passive listeners of music, some respondents were also active listeners as they enjoyed dancing to music. Cases C, D, E and F mentioned that they attended fetes at their respective schools, where they socialized with friends. This was also borne out in my observations generally, where most of the youth did dance to the music.
Consumption of Music.

Consumption as used in this study refers to the type of learning which takes place as a result of listening to popular music. Music according to Lull (1985) has both affective and cognitive functions. Cases A, B, C, and H all said that the music they listened to teaches them about love, helps them to understand relationships and teaches them about the realities of Jamaican life.

In Lull's view "personal involvement with the music enhances socialization to the values and life styles embraced by it." This may have been the case in Jamaica in the 1960s when some youth identified with the rude boy phenomenon, which was immortalized in the music of its day, ska and rock steady. This certainly is not the case with the respondents in my sample, who did not agree with the statement that "Reggae music reflect my way of life," although some did agree that music showed what life was really like in Jamaica. For example Case E, who is from a working class background said that "reggae music teaches you about everyday life, what kinds of things affect you." Case F also said that
"Reggae music teaches you a lot about how people live and their attitude towards each other. Five respondents mentioned the popular reggae song 'Wanga Gut' by Tiger, as having special meaning for them. This particular song, which remained at the top of the Jamaican charts for many weeks, was a source of controversy in Jamaica, when the Rev. Neville Callahan, in March, 1987 remarked that "the hopelessness of youth in Jamaica today was mirrored in the empty uninspiring lyrics that dominate Jamaican airwaves" (Gleaner, March 15, 1987).

Case A learns about the people and politics of the other islands from calypso, while Case C thinks that a song by Whitney Houston, 'I Believe the Children Are our Future' teaches parents about how to communicate with their children. The respondent also saw reggae music as making social commentary about the way people should behave and about being patriotic to Jamaica.
Research Question 2

How do musical preferences affect the lifestyle of youth?

All eight respondents listed reggae music either as their preferred music or second most preferred music. Seven of the eight respondents said that their preferred music did not affect the way they dressed or their hair styles. They did not mention whether it affected their language. However, two persons were able to give me examples of young people they know who were affected by their favourite music. One example they gave was that of a 15 year-old girl who was a rock fan, who punked and starched her hair. Another person cited the example of boys he knew who wore earrings.

Only one respondent said that his preferred music affected the way he dressed but only when he was going to a party. One of the respondents felt that it was more a North American than a local phenomenon to emulate your favourite performer in that way.

The presence of style was more obvious with the youth observed in natural settings. The extent
to which Rastafarian influence was present was evident in the accessories they wore, such as bracelets and belts made in the colours red, green and gold. This is unlike the 1960s when there existed in Jamaica a definite rude boy subculture which was easily identifiable by the kind of clothes worn and the ‘locking’ of the hair. This style has more to do with how the clothes are worn, for example, the shirt is left hanging outside the pants. In the case of the young females, gone are the natural hair styles of the 1960s and early 70s. Although some still continue to braid their hair, others either have it straightened or permed, styles made popular by black Americans.

At the school fete there was a definite style. Most of the youngsters wore stone/acid washed jeans or skirts or a casual clothing they could afford. Some wore shorts. The style in vogue was definitely North American.

Youth used the language popularized in reggae/songs for example, expressions like "hol fresh," "wanda out," "boops" and "wear van size" were constantly used.
Research Question 3

How does social class affect the musical preferences and style of this group of Jamaican youth?

The six out of eight youth who are from middle and working class backgrounds gave reggae music as their most preferred music, while the two upper middle-class youth said that reggae was their second most preferred music next to rock.

All admitted to being affected by the beat and lyrics of reggae music as it made them want to dance. All of the youth interviewed said that they got meaning from music. Reggae music taught them about the realities of Jamaican life, while soul music taught them about love and relationships.

The youth interviewed said that reggae music did not influence the way they dressed or their hair styles. Only one youth from an upper class background said that when he went to a party he sometimes dressed the way his favourite performer did.
All the youth observed in natural settings had a particular style of dancing, which originated from the "grassroots" in the society. The extent to which youth style of dress is affected by social class has much to do with the amount of money available to purchase the latest fashion or to have the latest hair style.

The promoter of Sunsplash, an annual reggae festival held in Jamaica, Ronnie Burke, believes that the dance hall DJ music has gone beyond the mass acceptance. It has gone uptown. "Go to any fete of young middle class up town and the dance hall music is there" (Gleaner, August 30, 1987, p. 4A).

Research Question 4

How does identification with popular music affect youth identity?

This sample of youth interviewed identified with reggae music, as did the youth I observed in natural settings. This shows positive identification with their local indigenous culture. Of significance, too, is the wider acceptance of dance hall/DJ music by all classes.
This is unlike the 1960s when ska and rock steady were seen mainly as grass roots music and were not accepted among the middle and upper-classes. Sunsplash, the international reggae festival staged in Jamaica for the past ten years, has a wide cross section of patrons, many of whom are members of the elite group in the society. Despite the criticisms of the lyrics of some DJ style music, more legitimacy has been given to it by the middle classes, as recently DJs made history by performing up town in a prestigious night spot frequented by the upper and middle classes.

Some of the upper crust residents of St Andrew were there. The list included those in the prominent middle class areas and they participated in every aspect from start to finish, refusing to be left out of any. The most frightening thing was the way the rich, the lame and the lazy and those in other categories, lay side by side, unconcerned about who was next to whom. (Dorman, 1987, p. 4A)

Rastafari seemed to have lost its overwhelming impact on the respondents I observed, as apart from accessories such as bracelets and belts, youth generally, are no longer "locking" their hair and
openly showing allegiance to Rastafari as they did in the 1960s.

However, the language of Rastafari is still present as youth continue to use expressions such as 'I an I' and 'brethren.' Among the youth I interviewed, one said that Rastafari was mainly important to older people, not to the youth. Jamaican music critic and disc jockey, Dermott Hussey, feels that "the spiritual authority of Rastafari on reggae has worn off since Bob Marley died, allowing for new influences" (Hussey quoted in De Freitas, 1987).

Garth White, (1978) who did research on the 'rude boy' phenomenon of the 1960s, believes that in the 1960s youth were in the process of moulding a positive black identity and showed signs of this by wearing their hair natural, by not wearing cosmetics, which was considered devaluing to the black self and as having a Eurocentric standard of beauty. Now that youth have a positive concept of the self, all styles -- appearance, image, argot -- have equal weight. In his opinion, upper and middle classes feel more comfortable with identifying with the reggae music of today because it is not dealing
with the socio-economics of the society and therefore is not rocking the boat. When reference is made to a social factor, it is not blatant, and therefore, not threatening to the elite.
CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Although some of the theories discussed in Chapter 3 can be applied to youth in Jamaica, some are not applicable, since these theories were developed in the context of western industrialized societies, where youth have to contend to a lesser degree with problems such as unemployment, which are endemic to Third World countries like Jamaica.

Although youth unemployment does exist in developed societies, the figures are comparatively low when compared with a Third World country like Jamaica, where the youth unemployment rate at the end of 1986 was 40%, an improvement over previous years. Statistics for 1975 shows that in Canada, the unemployment rate for youth ages 15-24 was 12.7%, in the United Kingdom was 13.7%, and in the United States recorded was 14.4% (Denton, Robb and Spencer, 1981).

The view of youth as consumer (Hedonic 1933 and Frith 1981) assumes that teenagers in the late 50's had a new found affluence, which resulted in the deliberate
creation of a teenage market, and along with that, a teenage identity. This certainly does not apply to the Jamaican situation, where the purchasing power of youth has always been low due to high unemployment.

The same can be said of the theory which views youth as a threat to the industrial work ethic (Communications Trends 5: p. 1). Many of the older youth observed were unemployed through no fault of their own and had never held a steady job. Although the government has implemented several training programmes, unemployment among youth continues to be high. As a result, most of these youth have never had the opportunity of developing any kind of work ethic, in contrast to working class British or American youth.

The view of youth as a period of training for adulthood (Communication Trends 5:1) can be applied to the Jamaican situation, where youth is also viewed as a transition between the stage of childhood and adolescent. It is in this context that music is used and consumed by the youth in this study.
The concept of self which is formed during this period (Miller, 1980) is quite positive in this sample of youth. They identified with local music to a considerable degree, despite objections from many of the adults with whom they come in contact.

The view of youth as a counter culture (Communication Trends 5: 1) which rejects the dominant values of society is applicable to youth in Jamaica during the 1960s. During this period youth identified with the Black Power Movement in an attempt to transform the society from a white dominated one to one in which black Jamaicans had an equal say culturally and economically. Youth in Jamaica do form a separate subculture (as defined above) which possesses a definite style. One feature of this style is the identification with reggae/DJ music, which was observed from the amount played at the fete and the party where they were in control.

A certain style of dress was very much in evidence when youth were observed interacting with the music. The extent of difference in style between middle class and working class youth has more to do with the level of
purchasing power which would dictate what is purchased.

Youth use language which is popularized in reggae songs and use the Jamaican dialect. Middle and upper class youth will use mainly this language when they are in informal settings such as a party or among friends.

According to Lull (1985), shared musical taste is a strong basis for friendship among adolescents. Youth in the sample discussed music with their friends to see whether the meanings gained from music were mutual. The majority of respondents did not purchase records or audio tapes. They usually borrowed from friends or taped their favourite music from the radio. Tapes borrowed from friends were sometimes taped from the radio, or originated from a sound system operator (who provided this service) or were pirated tapes sold in downtown Kingston.

The respondents in the study, especially working class ghetto youth, from an early age receive exposure to local music via neighbourhood sound systems, radio, television audio cassettes and on minibuses. The fact
that both radio stations are now playing more local music increases the exposure that youth get to pop music. More local videos than previously are also shown on JBC television. Sometimes eight out of the top ten songs are local.

There has also been a proliferation of stage shows. For example, over a twenty-two day period in December, 1986, there were 17 shows and over a thirty day period from March 28 to April 27, 1987, there were sixteen shows (McBowan, 1987). The increased amount of exposure given to local music via the various delivery systems results in youth hearing more local music, and thus there is every likelihood that their preference for local over foreign music will increase.

In 1987, the Jamaican Music Industry Award, JHMI, was established. The dance hall Dis received most of the awards in the Popular Music section, giving local music further legitimacy. With increasing exposure and legitimacy given to local music, despite criticisms of its contents, local music has gained more acceptance among upper and middle class youth. Stone (1987) and Richardson (1989) view the 1980s as a time when local
culture is no longer perceived as inferior to North American and European culture by the vast majority of the Jamaican people. Black Jamaicans are no longer ashamed of their heritage and this has resulted in many Jamaicans trying to discover their roots by visiting open-air dances and stage shows.

To what extent social class is an important variable in youth's choice of popular music needs to be verified by further research, in order to measure the changes which might have taken place since Cuthbert carried out her research in 1983. Many changes have occurred in the Jamaican society which might affect youth's feelings about local culture, in particular, local popular music. One such change is that the majority of Jamaicans have an increasingly positive self image and self worth and no longer see themselves as extensions of Europe and North America. Acceptance of local culture and having a positive identity by the majority of Jamaicans are due mainly to the influences of the Rastafarian religion and the black power movement which had their greatest impact in Jamaica during the period of heightened awareness in the 1960s and 70s. Also the 1970s saw a number of
significant economic, social, political, and educational achievements on the part of black Jamaicans, especially among those whose identities were moulded after independence (Miller, 1980).

An important change which has occurred in reggae music might also have influenced people’s attitude towards whether positive or negative, reggae music has changed from being a message music, that is, one which commented on the injustices of the Jamaican society to one that deals with trivia. This according to Garth white means that it is more acceptable to the elite in the society who no longer perceive the music as a threat to their oligarchic positions.

In addition, the fact that reggae music has gained legitimacy on the international music scene might have positively affected the attitudes of Jamaicans to the music.

According to social researcher Dick Hebdige, young blacks in the United Kingdom have also used music as a means of consolidating and maintaining their identity. "In Britain it was through music more than any other
medium, that the communication with the past, with Jamaica and hence Africa, considered for the maintenance of black identity was made possible" (Hebdige, 1979, p. 39).

The high percentage of unemployment among youth has resulted in youth seeking meaning and fulfillment in leisure activities in which music plays an important role, such as parties, dances and fetes or standing around record shops dancing to music. For these youth, reggae music, whether containing humorous or crude remarks or making social commentary, is music with which they identify.

Recommendations

This study's main concern is not in making generalizations about a population. Generalizations cannot be made beyond each individual and situation in the study as this is an exploratory study. However it has shed new understandings about youth and popular music interaction and youth identity in Jamaica. The findings of this investigation indicate that social class is no longer a significant variable among the
youth studied when it comes to identifying with local
music.

This suggests that the following research should be
done:

1. A quantitative study to look at the dimensions of
   musical preferences and the variables which
   affect those preferences.

2. Quantitative research on the exposure,
   consumption and use of popular music and whether
   it varies with levels of education and social
   class.

3. Systematic study of usage patterns, hardware and
   software, ownership and purchase, and peer group
   and family context.

4. Content analysis of the amount of foreign versus
   local music played on both radio stations.

5. Qualitative study of the meaning popular music
   has for a very wide cross section of youth.
These studies when carried out might have policy implications to set a standard for the music that is deemed undesirable for air play, as presently there is no such standard. This might also have implications for the amount of foreign versus local music to be played on the airwaves to ensure that local music continues to get a significant amount of air play, especially as one of the conclusions of this study is that music does play an important role in the formation of the cultural identities of youth in this sample. White (1987) believes that reggae music is a strong force and is responsible more than any other single cultural form for raising the consciousness of the poor.

The findings of Richardson (1983) and Stone (1987) that the majority of black Jamaicans now have a positive sense of self-worth, and take pride in the excellence of their indigenous culture, indicates that that the popularity of local over foreign music is a trend that ought to be encouraged by policy makers, the media and by those involved in the music industry.
Appendix A

Interview Questions

Cross-Check Questionnaire

Summary of Main Themes
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Which kind of popular music do you like?
   Give your reasons for liking your selection.

2. Where do you hear popular music?

3. How do you learn about new music?

4. Which do you prefer the music or the words of popular music?

5. When do you listen to pop music?

6. How often do you listen to pop music?

7. Does your favourite music affect you in any way?

8. Are you influenced by the lifestyle of your favourite singers?

9. Does music teach you anything?

10. Do you expect to find a job when you leave school?

11. Is life better in another country?
KINDLY TICK APPROPRIATE REPLY/ANSWER:

KINDLY REPLY TO ALL STATEMENTS/QUESTIONS

A. WRITE THE NAME OF YOUR SCHOOL: __________________________; GRADE ______

B. OCCUPATION OF THE HEAD OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD: __________________________

C. IN WHAT AREA DO YOU LIVE?: __________________________ KINGSTON ______

D. SEX: MALE____ FEMALE____

    AGE: ______

E. DO YOU OWN A? a) RADIO ______

    b) CASSETTE PLAYER ______

    c) TELEVISION ______

F. DO YOU WATCH? a) JBC TELEVISION ______

    b) SATELLITE STATIONS (Dish) ______

    c) VIDEO ______

REGGAE MUSIC

1. Reggae music teaches me that life is hard:

   a) STRONGLY AGREE ______

   b) AGREE ______

   c) NEUTRAL ______

   d) DISAGREE ______

   e) STRONGLY DISAGREE ______
2. Reggae music makes me want to dance:
   a) STRONGLY AGREE ______
   b) AGREE ______
   c) NEUTRAL ______
   d) DISAGREE ______
   e) STRONGLY DISAGREE ______

3. The words (lyrics) of reggae music have meaning:
   a) STRONGLY AGREE ______
   b) AGREE ______
   c) NEUTRAL ______
   d) DISAGREE ______
   e) STRONGLY DISAGREE ______

4. The words (lyrics) of reggae music are vulgar:
   a) STRONGLY AGREE ______
   b) AGREE ______
   c) NEUTRAL ______
   d) DISAGREE ______
   e) STRONGLY DISAGREE ______

5. Reggae music tells what life is really like:
   a) STRONGLY AGREE ______
   b) AGREE ______
   c) NEUTRAL ______
   d) DISAGREE ______
   e) STRONGLY DISAGREE ______

6. The words of reggae music are hard to understand:
   a) STRONGLY AGREE ______
   b) AGREE ______
   c) NEUTRAL ______
   d) DISAGREE ______
   e) STRONGLY DISAGREE ______
7. Rock music gives me the impression that life is easy:
   a) STRONGLY AGREE ______
   b) AGREE ______
   c) NEUTRAL ______
   d) DISAGREE ______
   e) STRONGLY DISAGREE ______

8. Rock music reflects how I feel about society:
   a) STRONGLY AGREE ______
   b) AGREE ______
   c) NEUTRAL ______
   d) DISAGREE ______
   e) STRONGLY DISAGREE ______

9. I associate rock music with devil worship:
   a) STRONGLY AGREE ______
   b) AGREE ______
   c) NEUTRAL ______
   d) DISAGREE ______
   e) STRONGLY DISAGREE ______

10. Rock music makes me want to dance:
    a) STRONGLY AGREE ______
    b) AGREE ______
    c) NEUTRAL ______
    d) DISAGREE ______
    e) STRONGLY DISAGREE ______
11. Calypso music has no meaning:
   a) STRONGLY AGREE ______
   b) AGREE ______
   c) NEUTRAL ______
   d) DISAGREE ______
   e) STRONGLY DISAGREE ______

12. Calypso music reflects how I feel about life:
   a) STRONGLY AGREE ______
   b) AGREE ______
   c) NEUTRAL ______
   d) DISAGREE ______
   e) STRONGLY DISAGREE ______

13. Soul music relaxes you:
   a) STRONGLY AGREE ______
   b) AGREE ______
   c) NEUTRAL ______
   d) DISAGREE ______
   e) STRONGLY DISAGREE ______

14. Soul music teaches me about love:
   a) STRONGLY AGREE ______
   b) AGREE ______
   c) NEUTRAL ______
   d) DISAGREE ______
   e) STRONGLY DISAGREE ______
15. Soul music teaches you how to help each other:
   a) STRONGLY AGREE _____
   b) AGREE _____
   c) NEUTRAL _____
   d) DISAGREE _____
   e) STRONGLY DISAGREE _____

16. Soul music is not very stimulating:
   a) STRONGLY AGREE _____
   b) AGREE _____
   c) NEUTRAL _____
   d) DISAGREE _____
   e) STRONGLY DISAGREE _____

17. Soul music reflects my way of life:
   a) STRONGLY AGREE _____
   b) AGREE _____
   c) NEUTRAL _____
   d) DISAGREE _____
   e) STRONGLY DISAGREE _____

18. Soul music does not teach me anything about life:
   a) STRONGLY AGREE _____
   b) AGREE _____
   c) NEUTRAL _____
   d) DISAGREE _____
   e) STRONGLY DISAGREE _____
19. Soul music makes me want to dance:
   a) STRONGLY AGREE ______
   b) AGREE ______
   c) NEUTRAL ______
   d) DISAGREE ______
   e) STRONGLY DISAGREE ______

20. Soul music makes me feel sad:
   a) STRONGLY AGREE ______
   b) AGREE ______
   c) NEUTRAL ______
   d) DISAGREE ______
   e) STRONGLY DISAGREE ______

21. I like to dress the way my favourite singers dress:
   a) STRONGLY AGREE ______
   b) AGREE ______
   c) NEUTRAL ______
   d) DISAGREE ______
   e) STRONGLY DISAGREE ______

22. When I go to a party I wear the kind of clothes my favourite "rock group" wears:
   a) STRONGLY AGREE ______
   b) AGREE ______
   c) NEUTRAL ______
   d) DISAGREE ______
   e) STRONGLY DISAGREE ______
23. I admire the clothes my favourite singers wear but I do not go out of my way to copy them:
   a) STRONGLY AGREE ______
   b) AGREE ______
   c) NEUTRAL ______
   d) DISAGREE ______
   e) STRONGLY DISAGREE ______

24. Rock music affects how I talk:
   a) STRONGLY AGREE ______
   b) AGREE ______
   c) NEUTRAL ______
   d) DISAGREE ______
   e) STRONGLY DISAGREE ______

25. It is expensive to dress like my favourite singers:
   a) STRONGLY AGREE ______
   b) AGREE ______
   c) NEUTRAL ______
   d) DISAGREE ______
   e) STRONGLY DISAGREE ______

26. Reggae music does not affect how I dress:
   a) STRONGLY AGREE ______
   b) AGREE ______
   c) NEUTRAL ______
   d) DISAGREE ______
   e) STRONGLY DISAGREE ______
27. Reggae music influences the way I speak;
   a) STRONGLY AGREE
   b) AGREE
   c) NEUTRAL
   d) DISAGREE
   e) STRONGLY DISAGREE

28. Soul music affects the way I dress;
   a) STRONGLY AGREE
   b) AGREE
   c) NEUTRAL
   d) DISAGREE
   e) STRONGLY DISAGREE
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Appendix B

RJR 1987 Top 100 Songs

The Daily Gleaner Top 10 Chart, March 1987

Music Videos on JBC Television (Sample)
NEWS FROM RJR
THE POPULAR STATION
RADIO JAMAICA LTD., BROADCASTING HOUSE, P.O. BOX 23, KINGSTON 6, JAMAICA

RJR "SUPREME SOUND" TOP 100 FOR 1986 - 10/1/87

1. WHAT THE HELL
2. CRESTTILES
3. HERE WE GO
4. SCOPE
5. CARAVAN OF LOVE
6. REVIVAL TOOE
7. PEY DROH
8. POWER OF LOVE
9. COST OF LIVING
10. I WANT MAKE UP WITH YOU
11. THAT'S WHAT FRIENDS ARE FOR
12. ON MY WAY
13. SHE LOVES ME NOW
14. GOVERNMENT BOOGS
15. SECRET LOVERS
16. BED COME TO SMOKE
17. I CAN SEND US CORE
18. PROPHET A GO HOLD THEM
19. BASTION BOOGS
20. ONE SOOTER
21. POLICE IN A ENGLAND
22. I MISS YOU
23. REMEDY REMEDY
24. CUTTING
25. WINDERS ONLY
26. KING ROAD 1AM
27. TEMPER TALENT
28. SKIN N SKIN
29. CODY ERTEN
30. GYPSIE BOCA
31. WEED ONE BOUNCE CAN DO
32. UNDER COVER LOVER
33. REBEL CULT-STYLE
34.Sweet Love
35. PLEASE DON'T GO
36. NOBODY'S TO BE ALONE
37. FEELING BORRY
38. REVOLUTION PT.11
39. I NEED YOU
40. RIDE DOWN BAD COMPANY
41. NO WILE OR SUNDAY
42. KICK OF HERETIC (R.P.A.P)
43. GLORIA GAL
44. BODY COME DOWN (R.P.A.P)
45. IT'S TOO HOT
46. BUCKER (R.P.A.P)
47. REGGIE LAUD
48. ANGEL EYES
49. OVE FOR RIVER
50. WINDS WORLD
51. SUCKS TO BE IN LOVE
52. DEATH TRAP
53. WHAT'S GOOD FOR THE GOOSE
54. ROCK ME BAST
55. RICKER
56. SAY WHAT BAY ME
57. CHEERLIE CHEERLE
58. ROCK ME TONIGHT
59. S/FARD ALL MY LOVE
60. HOOFER (R.P.A.P)

RJR SUPREME SOUND
Kingston: 2700kHz AM; 104.5MHz FM
Cooper's Hill: 2700kHz AM; 104.5MHz FM
Savannah: 2700kHz AM; 104.5MHz FM
Point Pilgrim: 2700kHz AM; 104.5MHz FM
Mona: 2700kHz AM; 104.5MHz FM

FAME FM
92.7 MHz
95.7 MHz
91.5 MHz
61. CLARK DOUGY  
62. SAVE TO GIRLIE GIRLIE  
63. TUPPY LOVE  
64. MONEY GIRL  
65. CONSCIOUS SOLDIER  
66. MUSIC IS LIFE  
67. FANCY GIRLS  
68. DIKE STREET  
69. BAGMRUPPIIIN  
70. TROUBLE AGAIN  
71. HOLD ON  
72. I DON'T WANT TO BE LOVELY  
73. YOU GIVE GOOD LOVE  
74. ROLLING  
75. DE POCKET  
76. FIRE ELEPHANT  
77. SO LONG  
78. A.I.D.S. (B.F.A.P.)  
79. EVERYTHING YOU DO AWAY  
80. IF YOU WERE HERE TONIGHT  
81. SOMETHING  
82. SETTLING DOWN  
83. ALLIE (B.F.A.P.)  
84. MY EYES  
85. WILDFIRE  
86. CROSS OVER THE BRIDGE  
87. ROCK WHEN I TELL YOU  
88. ALL IN THE GAME  
89. TEMPO  
90. CUSTOM OFFICERS  
91. HIS WORLD. MY WORLD  
92. '86 FLOOD  
93. THE GLORY OF LOVE  
94. TANZANA  
95. THE FLOOD  
96. CANTON KISSELLER  
97. MARKET PLACE  
98. STONE WALL  
99. WISER WE DIDN'T TRUST ME SO MUCH  
100. LITTLE DOWN TOWN  
101. TOMATO LAIN  
102. TICKER  
103. CULTURE  
104. LEROI SMART  
105. E.T. WEBSTER  
106. ADMURAL TITUS  
107. THE PHARLS  
108. DENNIS BROWN/BLAISE MERGER  
109. KING KONG  
110. HAYL PINT  
111. DINO BRUSCO/JOHN HOLT  
112. HOWDIE JONES  
113. DIOHIO DUBIN  
114. ALEXANDER O'NEAL  
115. RISE & ROBBIE  
116. LEROI SMART  
117. IDIOIT WOMACK  

TOP MALE ARTISTE - HALP PUNT  
TOP FEMALE ARTISTE - SHIRLEY MCLEAN  
TOP LOCAL GROUP - FABULOUS FIVE INC.  
TOP RECORD PRODUCER - HAYT'S  
LONGEST RECORD ON THE CHART (53 WEEKS) - WHAT ONE DANCE CAN DO - DENNIS BROWN  
TOP FOREIGN GROUP - ISLEY, JASPER & ISLEY  
TOP FOREIGN MALE SINGER - JENNIFER RELEH  
TOP FOREIGN MALE SINGER - MAURICE WHITE  
OUTSTANDING LOCAL SONG MAKING IT ON THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE - I WISH WE MAKE UP WITH YOU
DJs rule the roost

Compiled for the Gleaner by Howard McGowan

FOLLOWING an absence of some four years the Gleaner has decided to resume publication of the weekly Top Ten music charts.

As in the past the chart will be compiled from sales return from leading record shops.

The chart this week with sales for the week ending March 14 reflects the total dominance of the DJs and dance hall syndrome. In fact only two foreign records found their way into the top ten, these are Gregory Abbott's "Shake You Down" and the New Edition's "Earth Angel."

Both songs have done well in the U.S. and this is usually a guide as to a song's chances here.

In the case of the former, this song brings the new green-eyed heart-throb Gregory Abbott to the Jamaican audience for the first time and its popularity shows that its headed right for the top.

It sits nicely in the No. 3 slot while New Edition's "Earth Angel" comes in at No. 5.

DJ sensation Admiral Bailey, dominates the charts with two shots; his "Punammy" rules the roost while his second shot "Healthy Body" sits in the No. 6 position.

Jamaica with three entries on the chart is the leading label, while new DJ King Tiger's "Wanga Gutt" lurches in the No. 4 position.

On the Shouts to Watch section the DJs again rule with two of the three songs here. Firstly there is Tiger's "Can Tan Ya So", Peter Meto's "Yes Daddy" and Sophia George's "Runnings Well Dread."

Below are the songs on this week's chart:

2. "No Mama": Screw Driver, Volcano.
10. "Promise Me": Earnest Wilson, Techniques.

SHOTS TO WATCH: "Can Tan Ya So": Tiger, "Yes Daddy": Peter Meto and "Runnings Well Dread": Sophia George.

The top ten is based on sales from leading record shops and is a consensus.

Shops which assisted this were: Randy's, Derrick Barnett, Joe Ottos, Techniques, Records and Things, All Nation Record Shop and Aquarius.
MUSICAL VIDEOS
Jamaica Broadcasting Corporation. T.V.

Music Music Music

March 19, 1988

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Local</th>
<th>Foreign</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Don't Go</td>
<td>M. Jackson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Dem a fi Feel It</td>
<td>D. Legend</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Girlie Girlie</td>
<td>S. George</td>
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<tr>
<td>Live in Concert</td>
<td>Half Pint</td>
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<td>*</td>
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<tr>
<td>You're so Fine</td>
<td>M. Williams</td>
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<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some to love me for me</td>
<td>Lisa, Lisa and Cult Jam</td>
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<td></td>
<td>featuring Pull Force</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Come to me</td>
<td>Freddie MacGregor</td>
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<td>*</td>
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<tr>
<td>You, me and he</td>
<td>Mtume</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>So Amazing</td>
<td>G. Albright</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Can't Stop Rocking Tonight</td>
<td>Blood Fire Posse</td>
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<td>*</td>
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<tr>
<td>One Man One Woman</td>
<td>G. Myers</td>
<td></td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I'll be Watching You</td>
<td>Police</td>
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(1987, August 19) Garvey and Jamaica Daily Gleaner p.8

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Interview

Dean, J. (1987, August) Interview with Garth White, Researcher, Reggae Music Analyst, on Popular Music Exposure, Consumption and Youth Identity in Jamaica
VITA AUCTORIS

June V. Deqia was born in Portland, Jamaica, West Indies. She completed her high school education in London, England. She later entered Eastbourne College of Education in Sussex, England, where she completed the 3 year Certificate in Education in 1973.

Ms. Deqia taught in England for 3 years before returning to Jamaica to continue teaching.

In 1984, Ms. Deqia graduated from the University of the West Indies with a BA (Hons.) in Communications and Social Sciences. She then worked as a producer and administrative assistant in the Radio Education Unit, University of the West Indies.

Ms. Deqia began the Master of Arts in Communication Studies at the University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario, Canada in January, 1997.

She is married with one daughter.