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REFLECTIONS ON YOUTH SUB-CULTURES

Youth culture and youth subcultures have been a subject of research since the early 1930s of the previous century. It is most certainly true today that there is not one singular youth culture but a variety of different youth subcultures. The 90's can not be described as the same as the 60's or 70's or even the 80's, etc. There are many reasons put forward by sociologists for this such as there are more styles available today, media influences us more and there is a higher disposable income per household to spend on fashions. We shall try to explore in the given article the reasons behind the existence of youth cultures in previous years and why the same format has not occurred at the end of the XX – the beginning of the XXI centuries.

Defining “youth” can be difficult and is described in the Concise Oxford Dictionary as: “the state of being young, the period between childhood and adult age”. This would indicate that youth is described as an age group and people can be distinguished by the different age groups. However, it could be questioned that not all children stop being children at the same time. Sometimes youth is described as “not simply an age group, but the social organization of an age group” Sociologists of youth, according to such understanding, describe youth culture as “the way of life shared by young people”.

Subculture, as defined in the Concise Oxford Dictionary, is a “cultural group within a larger culture often having beliefs or interests at variance with those of the larger culture”. This would imply that a subculture is a subdivision of a national culture; it exists between the parameters of certain cultures.

Empirical observation carried out by sociologists find that youth sub-cultures have a distinct individual style. They have certain ways of dressing (i.e. shoes, clothing and hairstyles), speaking (i.e. slang), listening to music and gathering in similar places i.e. bikers at race meetings and bars and ravers at dance clubs or outdoor raves. It is then assumed that shared activities reflect shared values.

To concentrate on the bikers of the 60's seems fitting. This was one large youth culture and still exists as a smaller section of society. It could be said that not all bikers today share the same values and enjoy the same activities as do the 60s style of bikers. This could be because members of the subculture break away from a particular group or never ‘join’ in the first place. Age could have implications here; the transition from youth to adult may determine how long a member stays in one



particular subculture. Although there are variants of bike-boys they were broadly from a working class background and were seen as outsiders and loners linked by the love of motor-bikes and heavy rock music. Their style was masculine and their appearance was aggressive. The motor-cycle gear looked tough with its leather studs, denim and heavy leather boots. Hair was worn long in a greasy swept-back style and many were tattooed on the hands, arms and chest. A typical evening for the bike boys would consist of permutations of the same activities: a drink and a game of darts in their local pub, a game of pinball and a coffee in the coffee bar and general horseplay and chatter in a club.

An ethnographic study of a group of bikers during the 70s describes the group as being almost all male and from typical working class backgrounds. However, it could be argued that today's bikers come from a variety of class and professional backgrounds from bricklayers to bankers. In Britain, the general fears about young people and youth subcultures have been focused on working class youth styles. However different youth groups are from each other, i.e. bikers as opposed to the more "recent" ravers, they appear to outrage "straight" society and are often labelled deviant or delinquent. Youth has been seen as a "social problem" for at least one hundred years.

Although bikers, as a subculture, still exist today, it would appear that changes have been made as to the composition of members within the subculture; their values, beliefs and shared activities. The "ravers" from the eighties are a good example of another post-war youth culture. During the late 80s, young people with bandannas, brightly coloured clothes and a crazed look in their eyes were being presented as the next youth subculture. For the ravers (also known as clubbers) the shared experience is attending a rave and possibly taking ecstasy which has become synonymous with the rave culture. This is often the only thing ravers have in common with each other unlike other subcultures. These parties, where extensive use of strobe lighting and psychedelic imagery was used, were attended by young males and females stereotypically dressed in baggy oversized T-shirts, track suits and baggy jeans. The clothes were comfortable, brightly coloured and cheap. The intensive dancing to fast beating music, along with the use of hypnotic drugs, went hand-in-hand. This style of clothing suited excessive body movement, however, this fashion style began to change. With interest coming from the fashion industry, the style began to change and evolve. Baggy clothes for girls were replaced by tight body-hugging outfits made of materials such as



lycra emphasising appearance rather than comfort and practicality. It is difficult to define the common experiences that lead people to go to raves. It could be that many youths wanted a form of “escapism” to get away from the norms of every day life or problems like unemployment. Most ravers only attend raves or clubs at the weekend; it could be argued that rave is more a leisure pursuit as opposed to a subculture. Ravers appear to cut across all social divisions, classes, gender and age. Unlike the 60s bikers, ravers are not exclusive to the working class, the unemployed or dominated by male members. It is difficult to make analogies between the common experiences of an eighteen year old student and a thirty year old computer analyst both attending raves on a Saturday night. The age of spectacular subcultures are gone for good. This is because there are so many style and taste cultures which offer young people different ways of expressing their identity. There is too much diversity for any single youth subculture to dominate society. The growth of capitalist culture and leisure industries has meant that all young people now have access to the cultural resources they need to engage in “symbolic creativity” in their leisure time. Basically, youth culture has become complicated. There are so many different theories now that they could easily come into doubt. It would seem that, when comparing the two different subcultures, that patterns and common beliefs differ and have changed over the last 20 years. Bikers had a tighter sense of belonging to their subculture than the more recent ravers. Society appears to be so complex now; there seems to be a wider social system with changes in class, occupational structure, neighborhood structure and family and leisure patterns. Today’s youth subcultures point to an interweaving of style with gender, class and age which follows a more contemporary outlook as opposed to some of the classic theories. Under post-modern conditions, identities appear to be in a constant state of change: individuals move freely from one sub-cultural group and enthusiasm to another; they mix and match what were formerly distinct categories like the 60s bikers. Style, enjoyment, excitement, escape from boredom at work or play, being attractive to ones self have now become central life concerns.

Media also plays a great part in the prevention of a new youth culture forming. Nowadays young people have access to the “back catalogue” of previous forms of music and subcultural styles through television stations and magazines. Subcultural dress now becomes a matter of surface style. Furthermore, during the 1980s, market



researchers began to change ways in which they saw the various groups of consumers. This change in the way in which consumption patterns are perceived by market researchers from being seen as influenced by socio-economic class to being seen as influenced by life-cycle stages.

It is also worth noting that in recent years the subcultures that have occurred have been seen to be deviant such as the skinheads, ravers, football 'hooligans' and punks. Two different, yet similar, deviant groups can be used to describe the entire deviant subculture. Those who classify themselves as punks and anarchists are one type and those that spout “free love” and peace (hippies) are another type of deviant subculture. The first group chooses to be social outcasts because of a hatred of norms. This group attempts to destroy society and with it the means for bettering it. They believe in a type of anarchy that stems from loathing toward expected values and refuse to get jobs or even conform to society in the most basic ways. Hippies on the other hand choose a method of peace and tranquility, believing that people should all love one another and anarchy would be beautiful if everyone could simply understand how to live at peace with themselves and nature.

All hope of meaningful cultural activity is denied; young people face a future in which any genuine radicalism is quickly incorporated into the commercial marketing system and used to sell more commodities. Although there are a number of subcultures left in today's society such as “surfers”, “townies” and people who follow the grunge movement, there is no singular youth culture left.

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ДО ПИТАННЯ ПРО КОМП'ЮТЕРНИЙ СЛЕНГ

Одним з актуальних питань сьогодення навколо якого розгортається наукова полеміка представників лінгвістичної науки є питання про вплив Інтернету на мову, позаяк реакція на, вживані представниками певних прошарків населення, дивакуваті слова, як “*бе-ем-нешка*”, “*сервак*”, “*даунлоад*”, тощо сприймаються неоднозначно. Природно, що з розвитком технологій, з'являються нові лексичні одиниці, які спочатку потрапляють до розряду сленгових. Тому спроба дослідити певні аспекти комп'ютерного сленгу видається нам особливо важливою.

Сленг – експресивно і емоційно забарвлена лексика розмовної мови, що відхиляється від загальноприйнятої мовної норми. [2, с. 558].