

Sociology popular culture essays examples

[Technology](#), [Development](#)



It would be probably too broad to argue that everything that surrounds us and that impacts our lives is popular culture. Instead I will say that through our lifestyle choices, our artistic and cultural preferences, our fashion styles and even our behaviors we are either the result or the perpetrators of popular culture or both. Each nationality, each society, each group of friends have specific values that separate them from the others, the rest of the world. These values shape their lifestyle, artistic and cultural preferences, fashion styles and behaviors. Hence, the values that define nationalities, societies, communities or groups of friends have the strength of instituting what is popular, what is fashionable, what is cool, what is desirable, determining imitation patterns, which people naturally tend to adopt.

The natural adoption of specific values is generated by the need of belonging to a group, which is part of the essential human needs. The need to be part of a group, to be respected and regarded as one of the members implies the affiliation of specific values, and implicitly the negation of other values. As such, while certain values proliferate, others are denigrated. This is how popular culture generates gender, race, ethnical, ageism or any other form of discrimination. By instituting what is popular and desirable, popular culture implicitly states what is un-popular and un-desirable, generating an antipathy wave against those who are different, who do not conform to the absorbed values.

The conformity to a set of values for the purpose of belonging, being liked, or being a part of a group also implicates the lack of originality, of authenticity and the formation of a status quo, of a standardized behavior. The problem of a copy-paste behavior is that it favors the conformism while limits the

progress. When everybody agrees to an instituted state of order, the progress cannot exist. The progress occurs when there are different views, various opinions, and distinct approaches to solving problems or to understanding situations. In a world, a society or a group wherein everybody acts the same, if somebody would challenge this conformity by acting differently, he or she might be considered against the instituted system, and perceived as threatening the popular culture. In such a world, there is no space for diversity other than to be banished and considered un-desirable. Literature, philosophy and other cultural and non-cultural oeuvres speak the dangers of popular culture. In Shirley Jackson's (26) "The Lottery", Mrs. Hutchinson was a symbol of non-conformity to the popular culture values of her village and ironically, she drew the "lucky" ticket that condemned her to death. Anatole France (7) reasons that art only sensitizes based on the context wherein it is produced, so that only the author's name dictates whether the viewer of an art piece will adore the art piece or consider it abominable. These are pure examples of popular culture and its mechanisms. Hence, popular culture is entrenched in society since always, defining role models, fashionable social standards, snobbism, but also hatred and despise for everything that is different.

The context defines what is popular and what is not represents one main fundament of the popular culture. The context includes not only a set of values, but also specific characteristics that define a group of people, making them similar from various points of view: behavior, tastes, lifestyles, social or personal expectations.

Popular culture is inherent to society. It represents a form of controlling

masses and creating cohesion, unity and harmony. The lack of popular culture could result into chaos, but also into an explosion of diversity, creativity, and originality. The counter effect of popular culture would be the lack of liaison between individuals, disharmony and uncontrolled situations of standing up for one's values. Adhering to the same values creates groups, which further promotes what is good and what is not good for the group, or, as stated above, what is popular and what is not.

Works Cited

- France, Anatole. *Le Jardin d'Epicure [The Garden of Epicurus]* Paris: CODA. 1895. Print.
- Jackson, Shirley in Harold Bloom. *The Lottery*. Broomall: Chelsea House Publishers. 2001. Print.