

Examine sociological contributions to our understanding of youth culture

[Science](#), [Anthropology](#)



Youth culture as a whole is the shared norms and values of " youth" as a whole. Although there is no agreed biological age which determines someone to be a youth there are certain behaviours which are associated with this stage of development e. g Rebellious, Binge drinking, partying etc. Functionalists, consensus and structuralist theorist, say that we are taught youth culture through the agents of socialisation eg Media, family, Education etc. and that we have no choice but to conform. Eisinger, a functionalist, said that Youth is " transition mechanism" and is the stage in which we begin to change from children to adults. Social action theorists however would disagree with the functionalist point of view, as they believe that we have the ability to choose our identity and that youth culture is something we choose for ourselves rather than it being imposed on us. They say that we are able to manage the impression that other people have of us and that we are not just a product of the Agents of Socialisation. Cohen, a key Social action theorist, blames the media for the negative view about Youth culture that we have today. He says that the media creates moral panics by exaggerating stories on the mods and rockers in the 1960's created a social anxiety about youth in general. He claims that the media blames youth for the moral decline of the country and that Youth culture has been spoiled and stigmatised by The media. Marxists on the other hand, consensus and Structuralist theorists, say, like Functionalist, that Youth culture is imposed on us through the agents of socialisation, however rather than a " transition mechanism" they believe that we are socialised in order for the bourgeoisie to further exploit the proletariat and for them to make profit eg through fashion, makeup, technology, magazines. Marxists say that the bourgeoisie

like youth culture as it prevents us from becoming class conscious and revolting against them. Lastly Feminists, structuralist and conflict theorists, also believe that we are taught Youth culture through the agents of socialisation. They say that females are stereotyped and mostly absent in studies of youth culture. Mc Robbie, a key feminist, made a study on "female bedroom culture" in which girls use makeup, dance, read mags free from the pressure of the outside world and to escape the oppression from men. In conclusion youth culture plays a big role in todays post-industrial society. All theories acknowledge the existence of youth culture but cannot agree on its function.