

Thematic guide: youth culture studies (using qualitative data)

Youth groups started influencing music, television and cinema



The study of youth culture saw a rapid expansion in the second half of the twentieth century as an increasing number of youth groups started influencing music, television and cinema.

Economic and social changes, such as increasing numbers of young people with growing financial means, played a big part in favourably influencing this emerging trend and pushing the various youth groups into mainstream culture.

Early studies often perceived youth culture as the study of 'trouble-makers' and young people who rebelled against societal norms.

As youth culture gradually entered the mainstream, the sociological study of youth shifted to the examination of young people's subjective experiences in contemporary society, as well as to the use of these accounts to inform changes in social life.

Studies such as Lloyd and Dittmar's examination of boys and girls' concerns with body image, along with Riley, Griffin and Morey's study on dance culture, are good examples of this latter trend in the social research of youth culture.

Searching for related materials

The [UK Data Service data catalogue](#) can be searched for data on youth culture studies using subject terms such as:

- childhood
- cultural life
- family life
- health
- identity
- role models
- social behaviour
- youth culture

Every data collection is accompanied by comprehensive documentation. These are open access and available to the public from the website and it is not necessary to be a registered user to access and download them.



The content of the documentation varies by collection, but usually includes information such as the initial proposal, interview schedule, description of methodology, end of award report, and so on.

In some cases more details are provided, such as the coding schemes of the original researchers or examples of the consent forms used.

Other resources on youth culture studies

[Child care in Practice](#)

[Centre for the Study of Childhood and Youth](#)

[Youth, Sound and Space – an online journal](#)

[Timescapes](#)

Summary of selected qualitative studies on youth culture studies

Study name

[SN 4688 US-UK Working Families: Work, Life and the City, 1996-2001](#)

This project focused on three overlapping spheres of restructuring in family life: those operating in labour markets, urban housing markets, and gender relations. The project explored the way 'two wage' families draw on local labour, housing, transport, and childcare solutions to cope with everyday life. Other issues explored were varying prosperity and growth, family structure, social dislocation, home and work dislocation.

Coverage

Sample: two-parent families with young children and at least one economically active partner, resident in Great Britain or the USA between 1996 and 2001

Data: 85 interviews

Topics

- household
- employment
- childcare
- housing
- relationships
- social networks

- transport

Study name

[SN 5028 Quality of Home Experience for Homeworkers, 2002](#)

This study examined the ways in which home is conceptualised, experienced and evaluated by homeworkers, a hard-to-reach group. It explored the impact of home working on the experience of home and family life and sought to identify ways in which working from home may challenge the traditional stereotypical view of home.

Coverage

Sample: homeworkers: worked more than 20 hours, did not live alone, resident in the North of England and South Wales
Data: 45 qualitative interviewees, 15 focus group interviewees, 62 quantitative respondents

Topics

- homeworking
- home life
- leisure time activities
- local neighbourhood

Study name

[SN 2000 Family Life and Work Experience Before 1918, 1870-1973](#)

The major part of this collection comprises life story interviews originally collected as part of the study The Edwardians: Family Life and Work Experience Before 1918. The interviews were undertaken in the early 1970s and formed the basis of the first national oral history project in the United Kingdom.

Coverage

Sample: men and women born between 1870 and 1908

Data: 449 interview transcripts (PDF format) and 444 quantitative cases

Topics

- age
- birth order
- childbirth
- community
- families
- marriage

Study name

[SN 5190 Cross-Generational Investigation of the Making of Heterosexual Relationships, 1912-2003](#)

Hockey, J.

Making intimacy and the practices of everyday life its core focus, this study asked how women and men manage and subjectively experience the institution of heterosexuality. The study used a life course perspective to investigate the processes through which women and men have identified themselves as 'heterosexual' at various points across the last 80 years.

Coverage

Sample: extended families with three generations of adults aged 15+ based in Northern England

Data: 54 face-to-face interviews

Topics

- sexual knowledge
- courtship
- weddings
- parenthood
- separation and divorce

Study name

[SN 4723 Family Life of Old People, 1865-1955.](#)

Townsend, P.

This material formed the basis for Professor Townsend's classic 1954-1955 study which examined the growing perception that a breakdown in extended family networks was leaving old people isolated, and creating an increasing demand for residential care. The project demonstrated the important role that kinship networks, and relations within the extended family, played in the maintenance of community membership.

Coverage

Sample: elderly men and women in Bethnal Green, Hampstead and Westminster, London

Data: 189 interviews, diaries (in PDF format)

Topics

- old age
- family life
- welfare services
- community life
- retirement
- poverty
- social isolation

Study name

[SN 5100 Transition out of the Parental Home in Britain, Spain and Norway, 2001-2002](#)

Hollway, W.

There is considerable diversity in young people's experiences of leaving home throughout Europe, with young people leaving home at much older ages in the south rather than the north. This research project explored the relative importance of factors such as access to higher education, labour and housing market conditions and culturally-defined norms on leaving home in three European countries: Britain, Spain and Norway.

Coverage

Sample: young people and their parents in Liverpool, Bilbao and Trondheim

Data: Interviews - Liverpool: 34, Bilbao: 34, Trondheim: 24

Topics

- domestic responsibility
- family life
- leaving home
- parents
- siblings