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Cultural Studies and New Student Resistance

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Synonyms

[Cultural politics of education](#); [Higher student movements](#); [Subcultures](#); [Youth movements](#); [Education and youth protests](#); [Media and youth movements](#)

Introduction

Youth and resistance are two concepts closely linked to the development of Cultural Studies. Both contain the elements of topics of interest for Cultural Studies: power, historicity, categorization, and social structure. Youth and resistance seem to refer directly to the claims of social change, to those practices that subvert the inherited order and challenge the traditional patterns of the order of society. To amalgamate these concepts, the notion of subcultures has been widely employed. In fact, one of the primary texts on the subject and one of the most important works about youth in the tradition of Cultural Studies associated youth and resistance with a

configuration of differentiated structures within broader cultural networks. This is how “subculture” was defined in *Resistance Through Rituals: Youth Subcultures in Post-war Britain* (Hall and Jefferson 1993), which was the study done by the first generation of graduates from the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies of Birmingham, originally published in 1975 with the goal to explain the phenomenon of “youth culture” in Britain after the war. Dick Hebdige followed this line of research with *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (1979), a key text in the study of youth and subculture. From these works, youth have been of particular interest to those who use Cultural Studies as the main reference in the fields of communication, education, sociology, anthropology, history, and literature.

Youth is a conceptual category that allows for the organization of a social group within a given set of features. Thus, youths, when using a more conservative lens, would primarily be seen as incomplete adults, prone to disorder and to disrupting the harmony of society. Therefore, the early works that considered this subject of study were especially dedicated to juvenile delinquency (Baker 2012). In a more romantic vision of youth, on the other hand, youth would be the only possibility of overcoming the mistakes of the present and leading society towards a more prosperous and just horizon. Cultural Studies subverts both viewpoints and stresses the analysis of the categories of youth, which cannot be conceived as a homogeneous group or even as a