

Global Socioeconomic Impact from U. S. Subcultures

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Abstract

Numerous subcultures exist within the United States alone, with ethnic and racial groups sharing the same cuisine, language and fashion of their ancestry, while others are formed by members who possess manners or predilections that differ from the majority of a society's population, including hairstyles, tattoos, body piercings, music and hobbies. Certain subcultures have not only made significant impacts on the economic and social status of their dominant parent cultures and societies, but on other sub and parent cultures around the world thanks to the evolution of the Internet, social networking, and the increase in world travel. Examples of these impacting factors include the domestic and international influence on fashion, lifestyle, language, consumer spending, and employment opportunities. This paper examines how certain subcultures from the United States have had a significant socioeconomic influence on their parent culture while spreading to and affecting foreign countries over several decades. It also examines which subcultures have progressed the fastest, and which may have the strongest influence on global economies and societies in the future.

祖先と同じ料理、言語、ファッションを共有する民族的、人種的グループの多数のサブカルチャーがアメリカ国内のみに存在する一方で、ヘアスタイル、タトゥー、ボディピアス、音楽、趣味を含む社会の人口の大部分と異なるマナーや嗜好を持つメンバーによって形成されるサブカルチャーも存在します。

特定のサブカルチャーは、インターネット、ソーシャルネットワークの発展や海外旅行の増加のおかげで、アメリカの一般的な文化や社会の経済・社会的状況だけでなく、世界中の他のサブカルチャーと一般的な文化にも大きな影響を与えました。これらの影響要因の例には、ファッション、ライフスタイル、言語、消費者支出、雇用機会に対する国内および国際的な影響が含まれます。本稿では、米国からの特定のサブカルチャーが、何十年にも渡って海外に広

がり影響を及ぼしながら、各地の一般的な文化に大きな社会経済的影響を及ぼしてきたことを検証します。また、どのサブカルチャーが最も速く進行したか、そして将来的にどのサブカルチャーが世界経済や社会に最も大きな影響を与える可能性があるかについても考察します。

Introduction

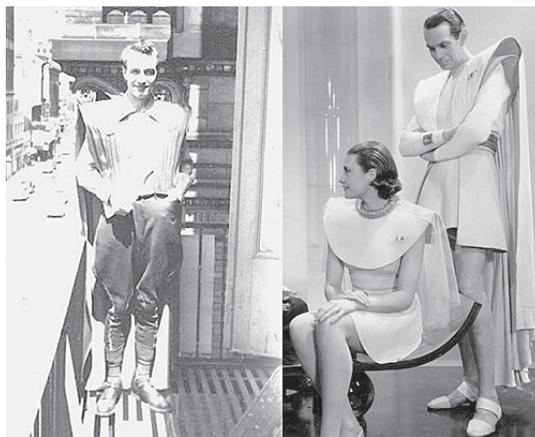
Culture refers to a group's shared practices, values, and beliefs, and encompasses a group's way of life, from routine, everyday interactions to the most important parts of group members' lives. It includes everything produced by a society, including all of the social rules (OpenStax, 2019). Meanwhile, a *subculture* that exists within its dominant culture of society is described as "a subdivision of a national culture, composed of a combination of factorable social situations such as class, status, ethnic background, regional and rural or urban residences, and religious affiliation, but forming in their combination a functional unity which has an integrated impact on the participating individual" (Gordon, 1947, p. 40). Around the same time, Komarovskiy and Sargent (1949) emphasized that subculture refers to cultural variants displayed by certain segments of the population and are distinguished not by one or two isolated traits but constitute relatively cohesive social systems. "They are worlds within the larger world of our national culture" (Komarovskiy and Sargent, 1949, p. 143). In a recent publication, Jandt (2018) describes subcultures as complex societies which are made up of a large number of groups with which people identify and from which are derived distinctive values and rules for behavior. "A subculture resembles a culture in that it usually encompasses a relatively large number of people and represents the accumulation of generations of human striving. They exist within dominant cultures and are often based on geographic region, ethnicity, or economic or social class" (Jandt, 2018, p. 12). Subcultures are also defined as a "cultural pattern that set apart some segment of a society's population" (Macionis & Plummer, 2008, p. 139), or "a social group which is perceived to deviate from the normative ideals of adult communities" (Thornton, 1995, p. 2). Harris (2017) notes that in the United States, adolescents often form subcultures to develop a shared youth identity, but even as members of a subculture band together, they still identify with and participate in the larger society. On the other hand, sociologists have defined *countercultures* as "a type of subculture that rejects some of the larger culture's norms and values. In contrast to subcultures, which operate relatively smoothly within the larger society, countercultures might actively defy a larger society by developing their own set of rules and norms to live by, sometimes even creating communities that operate outside of greater society" (Harris, 2017). Examples of countercultures are cults (a word derived from culture), and include the Ku Klux Klan (KKK), Beat poets and writers of the 1950s, and hippies of the 1960s.

Subcultures help individuals rediscover themselves, giving them a sense of identity, social belonging, and to live or become that favorite hero, manga or movie character they've always wanted to be. Subcultures add variety to mainstream parent cultures, shaping our societies and changing our history. Against this backdrop, some of the most socioeconomically influential U.S. initiated and now global subcultures include fandom (cosplay), hip-hop artists, cyclists, and homesteaders. Although there are many more, these particular subcultures have grown rapidly in the U.S. over the past several decades and have significantly influenced domestic fashion, style, language, music, consumer spending, and employment opportunities while spreading their influence on other sub and parent cultures around the globe.

Fandom/cosplay

One of the fastest growing U.S. and global subcultures is fandom/cosplay. Some argue that it started when a man named Forrest J. Ackerman wore his “futuristic costume” designed and created by Myrtle R. Douglas to the first WorldCon back in 1939 in New York (The Artifice, 2019). Others argue that fandom was renamed “cosplay” and started in Japan in the 1970’s when the manga series, *Urusei Yatsura*, and television series, *Mobile Suit Gundam*, became popular as Japanese college students eagerly dressed as their favorite characters from these media for local conventions, which helped launch the movement both domestically and internationally (The Artifice, 2019).

In North America, Europe, and Asia, it is no longer unusual to see people wearing



Forrest j. Ackerman’s futuristic costume based on the 1936 sci-fi film “Things to Come”.

costumes at conventions, at various social events, or on the streets. Their unique, colorful and carefully crafted wardrobes are no longer limited to just sci-fi or anime, but have expanded into other dimensions such as superheroes, cartoon characters, video game and movie characters among others. Similarly, Japan has exemplified cosplay as part of its subculture, and practitioners can be found in crowded areas such as Harajuku, Shibuya and Shinjuku in Tokyo, and the Dotonbori (Namba area) of Osaka. Cosplayers in these areas may dress up on a daily basis, so it is not unusual to see them flaunting their unique outfits amongst the crowds on trains, busses, streets, in shopping malls or parks at any time of the year.

The Artifice (2019) states that some of the main reasons why adults of all ages enjoy fandom/cosplay are:

- 1) They enjoy transforming themselves into other characters. Most claim that being something or someone else gives them strength and courage.
- 2) It helps boost their confidence. As one fan explains, “Through fandom/cosplay, I can become the character(s) I’ve always wanted to be. I can live vicariously with how cool they are” (The Artifice, 2019).
- 3) Fandom/cosplay gives practitioners a strong sense of community. Fans can interact with others who are at the same event or in the same group, so there is a sense of unity, and most feel it’s thrilling to see another fandom/cosplayer as the same or another character from the same comic series. Some of the more popular events fandom/cosplayers attend include group photo sessions, costume making and sewing parties, beach parties, and club or convention activities.
- 4) Although most fandom/cosplayers participate for fun, some actually do it to earn a living, such as celebrity Jessica Nigri, who became popular ever since her ‘Sexy Pikachu’ costume was posted on the Internet in 2009.

Socioeconomic factors

What influence does fandom/cosplay have on societies and their economies? Investin (2018) claims that the industry has quickly risen to a multibillion-dollar business worth over 45 billion US dollars (USD) worldwide and has created massive employment for creative fandom/cosplay designers, artists, and photographers while allowing fans to appreciate their favorite characters by donning their outfits. At present, the industry has officially become a mainstay of the entertainment niche all over the world. As with any other industry, fandom/cosplay has a lot of potential, especially when it comes to marketing and brand creation (Investin, 2018). Furnston (2017) notes the industry is generally subdivided into two different categories: the creators or players who include career fandom/cosplayers, photographers, and prop makers who supply most of the

ideas and characters, and the viewers, corporations, fans and information suppliers. Like any other industry, fandom/cosplay has a lot of potential, especially when it comes to marketing and brand creation, so for a large number of people this subculture can be the start of a lifelong journey into a design career, whether it's costume design, SFX make-up, or product and prop design (Furmston, 2017). One example is Sorcha McIntyre, who launched a graphic design career after attending events that gave her a chance to display her artwork and designs. Contrarily, Investitin (2018) states that despite the industry's tremendous growth rate, fandom/cosplay critics claim numerous challenges have also curtailed it, including:

- Lack of settlement accounts — The fandom/cosplay industry is global, but there exists no dedicated method that can be used to settle payments in different regions. Additionally, although many fans are between the ages of 30 and 50, the majority are still in their teens or early 20's, which means few have access to credit cards and other payment methods that often require credit ratings and significant bank checking or savings accounts.
- Issues with revenue sharing — Sharing revenue in the fandom/cosplay industry is difficult due to a lack of a specific market where revenues can be shared based on copyrights. As a result, few prop makers and other players have been able to acquire legitimate rewards for their talents.
- Lack of transparency — This is evident, especially when corporations take advantage of players in the industry for advertisement campaigns and other purposes. This means that fandom/cosplayers are not always compensated by corporations who use their photos or reproduce their costumes without paying them for their time, effort and ideas. There should be more distinct accounting laws that demand clearer documentation of these factors.
- Lack of monetization — Fandom/cosplay prop makers and artists spend a great amount of time and money to recreate outfits of their favorite characters, but if there is no specific method where their talents can be actualized and monetized, many end up doing it for fashion purposes only and receive no financial rewards for their efforts.

Despite these challenges, the steady increase in this subculture's popularity will no doubt place stronger demands on participants and corporations to improve their practices in order to yield newer designs and develop more effective marketing

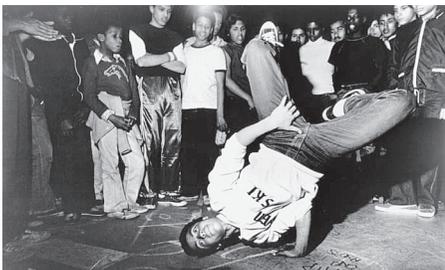
and brand creation to satisfy the demands of future fans and potential consumers. Meanwhile, stricter rules about transparency and monetization should eventually take affect. Furmston (2017) notes, “If you think cosplay is just about dressing up in sexy outfits, you are sadly mistaken. Cosplay has grown up: it’s an art, an inclusive hobby, and a creative pursuit — and, for an increasing number of people, it’s a way of life”.

Future of fandom/cosplay

The combination of fandom/cosplay and Ethereum block chain technology should eventually bring about a cryptocurrency designed to help fandom/cosplayers overcome their current reimbursement challenges while helping to ensure transparency and accurate payment in the industry. BTCUpload.com (2018) writes that since 2010, the fandom/cosplay market has increased by 15%. It’s now worth between 30 to 50 billion USD, and with the help of communities such as Cure WorldCosplay, the potential market could be far higher, mainly when the fandom/cosplay industry works along with sectors like anime, comics, films, and gaming industries with a market value that goes over 180 billion USD. With future development of financial technology such as Ethereum block chain and cryptocurrency to help reimburse fandom/cosplayers for their costume ideas, and designers for their creation of movie and manga characters, the spread of this subculture has the potential to go well beyond imaginable limits.

Hip-hop subculture

Hip-hop subculture undoubtedly boasts the widest influence of any subculture on a variety of economic categories, including fashion, music, employment, vocabulary, and consumer spending. “Hip-hop is a culture, not simply a musical form, and an underground subculture has grown steadily alongside hop hop’s mainstream popularity” (Hanefler, 2010, p. 45). The history of this phenomenon dates back to the 1920s when



A b-boy circa, 1980.



The Cold Crush Brothers’ Tony Tone with Kool Here

the earliest forms of hip-hop dance were created, and later in the 1950s and '60s when the Jamaican dancehall toasting era movement helped boost its image (Adaso, 2018). Haenfler (2010) accentuates that the early pioneers were disc jockeys who performed live in clubs or parks, encouraging enthusiastic crowd participants by manipulating the music using two turntables which allowed mixing and rearranging of songs. Hip-hop, Adaso (2018) asserts, became predominant in African American urban communities of New York, and included rap, break dance, graffiti writing, and disc jockeying among others. Hip-hop dancing includes a group of various dance styles, including robotic, tutting, b-boying popping and locking, styles that developed and became popular in the 1970s. One artist originally accredited to starting the hip-hop concept was DJ Kool Herc, who performed at block parties around New York Bronx neighborhoods in 1974 along with other DJs, which eventually lead to DJ/MC/Crowd pleaser Lovebug Starski coining this culture as “hip-hop” (Adaso, 2018).

Nielsen Music, which compiles data from more than 39,000 retail outlets globally to help record labels, publishers, artists, artist management, and performance rights organizations, released an annual mid-year report which revealed that pop and rock-and-roll were no longer the top genre of overall album consumption in the U.S. (McIntyre, 2017). Hip-hop is a completely improvised freestyle of music that doesn't contain any binding elements. In another recent report from Statista (2019), hip-hop and rap boasted the largest share of total music album consumption in the U.S. in 2018 for the second year in a row at nearly 22% of total sales, while pop music came in second place at just over 20%, and rock in third at 14% (figure 1).

Share of total music album consumption in the United States in 2018, by genre

R&B/hip-hop genre represented 24.5% of all music consumption in the U.S. in 2017, which was the largest share of any genre and the first time R&B/hip-hop has led this measurement for a calendar year. The percentage share represented a combination of album sales, track equivalent album units and streaming equivalent album units, including both on-demand audio and video streams (Caulfield, 2018).

Influence on fashion

Also known as “big fashion”, hip-hop has a distinctive style of dress originating from African American, Latin and other inner-city youth of New York City, followed by Los Angeles, Chicago, Philadelphia, Houston, the San Francisco Bay area, Detroit, Memphis, Atlanta, St. Louis among others (Tyga's Hip Hop Fashion, 2019). Every city

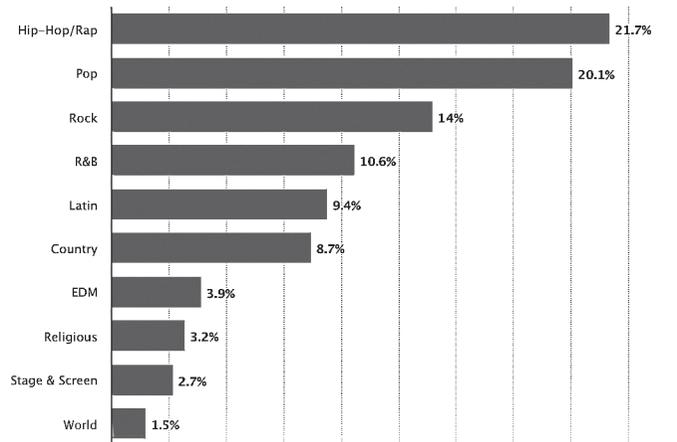


Figure 1, Source, Statista, 2019

has contributed its own elements to the overall hip-hop style seen around the globe. Van Dyk Lewis (2019) informs that from the very beginning, hip-hop fashion has been on a trajectory of developments that have been primarily in the men's wear sector, where early clothes were functional and included conventional items such as multicolored appliqué leather jackets, sheepskin coats, carcoats, straight leg corduroy or denim jeans, hooded sweatshirts, athletic warm-up pants, mock turtlenecks, sneakers, and caps. Less functional items included designer jeans and moniker belts, gold jewelry, Kangol caps, Pumas with fat laces, basketball shoes, and oversized spectacles by Cazal (Van Dyk Lewis, 2019). Baggy apparel shapes which disguise the contours of the body were introduced in the 1980s, but during the early 2000s, the archetypal hip-hop look consisted of baseball caps emblazoned with insignia from the black leagues and football teams, and well-known fashion designers (Van Dyk Lewis, 2019). During the late 1990s, the universal oversized white T-shirt, basketball vests, and hockey shirts became the norm of the industry, and, according to Van Dyk Lewis (2019), hip-hop fashion branded sportswear designers such as Adidas, Reebok, Nike, and British Knights became influenced by hip-hop, making efforts to produce fashion sportswear, hip-hop brands of Troop, Cross Colors, Mecca, Walker Wear, and Karl Kani. Hip-hop has created its own trends and consumption patterns with cultural networks, all of which have modified at an impressive pace and mixing it with mainstream fashion. Many of the raps by major hip-hop stars, Van Dyk Lewis (2019), exalt the importance of wearing Gucci, Prada, Versace, Tommy, Earl, Burberry, Timberland, Coogi, and Coach.

Influence on Vocabulary

Hip-hop subculture gradually developed beyond music and fashion. Its unique vocabulary has also spread across the globe, including words such as “YoYo”, “What’s up?”, “da bomb”, “dope”, “legit” and “nigga” (Reid, 2006, p. 380). Although “nigga” was once received in a negative connotation, Reid (2006) emphasizes that individuals of the hip-hop subculture have managed to reverse the meaning as a term of endearment. In a recent study, researcher Matt Daniels (2017) from DataFace put together a dataset that represented hip-hop. He used 26 million words from the lyrics of the top 500 charting artists on Billboard’s Rap Chart, or about 50,000 songs. The most common in hip-hop lyrics was the word “Love,” which appeared 21 times for every 10,000 words. However, what mattered for the analysis was usage of the word in hip-hop compared to all other music lyrics. The study used lyrics from 275,905 songs (about 47 million words) spanning all music genres, except hip-hop. In the non-hip-hop dataset, words such as “love” were even more common: 71 times per 10,000 words versus 21 in hip-hop (Daniels, 2017).

Socioeconomic factors

Brandon Gaille (2015), Internet marketing entrepreneur and fashion expert, documents that hip-hop has had the following influence on fans worldwide:

- 12.6% of people who listen to hip-hop regularly will purchase clothing weekly.
- 37.1% of 15–25-year-olds in China said they love hip-hop, or about 296 million people in total.
- 24 million people between the ages of 19 and 34, from a range of nationalities, ethnic groups, and religions, are estimated to make up the core hip-hop demographics.
- \$500 billion of annual spending power is attributed to hip-hop demographics every year.
- 45% of world-wide hip-hop music fans will buy hip-hop related clothing or toys at any given time.

Hip-hop music, fashion, and sales originating in the U.S. expanded rapidly in foreign countries primarily throughout the 1980s. Japanese hip-hop (also known as J-rap, J-hip-hop or J-hop), for example, is said to have begun when Hiroshi Fujiwara returned to Japan from the U.S. and started playing records in the early 1980s (Condry, 2007). According to Howling Pixel (2019), Japanese hip-hop tends to be influenced by old school hip-hop which originated in New York, taking from the era’s catchy beats, dance culture, and overall fun and carefree nature. As a result, hip-hop stands as one of the most commercially viable mainstream music genres in Japan and the line between it and pop music is frequently blurred (Howling Pixel, 2019). Freestyle hip-hop, Wada

(2019) adds, has also become quite popular in Japan. It is a technique for expressing hip-hop using improvisation. Amid the current popularity of freestyle in Japanese-language rap, it is characteristic of Japanese society to appreciate this improvisational nature while comprehending the Japanese lyrics. A trend affecting the Japanese hip-hop fashion market is a move towards more casual and athletic clothing. In addition to hip-hop wear, consumers contribute significantly towards world demand for casual, comfortable clothing, and these different fashions can be seen on young Japanese adults dancing in hip-hop groups at universities and various venues throughout large cities (Wada, 2019).

FashionUnited (2016) noted that Athleisure and athletic apparel is another new style that is becoming more popular in the U.S., particularly in athletic footwear. By the mid-1980s, Beastie Boys, LL Cool J, Public Enemy and Run DMC of Def Jam Records Company held the “Def Jam Tour”, which triggered a global hip-hop craze. By the 1990s, several rappers and Disc jockeys who gradually formed hip-hop music into the mainstream market achieved 10 million USD in sales. Hip-hop music has become big revenue for the entertainment industry in the U.S. and around the world (Williams, 2005). Meanwhile, health and wellness have become a widespread trend in countries like Japan, which has led to increased demand for sportswear and baggy clothes. This sportswear segment of the market is expected to continue to flourish with the oncoming 2020 Tokyo Olympics (FashionUnited, 2016). It seems obvious that the wide variety of aspects influencing the attraction to hip-hop will continue to have a significant impact on this subculture’s fashion, vocabulary, music, employment, and consumer spending.

Future of hip-hop

“Hip-hop has the potential to draw attention to racism and provide disadvantage youth with a forum in which to build solidarity and fight oppression” (Haenfler, 2010, p. 54). DeCarlos Garrison, artist manager and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Bandbasher, claims the future of hip-hop needs to better reflect its past, while embracing its recent upswing in market power. In the beginning, popular rappers including Run DMC, The Beastie Boys, Public Enemy and N.W.A elevated hip-hop with “Gangsta rap” from the U.S. east coast, while N.W.A members Dr. Dre, Ice Cube, and solo artists Ice T and Snoop Dogg emerged from the U.S. West Coast, sparking the famous feud between both sides of the continent while hip-hop’s popularity spread across the globe (Simons, 2019). Despite the popularity and strong influence hip-hop has created for several decades, like disco, some critics are now saying it has not only reached its peak, but may be on a slow, downward trend. Garrison (2018) notes that one of the main reasons

for this is because current rap and hip-hop artists all sound the same, chasing celebrity and not excellence, and not really thinking about the future. “Artists and their teams need to shift focus to ensure a creative, innovative future for hip-hop. We need voices with something to say, producers who create sounds regardless of how fashionable they are” (Garrison, 2018). In contrast, hip-hop and rap still boasted the largest share of total music album consumption in the U.S. in 2017 and 2018, indicating that they still have a very strong following for the time being. Artists and fans will need to continue finding ways to connect and support each other so that both can benefit for the future survival of this legendary subculture.

Bicycle Subculture

Bicycle subculture usually refers to various forms of cycling associated with bike clothing, helmets, and other items, but it also refers to cities and countries that support a large percentage of people who now belong to this expanding group. According to a report released by the American Public Transportation Association (APTA), Americans took 10.1 billion trips on public transportation in 2017, and although commuter and light rail ridership remained steady compared to public transit ridership in 2016, there was a 3.0% decrease in bus ridership as it declined by 4.3% compared to the previous year (Public Transit Blog, 2018). In large U.S. cities where public transportation is available, the combination of higher gas prices, parking fees, maintenance fees, inevitable parking tickets, road rage, and environmental impact are making it more and more attractive to explore non-auto options for transportation (Oliver, 2011). As a result, a greater number of people have taken up riding their bicycles and joining cycling clubs for health and environmental concerns.



Bicycle subculture, obsessive riders doing stunts

Why do people cycle?

Baskind (2010) listed 12 reasons why more people use bicycles for transportation than in the past:

1. It's easier to finance a new bicycle than a new car.
2. A bicycle has a tiny manufacturing footprint when compared to a car.
3. Bicycles produce no meaningful pollution when in operation.
4. Bicycles save taxpayers money by reducing road wear.
5. Bicycles are an effective alternative to a second car.
6. Using a bicycle for transportation can help a person lose weight and improve his or her overall health.
7. Bicycles can be easily stored.
8. Bicycles don't burn fuel.
9. Bicycling may be faster and more efficient than a car or public transportation.
10. Bicycles cost much less to maintain and operate than automobiles.
11. Bicycles provide mobility for those who can't afford a vehicle or public transportation.
12. Studies show that bicycle commuters are healthier, more productive, and require less time off from work.

Gough (2018) states that the number of cyclists/bike riders in the U.S. has increased over the past three years from around 43 million to 47.5 million in 2017. Meanwhile, the U.S. bicycle market, which includes retail sales of bicycles, related parts and accessories through all channels of distribution, has an estimated size of around six billion USD annually. On average, consumers in the U.S. spend about 22.6 USD on their bicycles per year, while sales of electric bicycles that have an integrated electric motor in them are forecast to acquire strong growth in the coming years (Gough, 2018).

The most distinguished example is the city of Portland, Oregon. PBOT (2018) reported that as of 2017, 6.3% of Portland commuters go to work or recreation by bicycle, which is the highest percentage of bicycle commuters for any large U.S. city and means that approximately 22,647 workers in Portland alone choose to make their daily commute by bicycle. Nationally, 0.5% of commuters bicycle, and 374% more people biked to work in 2017 than in 2000. 80% of bicyclists in Portland wear helmets, and 35% of bicyclists are female (PBOT, 2018). Meanwhile, in the city of Chicago, Oliver (2011) states that although the number is much lower (1.15%), there was a 129% increase in bicycle riders between 2000 and 2009, and the city now has miles of dedicated bike paths, including the "Lakefront Path" which hugs the shore of Lake Michigan. This route stretches a distance of over 15 miles (24 kilometers), all within the city limits, and Chicago installed bike rental kiosks (Community Bicycles), and standard rental shops

around the city.

U.S. roads and cities were originally paved and re-designed between 1880 and 1900 to serve the needs of cyclists in what was known as “the Good Roads Movement” (Oliver, 2011). Even before the relatively recent increase in bicycle commuting, bicycle culture has been a rich part of America’s mix, including fixed-gear-riding bike messengers, catapulting themselves along city streets; competitive racers, decked out in their Lycra riding expensive racing bikes; low-rider bicycles, often identifiable by their shiny chrome-plated hardware; and just casual riders (Oliver, 2011). Other “hardcore” cyclists, notes Oliver (2011), are referred to as casual riders or “Fred’s”, those who wear average street clothes, while Freds refer to the Spandex-clad riders as “Lances” (Lance Armstrong). Bicycle subculture is growing rapidly around the country, and if more cities use Portland and Chicago as examples for better accessibility and improved bicycle infrastructure, the U.S. could well become a predominant cycling urban country like Holland, Spain or China in the very near future.

Socioeconomic factors

There are nearly 16,000 bicycle retail shops in the U.S., which employ more than 70,000 people (Flusche, 2012). Regions that have invested in bicycling have seen tangible economic impacts, and studies show that the bicycle industry, bicycle tourism, and the health benefits from bicycling create jobs, economic activity, and cost savings. According to Flusche (2017), bicycle manufacturing is a six billion USD national industry in the U.S., with the nation’s 60 million annual recreational bicyclists spending 46.9 billion USD on meals, transportation, lodging, gifts and entertainment. Flusche (2017) writes that one study estimated the spill-over effects of all bicycling-related activities could be as large as 133 billion USD, supporting 1.1 million jobs and generating 17.7 billion USD in federal, state, and local taxes. According to a study conducted in 2010, it was revealed that bicycle recreation and tourism contributed 924 million USD to Wisconsin state’s economy and estimated that the potential value of health benefits from reducing short car trips and increasing bicycling totaled 409 million USD (Flusche, 2012). Noting the economic and health benefits of bicycling in states such as Iowa, it was determined that commuter and recreational bicycling in the state generates more than 400 million USD in economic activity resulting in health savings of 87 million USD (Flusche, 2012).

Future of bicycle subculture

Nowadays in major cities across the U.S. and around the globe, e-bikes have become a common sight. Riders can check out a bike from a docking station, use it for as long

as they want, then return it to another docking station. Thanks to modern technology, including smartphones, GPS, Bluetooth, Radio-frequency identification (RFID), and mobile-payment systems, bike sharing in the U.S. has grown from 320,000 rides in 2010 to 28 million in 2016 (Thompson, 2018). Moreover, dockless bike sharing (DBS), where various types of technology are accommodated into each bicycle thus eliminating the need for docking stations, has become cheaper, making dockless bikes rentable for only one dollar per hour. Electric dockless bikes now feature cheaper and lighter batteries. According to one U.S. firm, Jump Bikes, CEO Ryan Rzepecki suspects that custom-designed dockless e-bikes, which can recently be found anywhere around San Francisco and Washington, DC., will eclipse the appeal of regular DBS because you can arrive at work without being drenched in sweat (Thompson, 2018). Rzepecki adds that the number of people wanting to ride electric bikes is likely 10 times that of people willing to ride regular bikes. On the other hand, the bike-share revolution has its limits, including under expansion in rural areas, and DBS systems producing piles of bikes on sidewalks and streets that have already become evident in countries such as China and Japan (Thompson, 2018). Regardless, for societies that are rapidly urbanizing and overheating due to carbon dioxide emissions, bike sharing poses significant solutions, including the reduction of pressure on public transportation, air pollution, traffic jams, and the enhancement of health and tourism.

Silverstein (2016) promises that the future of the global e-bike market is expected to be a strong area for investment, where sales generated over 15.7 billion USD in revenue worldwide in 2016, but is expected to grow to a 24.4 billion USD market by 2025. In markets around the world, increasing urbanization and a desire to move away from cars for motorized transportation are creating more opportunities for alternative mobility devices (Silverstein, 2016). E-bikes are unique mobility devices because they are low in cost, can utilize existing infrastructure, and have no licensing requirements. Silverstein (2016) asserts that improvements in Li-ion energy density (lithium-ion battery--a type of rechargeable battery), and decreases in battery pack costs are expected to position e-bikes even more firmly as primary technology that will be increasingly utilized as an alternative mode of transportation to automobiles (figure 2).

With a foreseen steady increase of DBS, dockless ebikes, fancier and lighter road and mountain bicycles, in addition to cyclist-fashion sales which will evolve and adapt to an expanding rider population, this subculture may one day truly become the next king of the road!

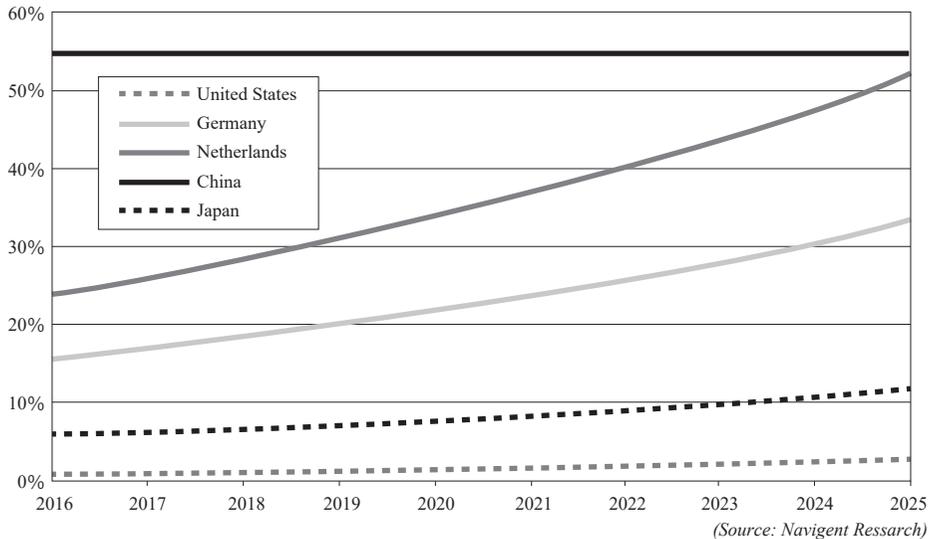


Figure 2 E-Bike Market Share of Total Bicycle Market by Country, Select Markets: 2016–2025

Homesteaders

On the opposite spectrum of the economic revenue scale lies the subculture homesteaders. These people contribute the least to their local economies as they live off their land and try to survive as frugally as possible, making use of everything without wasting anything. Despite this subculture's insignificant monetary effect on any given economy, its influence has had a major international following by citizens advocating a more solitary and stress-free lifestyle. Homesteading is a way of self-sufficiency



Sundari Kraft and company garden up a mess of goodies in Denver.

characterized by subsistence agriculture, home preservation of food, and may involve the small-scale production of textiles, clothing, and craftwork for household use or sale (Jones, 2019). Pursued in different ways and eras around the world, Jones (2019) states that homesteading is generally differentiated from rural village or commune living by isolation (either social or physical) of the homestead. The use of the term in the United States dates back to the Homestead Act (1862) and earlier. The homestead Act was passed by Congress in 1862 to encourage settlement of America's uninhabited prairies because states along the East Coast were becoming too densely populated and needed to be spread out across the continent. "The act offered settlers up to 160 acres (65 hectares) of land for only a small fee, and in return, the settlers had to live on and improve the property" (Porterfield, 2005, p. 4).

Although homesteaders have been around for centuries, their numbers have rapidly increased in the past few decades. Weaver (2017) accentuates that they do not operate full factory farms, but homesteads, usually under 10 acres with some as small as 1/4 acre in suburbia, and there's even urban homesteading and gardening. The main focus is to produce your own food and to be connected to the process of where it comes from. Anti-Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) and 100% organic farming advocates make up a large population of this subculture. In sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in nations formerly controlled by the British Empire, a homestead is the household compound for a single extended family, while in the UK, the term 'smallholder' or 'crofts' is the rough equivalent to 'homesteader' (@thistle-rock, 2019). Modern homesteaders often use renewable energy options, including solar electricity and wind power, plant and grow heirloom vegetables, and raise heritage livestock. Homesteading is not defined by where someone lives, such as the city or country, but by the *lifestyle choices* they make (Dahl, 2019). The ideas of modern homesteading proponents increased in popularity in the 1960s in the United States, and self-sufficiency movements in the 1990s and 2000s began to apply the concept to urban and suburban settings around the world, known as "urban homesteading" which incorporates small-scale, sustainable agriculture and homemaking (Hess, Hamilton, 2017).

Why people do homesteading

Many people grow tired of hectic business schedules, commutes, crowds, pollution, and the dangers of big cities. They find that living off the land in the countryside, where there is cleaner air and they can interact with nature, is a great way to escape stress in the middle of their careers or after retirement. Dingman (2017) uploads a webpage entitled *A Farmish Kind of Life*, and conducted a recent survey with several

of her homesteading friends. Some of their reasons for homesteading include the desire for a more old-fashioned lifestyle with less technology and convenience, and to have a stronger connection to wholesome food. Another advocate indicates “The reason I’m a homesteader is because I love food, and I care about where it comes from” (Dingman, 2017), while another adds, “I’m a homesteader because after my son developed multiple food allergies, the best and safest way to feed him and the rest of my family was to raise our own food. His allergies have since subsided, but it’s a lifestyle for us now” (Dingman, 2017). By living off their land, homesteaders are not only in contact with nature, but have full knowledge of what they eat, how they grow it, how to live independently while escaping the stresses of urban life, and pursuing a frugal and potential low-cost lifestyle.

Socioeconomic factors

Revolv (2019) states that social and government support systems are frequently eschewed in favor of self-reliance and relative deprivation in order to maximize independence and self-determination. The degree of this independence occurs along a spectrum, with many homesteaders creating their own foodstuffs or designing and manufacturing their own crafts or other products in order to appeal to high-end niche markets to meet financial needs (Homesteading, 2019). Meanwhile, other homesteaders enjoy a solitary lifestyle after successful careers that provide them the funding for land, housing, seeds, cattle, tools, and specialized equipment, including solar panels, farm machinery, and electricity generators. Contrarily, Revolv (2019) warns that many homesteaders come to realize over time that they cannot deal with the realities of high expenses, and even without a family to support, find that thousands of dollars of annual income per year are necessary to cover essential expenses while providing resources to build their dream. Maxwell (2019) warns that the most common misunderstanding among homesteaders is most of them automatically assume that growing things is the only way to make homestead income happen, but in fact, they discover that making the money you need from products off your land typically involves a lot of time, effort and risk in exchange for a surprisingly small amount of cash. On the other hand, Maxwell (2019) states, “I now garden directly for my family but earn the money we need from some pleasant work that we do entirely on the homestead. For what it’s worth, this is one of the things I’ve learned from living out here on the land”.

Future of Homesteaders

According to Mother Earth News Fair (2019), the business press predicts that the future of farming lies in the effectiveness of technology, including GPS-controlled

tractors to vertical farms in city warehouses and skyscrapers. However, expensive innovations won't necessarily solve a food system that has difficulty in keeping up with feeding an ever-growing human population, currently at 7.7 billion people (Worldometers, 2019). The real future lies in small farms and homesteads that enjoy the advantages of small scale, high productivity, subsistence-first thinking, and low levels of debt. Small-scale farms have always out-produced giant farms that challenged them, and proliferating numbers of "micro-farms" have proven that very small scale can be just as if not more profitable (Mother Earth News Fair, 2019). People who can provide for themselves and their neighbors against an increasing backdrop of global warming, the depletion of fossil fuels, and growing fear of international financial instability will be best positioned to thrive in the long haul. Homesteading may be one of the best solutions for future survival. People should learn the lessons of the past to produce more with less labor, working smarter and developing stronger ties with their surrounding communities while avoiding debt and incorporating innovations of small-scale farming in order to adapt to a changing global climate and economic system.

Conclusion

Numerous subcultures exist within the United States, with ethnic and racial groups sharing the same heritage, cuisine, language and fashion of their ancestry, while others are formed by members who possess manners or predilections that differ from the majority of a society's population. Subcultures also include countercultures (a type of subculture that rejects some of the larger culture's norms and values), which include cults that often actively defy larger society by developing their own set of rules and norms to live by, sometimes even creating communities that operate outside of their greater society. With the evolution of the internet, social networking, and the increase in world travel, subcultures such as fandom/cosplay, hip-hop, cyclists, and homesteaders have not only made significant impacts on the domestic economic and social status of their parent cultures, but on other sub and parent cultures around the world, greatly influencing global fashion, language, lifestyle, consumer spending, and employment opportunities where they exist. Subcultures help individuals discover or rediscover themselves, giving them a sense of identity and social belonging, and to live or become their favorite hero, manga or movie character to escape the doldrums of daily life with friends that share the same hobby. Subculture groupies enjoy being in specific music and dance groups, traveling together on bicycles or road bikes, and living solitary lifestyles on a plot of land knowing exactly what food and beverages they grow and ingest into their bodies without the stresses from urban society. Subcultures

add variety to mainstream parent cultures, shaping societies and changing history. Sociologists note examples of jazz or punk advocates emerging from an underground movement to modern music, while rock-n-rollers played a symbolic role in the original foundation of modern popular music. Hippies from the 60's lifestyle and fashion can still be found at casual clothing stores in college towns. Subcultures not only help define people, fashion, language, lifestyles, and give them a strong sense of identity, but produce jobs for those related to them, including fashion designers, manufacturers and event planners. Without subcultures to help evolve our societies, there could be little progression or change, and our lives might become as mundane as robots.

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