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Research paper

Beyond 'peer pressure': Rethinking drug use and 'youth culture'

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#### **Abstract**

The study of drug use by young people in the West has been transformed over the last decade by the development of sociological approaches to drug use which take serious account of the cultural context in which young people encounter drugs. One consequence is that the notion of 'peer pressure', as the primary articulation of the engagement between youth culture and drug use, has been displaced by

that of 'normalisation', which youth cultural lifestyles. In concerned with the prevale of rising rates of drug use lesser extent, post-Soviet Russia is used to develop

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and cultural explanations of it. It does this by situating young people's narratives of their drugs choices in the context of local drugs markets and broader socio-economic processes. However, it attempts to go beyond seeing structural location as simply a 'constraint' on individual choice by adopting an understanding of 'youth culture' as a range of youth cultural practices and formations that simultaneously embody, reproduce and negotiate the structural locations of their subjects.



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# Keywords

Drug use; Youth cultural practice; 'Normalisation thesis'; Post-Soviet Russia



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