Abstract

In considering the relationship between music, taste and ageing, there are two dominant points of view: first, that patterns of taste tend to shift and alter as one grows older (Bourdieu, 1984); second, that individuals remain trapped in a situation of what could be referred to as ‘arrested development’, as exhibited, for example, by ageing baby boomers nostalgically holding on to the musical tastes of their youth (Calcutt, 1998). This paper explores and contests such arguments with reference to empirical studies conducted in the UK, Australia and France. We consider the ways in which relationships between music, taste and ageing, and their everyday expression, are inherently bound up with local contexts and associated processes of cultural legitimation.

Biography

Andy Bennett is Professor of Cultural Sociology and Director of the Centre for Public Culture and Ideas at Griffith University in Queensland, Australia. He has authored and edited numerous books including Popular Music and Youth Culture, Cultures of Popular Music, Remembering Woodstock, After Subculture and Music Scenes. He is a Faculty Associate of the Center for Cultural Sociology, Yale University, an Associate of PopuLUs, the Centre for the Study of the World’s Popular Musics at Leeds University, and a member of the Board for the European Sociological Association Network for the Sociology of the Arts.

Hervé Glevarec is researcher at the CNRS (National Centre for Scientific Research). He worked on cultural and media consumption in French society (France Culture à l’oeuvre, Paris, CNRS Editions) (Libre Antenne. La réception de la radio par les adolescents, Paris, Colin/INA.). His current research interests centre on French radio audiences and French fans of American TV series fans and on youth media-based leisure. He has recently completed a book on the ‘bedroom culture’ of young people. His third area of research focuses on music and cultural legitimacy. He is interested in highbrow culture, new popular musical tastes and its consequences for the French sociological classical model of ‘cultural legitimacy’.