



# Introduction: Dialogues with subcultures

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# How to recognize a subculture?

- Outside appearance
- Hipster mimicri, poseurs – persons who copy or mimic the dress, speech, and/or manners of a group or subculture without understanding the values, philosophy or ideology of the subculture
- Resulting misunderstandings may be confusing and sometimes violent



## Example – *lumbersexual* (puuraidurseksuaal)

- A hipster who looks like a simple lumber worker. He has a trained body, wears an expensive flannel shirt, has an impressive beard and is an embodiment of extreme masculinity. But surely you won't find a lumbersexual cutting down trees in the deep forest – he would rather spend time in hipster bars, instead of an axe he is carrying a MacBook Pro and he knows well how to take care of pot-herbs.

(definition by the Estonian newspaper Eesti Ekspress 19. 11. 2014).

- Conclusion: We have to look inside – open a dialogue!





# Interview with Mati (17), guitarist in punk band Cynicow

- Are the punks a separate subculture having their own vocabulary, beliefs, traditions, etc.? Mati: *Absolutely.*



# Punk subculture

- What are the most important characteristics of the punk subculture?

Mati: *Ideology.*

- But why then their special appearance – haircuts, tattoos, rivets?

*These also reflect the ideology to some extent, but in principle there is no difference how you look, you can even wear an old Estonian female national costume and still be a punk when only your ideology is correct.*

- But have you read the research and articles that cultural researchers, sociologists and others have written about punks? What is your opinion of these?

*Quite a crap, they are too superficial and don't get very much the point.*

- Should the scientists research punk subculture at all and how to do it better?

*I don't know, but there is not much difference anyway, punk lives on also without them.*



# Interview with Väino (49), member of various subcultures

- Are you member of some subculture? And does this subculture have distinct traditions, vocabulary, behaviour, etc.?

*Many. Traditional medicine. Pedestrians. Bicyclists. Massage therapists. Spiritual seekers.*

\* Is it necessary that scientists would investigate subcultures?

*Yes, they could. But first they should find the standard human – the so-called „normal“ person who isn't member of any subcultures – in order to use him as a standard. But I think that persons who really don't belong to any subcultures can be also called a subculture. Subcultures are really a very mainstream thing, they are everywhere.*





# Why and how investigate subcultures?

*Väino: It helps people to be more open – to see that the world is more colorful than we may often think. However, scientists themselves can also be called a subculture and they should be investigated by other scientists then.*

- But don't you think that scientists are in a power position? They are in the power to publish anything they write about subcultures, whereas subcultures usually can't publish what they think of scientists?

*Scientists investigate subcultures in an academical way, yet the subcultures investigate scientists in a subcultural way. Both are powerful – the word spreads anyway, even if subcultures talk about scientists just over a glass of beer.*

- How can scientists investigate a person who is member of many subcultures at the same time?

*It is difficult even with one subculture because there are too many different angles – political, educational, historical, societal, all are different. It is not possible to put all these nuances into one single research.*

# Interview with Aive (44), reiki practitioner

- Can reiki practitioners be called a subculture that has their own traditions, vocabulary, beliefs, etc.?

*Yes, they can be called a subculture but I wouldn't identify myself only through reiki, and I can't say in the name of others if they identify themselves through reiki. Moreover, there are many different schools of reiki and there are several other subcultures that have to do with belief and have something in common – angel therapy, yoga, goddess belief. But it is true that reiki practitioners have their own vocabulary, e.g. expressions like 'anchoring energy', 'activating channels'. We can talk of a reiki community in Estonia, whose members communicate, have joint events, practice together. There is also a common reiki ethics: being free of violence, being honest, loving and forgiving. Many of these principles are present also in other religions, and I guess that this is the indicator that they are correct.*

- What is the best way how scientists could investigate reiki subculture?

*Through dialogue!*



# Lets start a dialogue!

