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Revue Internationale de Sociologie

Volume 23, 2013 - [Issue 1](#)

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Baby boomers, consumption and social change: the bridging generation?

Rebecca Leach , Chris Phillipson, Simon Biggs & Annemarie Money

Pages 104-122 | Received 01 Mar 2012, Accepted 01 Jan 2013, Published online: 26 Mar 2013

 Cite this article

 <https://doi.org/10.1080/03906701.2013.771053>

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Abstract

This paper outlines the ways in which the cohort born immediately following the Second World War illustrates changes in consumption patterns within their lives. The paper suggests that this cohort (often known as baby boomers) view themselves to be a 'bridging' generation between the 'old' ways of their own parents and the radically different views of the next generation. Now nearing or entering retirement and later life, the discussion considers the accounts of boomers themselves having experienced post-war consumer culture and shifting family relations. This paper focuses primarily on qualitative accounts from 150 detailed interviews followed by 30 in-depth interviews, and is framed by analysis of the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing. It explores central emergent themes in the accounts of respondents which demonstrate evidence for a 'bridging' identity maintained by baby boomers in relation to their consumption practices.

Keywords:

change

consumption

generation

boomers

age

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Notes

This research was funded under the ESRC/AHRC Cultures of Consumption programme, grant number RES154-25-0003, Boomers and Beyond? The mature imagination and inter-generational consumption. The secondary data from ELSA were made available through the UK Data Archive. ELSA was developed by a team of researchers based at the National Centre for Social Research, University College London and the Institute for Fiscal Studies. The data were collected by the National Centre for Social Research. The funding is provided by the National Institute of Aging in the United States, and a consortium of UK government departments co-ordinated by the Office for National Statistics. The developers and funders of ELSA and the Archive do not bear any responsibility for the analyses or interpretations presented here.

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