

Young people of the sixties' leisure choices much like those today

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A study carried out by a University of Glasgow research team in the 1960s into young people's leisure activities reveals that they are much like those today. Most of them watched television.

The research called Time of One's Own by Pearl Jephcott, interviewed over 600 [young people](#) from Armadale in West Lothian and Dennistoun and Drumchapel all between the ages of 15-19. It found that most did not go out during the week and when they stayed in, they watched television. Pop music programmes were the most popular, followed by sport and then television serials.

Previously unpublished images from the archive were rediscovered earlier this year by the sociologists Dr John Goodwin and Dr Henrietta O'Connor of the University of Leicester and are available to view and comment on [flickr](#).

The researchers are interested to hear from anyone who was involved in the study in the 1960s – maybe as interviewers or interviewees, youth leaders, health visitors, artists, photographers or colleagues of Pearl Jephcott.

One typical 15 year old girl said:

“In our district, there is no entertainment. There is only a couple of dance halls and they have a bad name. We have to travel for pictures or to go swimming. At night girls and boys just walk about the streets and

hope for the best. We just go about with boys and have a carry on. Even then there is too much police about.”

In terms of interests outside the house, football for boys and visiting for girls were the most popular activities.

Cafes were also widely popular with young people who were aged between 15-19 and although many of them attended dances, they strongly associated them with trouble, even those held in local church or Scout halls. It was almost universally agreed that the cause of trouble was associated with drinking alcohol.

The study was published in 1967 by Pearl Jephcott, a pioneer of social research who worked at the University of Glasgow at the time. Pearl spent most of her life investigating the lives of teenagers. She followed Time of One's Own with a study in 1971 into living in high rise flats.

Moir Rankin from Glasgow University Archives said: “Pearl Jephcott's archive collection has been in the University since her death in 1980. It was only when the team from Leicester brought the wonderful artwork to our attention that we began to look in more detail. Pearl was obviously a gifted social researcher who, unlike many others of her time, placed an emphasis on exploring the experiences of 'ordinary' young people. Her work is a fascinating insight into the lives of our teenage parents and grandparents.”

John Goodwin from the University of Leicester said:

“In approaching her research, Pearl Jephcott was also a genuine innovator, way ahead of her time, in that she used photographs, drawings and paintings in her studies well before such techniques became fashionable. Time of One's Own (1967) stands out in this regard as she used a range of images, including photographs, artist illustrations and

drawings by the young people themselves, to depict the lives of young people she encountered in the study. We were amazed by the wealth of additional images held by the University of Glasgow Archive not least because it is so unusual to have such complete records of these early social studies. Pearl's writings and accompanying images offer a real insight into the lives 1960s teenagers."

Provided by University of Glasgow

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