

LIST OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS9

LIST OF TABLES AND PLATES 10

CHAPTER ONE: WHAT IS MAINSTREAM YOUTH? 11

 Questioning orthodoxies about ‘mainstream’ youth 11

 Specifying the concept of ‘mainstream’ youth..... 13

 Background of the study: young people in the Czech Republic 16

 Aims of the book21

CHAPTER TWO: CRITICAL ENGAGEMENT
WITH THE CONCEPT OF ‘MAINSTREAM’ YOUTH
IN YOUTH STUDIES.....23

 Cultural approach25

*The binary model of passive mainstream and active
 subcultures*26

Mainstream is just a word32

 Structural approach41

 Navigating a way forward.....47

 Conclusion50

CHAPTER THREE: YOUNG PEOPLE’S CONSUMER
LIFESTYLES IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC53

 Young people and social change after 198956

 Young consumers in the Czech Republic60

 Key discourses on consumer lifestyles in youth research
 in the Czech Republic63

Questioning the victim/dupe model	66
Unfulfilled expectations and adult-centrism.....	72
Representation of mainstream youth in Czech cultural studies.....	74
Consumer lifestyles in the context of late modernity	76
Conclusion	78
 CHAPTER FOUR: UNDERSTANDING YOUNG PEOPLE'S CONSUMPTION	81
Framing the research question.....	81
An interpretive approach	82
Exploratory research design	84
The sample.....	87
First phase – collection of respondents' essays	92
Second phase – focus groups.....	94
Third Phase: Semi-structured interviews in small groups.....	99
Ethics and reflexivity.....	103
Conclusion	107
 CHAPTER FIVE: THE PARADOX OF CONFORMING NON-CONFORMITY.....	109
What kind of consumer am I?	109
Consumerism and conformity	115
Reflexive consumers	119
Second-hand shopping and the paradox of alternative consumption	123
The “Sheeple“	126
Neither the sheep, nor the rebel	131
Being normal does not mean being average.....	138
Conclusion	141

CHAPTER SIX: THE PARADOX OF CHOICE
AND THE MEANING OF CONSUMER LIFESTYLES
AMONG ‘MAINSTREAM’ YOUTH..... 145

Choice as a norm 146

Identity as a matter of choice and new forms of personal risk..... 150

Between a playful game and responsibility 156

Calculative attitude: a way out or risky business? 160

I am not a ‘shampoo’; I am not an ‘opportunist’:
reflections on undesired gender identities 165

The pros and cons of social change 171

Common biographies 174

Conclusion 177

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE CONCEPT
OF ‘MAINSTREAM’ YOUTH AND ITS IMPLICATIONS
FOR THE SOCIOLOGY OF YOUTH..... 179

Re-conceptualising ‘mainstream’ youth..... 181

Researching mainstream youth’s relationship
with consumption 183

Methodological dilemmas 185

Findings and implications..... 187

The paradox of conforming non-conformity..... 188

The paradox of choice..... 190

SUMMARY 195

BIBLIOGRAPHY 201

GLOSSARY 213

INDEX..... 214