

Sharing Isn't Caring



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Cultural Appropriation: A concept in which the adoption or use of elements of a culture by someone outside of that culture is viewed as a largely negative phenomenon. Seeing someone within your culture wearing your culture's clothes, or speaking the language

doesn't seem out of the ordinary at all. On the other hand, seeing someone who has no interest in being educated on your culture adopting your cultural dress and language to essentially turn it into a trend should not sit well with you if you value maintaining your culture's identity and keeping it respected. However, there is a difference between appropriating and appreciating another culture.

The list of continuous cultural appropriators includes celebrities such as Miley Cyrus, Kylie Jenner, Katy Perry and Iggy Azalea. Appropriating a culture is a product of being insensitive, ignorant and in some cases racist. An example of cultural appropriation would be: wearing a bindi just because you think it complements your look without it being a part of your culture.

Other commonly culturally appropriated trends include:

- Japanese Kimonos
- Native American print and Headdress



- Cornrows, Dreadlocks, Box Braids, Twists
- Sombreros
- "Ghetto" or "Urban" Fashion

People of color do not make up the majority of cultural appropriators, though they can appropriate cultures just the same as others. Most occurrences of cultural appropriation

Cultural appropriation is a problem in today's society

involve those of a race or ethnicity that aspire to be like other cultures. Being unaware of appropriating a culture is something most people face in society now due to the great amounts of integration. Accidental appropriation can be avoided.

Here are ways to avoid appropriating other cultures:

Not Everything is a Trend: Just because you think it's trendy or cool doesn't mean you should wear it. If it has no relation to your culture, you shouldn't wear it.

"Just hair.": It isn't "just hair". If a hairstyle you like is predominately worn by a certain race or ethnic group, you shouldn't try to imitate it or wear it.

Be Sensitive: Be mindful of how what you wear can determine how you're perceived by others; coming off culturally insensitive isn't a good look. Leaving it to them is much more respectful than making a mockery of it.

Admire from Afar: Wanting to be like a certain race or ethnic group shouldn't influence you to imitate their appearance.

The appreciation of cultures is encouraged in society. Genuine interest in learning about other cultures is a respectful way to show your appreciation and curiosity about a culture. So is becoming acquainted with people of a different culture and allowing them to educate you about their culture. The difference between appropriation and appreciation is the level of understanding. If you educate yourself on a culture you are interested in and become knowledgeable of why they have these certain elements to them, adopting them is much more significant and respectful.