

The Hipster Effect

For our model, we sought to show how people who go out of their way to be different from others will inevitably end up the same as everyone else. The term “Hipster” refers to a person that follows the latest fashions and trends while staying outside of the cultural mainstream. In the case of this project, Mainstream will refer to a normal person who is not a Hipster. A Majority will refer to whichever trend is the most prevalent in the model. Also, the Hipster Effect is described as the phenomenon where people oppose the mainstream culture, and become a new place of conformity.

The idea of hipsters even being a group defeats the purpose of a hipster in the first place. Counterculture is its own culture. If everyone is a hipster, everyone is mainstream. We demonstrate this most effectively by using our model with an X amount of people in a closed environment spreading trends through word of mouth. Whether they lean towards being Conformist or Nonconformist will determine their preference for being Mainstream or being a Hipster. They are represented by bouncing balls, each starting with a unique color, showing each as an individual in the Hipster or Mainstream category.

We assume that the following rules will play out accordingly:

- Nonconforming Hipster in a Mainstream Majority > Remain Hipster
- Nonconforming Mainstream in a Mainstream Majority > Become Hipster
- Conforming Hipster in a Mainstream Majority > Become Mainstream
- Conforming Mainstream in a Mainstream Majority > Remain Mainstream
- Nonconforming Hipster in a Hipster Majority > Become Mainstream
- Nonconforming Mainstream in a Hipster Majority > Remain Mainstream
- Conforming Hipster in a Hipster Majority > Remain Hipster
- Conforming Mainstream in a Hipster Majority > Become Hipster

With this in mind, it will be more than likely that the model will end up showing a flux in the trends. At one moment, the majority will be Mainstream, then it will even out into a balance,

then there will be a Hipster majority, then it will work back to being balanced again. We can gather that whenever a majority appears, more Hipsters will appear to counter it. This simply means swapping from one color to another in our model. Nonconformists will go out of their way to create new trends that will even things out, but then become the new majority. An endless cycle of balance and extremes.

Additional Problem

2.) The original statement asks you to model one aspect that is adopted within a group. How would your model change if you are required to model how two aspects are adopted within a group?

In the current model, it only demonstrates how a closed group react to a single trend through word of mouth. There are only two groups, those in the mainstream and those that go against it, the Hipsters. With the introduction of a second trend, this would create three groups to choose from, Trend A, Trend B, and the Hipster Trend. Anyone who was a conformist would switch to the most popular trend, and anyone who was a nonconformist would switch to the least popular trend. We can infer that whichever trend had the least amount of followers would receive a substantial amount growth from nonconformists, especially if they were in the Hipster trend. But once that trend becomes the new majority, The new trend with the lowest amount of followers would begin receiving new followers from nonconformists. This will create a continuous cycle of minority constantly becoming the new majority.