PIC Sophie Howlett

11: GLOBAL YOUTH CULTURE AND YOUTH IDENTITY

AUTHORS: CARA HEAVEN AND MATTHEW TUBRIDY
PARTNER ORGANISATION: While there was no official partner organisation for this chapter, the authors would like to thank Inga Brasche, UTS Ph.D. candidate for her assistance.

BACKGROUND

The globalisation of culture – the effect upon culture of the "increasing connection of the world and its people" – is perhaps nowhere more visible than in the changing nature of the relationship between the world's youth and their sense of identity (Solomon & Scuderi 2002:13). It has become commonplace to think of the world's youth as that part of the community who are most receptive, or, alternatively, susceptible to, foreign cultural practices. If childhood means acceptance, and adulthood means conservatism, youth means rebelliousness.

Youth are seen as the part of society that is most likely to engage in a process of cultural borrowing that is disruptive of the reproduction of traditional cultural practices, from modes of dress to language, aesthetics and ideologies. From Japanese punk to Australian hip hop, youth subcultures are seen as being implicitly rebellious, born as much from a desire to reject the generation that went before them, as from an identification with what they have become.

Exactly how accurate this widespread impression may be is difficult to assess. What is certain, however, is that the age of globalisation, more than any other age before it, is an age that has both exerted great effects upon, and been greatly affected by, young people.

KEY PLAYERS

THE CULTURE INDUSTRY: refers to industry concerned with the production, marketing and sale of cultural commodities. From cinema to advertising, news services to fashion, the culture industry is synonymous with the vast expanse of commodities made available through consumer culture. The term can also be used to refer to the markets that consume cultural commodities. These markets, like the producers themselves, are primarily located in the economies of the developed west:

"In 1998 the main consumers of cultural goods were the United States ($38.2 billion), Hong Kong SAR ($14.4 billion), Canada ($6 billion) and Australia ($3.1 billion) (UNESCO 2002a)."

The United States is accorded a certain pre-eminence in the field of the 'commercial culture industry' due to its domination of the market as both a producer and a consumer. Powerful multinational distributors like Time-Warner, News Corporation and the Hollywood studios, make the US a highly visible player in the cultural market place. As Donald Sassoon noted in his study of the cultural markets, "at the end of the twentieth century, the typical international best-selling novel, film, popular hit and imported American television programs [are] American or American-inspired". This "is not to say that everyone now consumes American culture; only that most of the culture that circulates *across national boundaries* originates in the US" (Sassoon 2002:124). Such a monopoly has significant ramifications on the dynamism of culture and fears, both real and perceived, of the homogenisation of cultures.

YOUTH (IN THE DEVELOPED WORLD): like all identities, is a culturally relative manifestation whose meanings and applications are specific to certain times and locales. For those living in present-day Western cultures, the term youth refers to persons who are no longer children and not yet adults. In a strictly legal sense, the term is typically applied to a person from the time of their early teens until a point between the age of 16 and 21, after which time the person is legally an adult. As an adult, they are endowed privileges such as the right to vote and consume alcohol etc. Used colloquially, however, the term generally refers to a broader, more ambiguous, field of reference – from the physically adolescent to those in their late 20s. The United Nations, for example, defines youth as people between the ages of 15 and 24 years inclusive (UNESCO 2002b). Traversing both sides of the legal distinction between childhood and adulthood, the youth identity presents those in their teens and their 20s as participants in a shared social experience that is distinct from that of other age groups.

To be a youth in this colloquial sense of the term is to be distinguished from the remainder of the population not just by age but by a certain level of agency (youth typically enjoy a greater amount of agency, or social power, than children but less than adults); a particular relationship to the labour market (youth are more likely to be unemployed, earn less or be engaged in study than adults); and youth-specific cultural pursuits (youth typically consume cultural phenomena and assume styles of behaviour and dress that are different from the comparable habits of children and adults). This final characteristic, along with age, is the most visible and obvious criterion that invites the application of the youth identity as it is currently employed in Western cultures.

It is also the criterion that is most specific to the experience of youth in the developed world, and it is a phenomenon that is fundamentally linked to the later part of the 20th century: the age of globalisation. Dick Hebdige's seminal study of youth identity and culture, *Subculture: The Meaning Of Style,* argues that present-day Western youth first appeared as a social phenomenon in the period following the Second World War. Writing in 1979, Hebdige cites a number of globalisation's emergent social conditions as causal factors in the historical manifestation of youth culture and the youth identity in the West. "The advent of mass media, the disintegration of the working-class community... the relative increase in the spending power of working class youth, the creation of a market designed to absorb the resulting surplus, and changes in the education system... [contributed] to the emergence after the War of a generational consciousness amongst the young" (Hebdige 1979:74).

SMOKING CEREMONY > IYP2000 opening

PICS Claude Sandler

DOMINANT-CULTURE, SUBCULTURES AND COUNTER-CULTURES: This "generational consciousness" formed the basis of demand in a new market where the culture industry functioned as an agent of supply: manufacturing the clothes, accessories and leisure time activities particular to the youth experience of the contemporary moment. The market place of the culture industry is the most visible manifestation of the relationship between youth and dominant culture. Dominant youth culture is the culture in which much of Western youth participate, and while its cultural practices and identities may feature distinct, and even confrontational, stylings in order to suggest a semblance of independence and alterity, they are predominantly a continuous part of the larger cultural tradition from which they emanate.

Hebdige argues that "generational consciousness" finds its most acute expression in subcultures. Subcultures exist at the cultural fringe and are typically anti-establishment and confrontational. Subcultures are frequently portrayed as dangerous by the mainstream media and are typically associated and confused with delinquency. The majority of Western youth will never invest themselves in a subculture proper. They will, nonetheless, invest themselves in a youth identity that sets itself apart from the identities of the older generation. Such non-subcultural identities are typically modified, less confrontational, versions of subcultural identities. Divested of their extreme stylistic alterity and transformed into a consumable object by fashion, music and other cultural industries, subcultural styles are frequently appropriated by, and thereby integrated into, dominant culture.

To say that subcultures are typically anti-establishment and confrontational is not to say that such practices are always conscious and considered critiques of dominant culture. Cultural practices that oppose dominant culture in this way are more properly referred to as counter-cultures. Student movements and social activism are the dominant means by which youth typically seek to organise themselves into a force of considerable political agency that can exert effects upon larger social developments.

YOUTH (IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD): The market place of dominant youth culture produces experiences which are enabled by the disproportionate levels of surplus capital being supplied to the West by the economically and politically marginalised countries of the developing South. The youth of these latter countries are, for the most part, excluded from the youth experience that their economies make possible in the developing world. According to the UN, the majority of the world's youth live in developing countries, with approximately 60 percent in Asia and 23 percent in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean. The UN estimates that by 2025, the number of young people living in the South will increase to 89.5 percent (UNESCO 2002a). In *Rethinking Youth,* Johanna Wyn and Rob White point out that for the majority of the young people living in these locales, the universal stage of development was and remains an inappropriate one:

> *"In 1986, the International Year of Youth, it was estimated by the International Labour Organisation that globally: 'there are some 50 million children under the age of 15 who are at work. Nearly 98 percent of all these child labourers are found in developing countries… If 'youth' is understood as constituting the period between the end of childhood, on the one hand, and entry into the world of work on the other, then it is manifest that youth does not exist in the situations outlined above."* (Wyn & White 1997:10)

MAIN ISSUES

1. UNDERSTANDING CULTURE

Culture is the ensemble of practices – linguistic, stylistic, religious, etc – that together form a way of being for a given social community.

To conceptualise culture in this way – as the ontological foundation of a person's lived existence – is to form a proper appreciation of how cultural effects produce identities, societies and realities. For culture is more than simply the dressing that adorns the window through which we perceive our lived existence. It is not just the clothes that we wear, the songs we sing or the holidays that we observe. Culture is the language through which we learn to read the world. It is the collection of learned assumptions that we bring to the daily practice of interpreting the meaning of our reality and ourselves.

PIC > Brett Solomon

The degree to which culture exerts effects upon the way in which we interpret the world is made apparent when we compare the different ways in which a language can present reality to a linguistic community. The British literary critic, Catherine Belsey, makes this point by citing the many different ways in which different languages have divided up aspects of the world as seemingly self-evident as the colour spectrum:

> *"In Welsh the colour glas (blue), like the Latin glaucus, includes elements which English would identify as green or grey. The boundaries are placed differently in the two languages and the Welsh equivalent of English grey might be glas or llwyd (brown). In other words, colour terms, like language itself, form a system of differences, readily experienced as natural, given, but in reality constructed by language itself."* (Belsey 1991:39)

In spite of the cultural and geographical proximities two peoples might enjoy, cultural difference can still make translation a challenging task. Even when the relationship between the words of two different languages appears to be synonymic, the meanings produced in each case can be significantly divergent. As the German literary-philosopher Walter Benjamin writes, "the words Brot and pain 'intend' the same object, but the modes of this intention are not the same. It is owing to these modes that the word Brot means something different to a German than the word pain to a Frenchman, that these words are not interchangeable for them, that, in fact, they strive to exclude each other" (Benjamin 1992:75).

The propensity for exclusion that Benjamin notes in language is equally present in the translation of non-linguistic cultural phenomena, such as facial expression, customs of behaviour and tone. One's own cultural assumptions are so familiar that they seem obvious and natural, and the obviousness of our assumptions can frequently lead us to misinterpret the meaning of cultural difference and alternative interpretations of lived reality.

2. UNDERSTANDING IDENTITY

A proper appreciation of the ontological significance of culture engenders an equally significant conceptualisation of the role of identity: the specific instance of interpreting the world that invests a person and those around them with meaning.

Identities structure the way a person understands themselves and their world in both a descriptive and a prescriptive sense. From infancy onwards, a person is addressed by others through identities that invite the addressee to regard them in a certain way. Culturally specific ways of being masculine or feminine are among the first identities

that most people will encounter, along with the identity of infancy itself. In the course of a person's biological and social development, the identities in which they will invest themselves will change according to circumstance and, to some extent, preference – resulting in an always complex, often contradictory and typically deep seated understanding of the nature of themselves, others and their world. In this way, identity negotiation is a dynamic process.

Culturally specific assumptions, contained within a diverse range of interrelated, practices (such as language, religion, sexuality, etc), mean that a person's identity is always a multi-dimensional conglomerate of many identities. Cultural diversity further compounds the complexity of identity insofar as it opens up gaps and discontinuities between the way in which a particular community might perceive itself and the way it is perceived by others. Physical characteristics, styles of dress and behaviour, language and communicative accents, and numerous other distinguishing phenomena, act as symbolic triggers in practices of cultural interpretation that attribute collective characteristics to the members of a particular community in a way that locates them within relationships of class, gender, ethnicity and so forth.

3. DIVERSITY, MULTICULTURALISM AND HYBRIDITY

Diversity is a fundamental characteristic of all cultures and all identities, traversed as they are by competing and interrelated specificities of class, gender, generation and sexuality. But such divergent specificities as these are typically experienced by a person as though they were part of a continuous singular identity, related as they are through a historically binding tradition that appears to be culturally self-contained – being Australian or Japanese, Christian or Muslim, etc. For this reason, the term diversity is reserved to refer to those instances where distinctly separate traditions of culture and identity come into contact in such a way as to co-exist. Multiculturalism refers to ways of being, and policies or programs, that encourage the development of societies in which diverse cultures and identities co-exist.

Hybridity refers to the manifestation of hybrid cultures and identities: cultures and identities that fuse together elements of separate cultural traditions. In a sense, all cultures and identities are necessarily hybrids insofar as all cultures evolve as a result of their contact with other cultures and identities. No matter how static, or self-referential a cultural tradition may appear to be, no cultural tradition is ever unchanging. That said, the term hybridity will be reserved to refer to instances in which the fusion of elements of two or more traditions is so new and distinct, as to be self-conscious.

4. ON THE OUTSIDE – THE MARGINALISATION OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCE

The history of the globalisation of culture, the history of the increasing connection of global cultures, is a history of struggle in which dominant cultures, sponsored by military and economic power, have often sought to colonise, subjugate or even eradicate, marginal cultures. Today, the power that sponsors the dominant culture of the West is not so manifest as it once was. The military forces of the West no longer occupy the lands of the peoples they economically dominate to the extent that they once did. They do not need too. Tied in to the global economy of capitalism by decades, if not centuries, of colonial occupation, the former colonies are now inextricably bound to the West by loans, technological dependency and the consumer culture that has become an almost ubiquitous feature of life.

The power of global capitalism thus represents a threat to cultural diversity insofar as its products and practices work to exclude non-western cultural practices and

marginalise non-western identities and ways of being. The youth of the developing world are attracted, lured or forced into non-traditional ways of being by a great many factors, economic necessity being the most significant, and alienated from their traditional communities. Such cultural disintegration is the primary cause of problems such as the loss of linguistic, historical and spiritual traditions, the break down of family support structures and the loss of a locally organised political voice.

Similar problems are experienced by Western youth who, while living in a developed country, might have strong investments in a cultural tradition and identity that is not the dominant identity of the country in which they live. Such youth may experience social and economic marginalisation as a result of this minority experience, and may develop deep-seated feelings of alienation as a result of diminished employment prospects and quality of life.

5. ON THE INSIDE – THE CHALLENGE OF CONSUMER CULTURE

Western youth are bombarded, throughout their day-to-day life, by advertisements, programing and other media that invite them to seek happiness through the accumulation of wealth and commodities. Youth alienation and the disproportionate representation of youth in suicide rates suggests that the life experiences of Western youth are intensely problematic, even if that experience is a privileged position in a larger sense.

The privileged position occupied by the youth of the developed world means that the issues they confront concern not only themselves, but also the future of the marginalised populations of the developing South. Consumer culture invites these privileged youth to participate in a way of being that is enabled by an economic system that exploits the developing world and is environmentally unsustainable. The compelling nature of this invitation is not to be underestimated, and failure to properly participate in the market place of dominant youth culture can result in an experience of social exclusion and alienation.

KEY RIGHTS AFFECTED

The effects of globalisation on youth culture are not uniform. The most widely acceptable means of identifying negative impacts (such as marginalisation) upon the youth cultural experience is the international community's human rights system. Because human rights are culturally constructed it is important to consider as many perspectives as possible. A range of human rights conventions and declarations have been developed by intergovernmental institutions that reflect more specifically their region's cultures and traditions (such as The League of Arab States, The Council of Europe, The Organisation of American States, and The African Union).

That said, the International Bill of Human Rights is the most widely accepted and recognised authority on human rights and thus lies at the centre of our framework for analysis. Its principle is that all human rights are interdependent and complementary and that its articles apply to all human beings without exception. In the past, Western governments have tended to emphasise civil and political rights above all others, which runs contrary to the principle of the International Bill of Human Rights. However, rights can always be refined and extended. In an attempt to give cultural rights more universal recognition UNESCO is aiming to do the following:

   i. research and clarify the content of human rights. By doing so, stronger mechanisms will be produced for the protection of cultural rights (UNESCO 2002b :24).

DELEGATES AT IYP2004 >
PIC Claude Sandler

ii. encourage debate about the potential for an international legal instrument on cultural diversity, in the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) (UNESCO 2002b :24).

The main human rights instruments that relate to cultural rights are:

- All peoples have the right of self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development (International Covenant On Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966, Article 1.1).

- Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion (UDHR, Article 18).

- Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression (UDHR, Article 19)

- Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association (UDHR, Article 20).

- Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community (UDHR, Article 27.1).

- To condemn racial discrimination (International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination 1965, Article 2.1).

- To condemn all propaganda and organisations which are based on theories of superiority of one race or one group of persons (International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination, Article 4).

- Persons belonging to minorities shall not be denied the right to enjoy their own culture, profess and practice their own religion or to use own language (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 27).

- All persons should therefore be able to express themselves and to create and disseminate their work in the language of their choice, and particularly in their mother tongue (UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, Article 5).

The following individual submission (South Africa) for IYP's Youth Commission into Globalisation shows that in a globalised world, racial discrimination still continues:

"It seems as if the only way to survive or be [accepted] amongst others is [by] adapting to the western culture… It is the only way to open doors to the corporate world. If you live your own African culture you are perceived to be unskillful and unproductive in the workplace."

The right for people belonging to minorities to use their own language is seriously being impinged upon due to the dominance of a handful of languages in the global flow of information. Up to 90 percent of the world's 6,800 languages face extinction, and 50 percent of all languages are spoken by fewer than 2500 people each (Oxfam Community Aid Abroad, 2002:116).

- Indigenous and tribal peoples shall enjoy the full measure of human rights and fundamental freedom without hindrance or discrimination (Indigenous and Tribal People's Convention 1989, Article. 3.1).

- Creation draws on the roots of cultural tradition, but flourishes in contact with other cultures. For this reason, heritage in all its forms must be preserved, enhanced and handed on to future generations as a record of human experience and aspirations, so as to foster creativity in all its diversity and to inspire genuine dialogue among cultures (UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, Article 7).

The IYP Commission found that while the right to education was important, access to culturally appropriate education systems was also significant: "All persons should be entitled to quality education and training that fully respect their cultural identity" (UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, Article 5).

This right is also recognised in Part IV Article 15, Draft United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: "Indigenous children have the right to all levels of education of the State. All Indigenous peoples also have this right and the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning."

Additionally:

- Governments shall have the responsibility for developing, with the participation of the peoples concerned, action to protect the rights of Indigenous people and to guarantee respect for their integrity (Indigenous and Tribal Peoples' Convention, Article 2.1).

- Promote social integration by fostering societies that are based on… respect for diversity and on participation of all people (Copenhagen Program of Action [Social Summit], 1995).

- While ensuring the free flow of ideas by word and image, care should be exercised that all cultures can express themselves and make themselves known. Freedom of expression, media pluralism, multi-lingualism, equal access to art and to scientific and technological knowledge, including in digital form, and the possibility for all cultures to have access to the means of expression and dissemination are the guarantees of cultural diversity (UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, Article 7).

In terms of respect for diversity, this means a respect for different ethnic groups and a respect for differences within those groups. For example, the Te Hoe Nuku Roa Research Team in their comprehensive study of culture and New Zealand Maori's concluded that Maori individuals can't be stereotyped. They found that Maori individuals have a variety of cultural characteristics and live in a number of cultural and socio-economic realities. The relevance of traditional values is not the same for all Maori and it can't be assumed that all Maori wish to define their ethnic identity according to classical tribal constructs. For example, for some Maori's, belonging to a sporting group is just as important as belonging to a tribal group. Identity is a personal choice and that must be respected (Fitzgerald 2000).

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Recent surveys conducted by the International Network on Cultural Policy (INCP) found that the biggest challenges expressed by most countries in terms of creating national cultural policy, were recognising cultural diversity and protecting the interests and rights of cultural minority groups[1]. While at the same time, there is a need to sustain a basic level of shared identity, social cohesion and national solidarity in a global environment (Baeker 2000:1).

Generally speaking, UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity recognises that in terms of cultural policy-making, the challenges for cultural diversity, heritage (tangible and intangible) and sustainable development cannot be isolated from one another (UNESCO 2002b). The Declaration recommends that comprehensive cultural policy must include the following elements:

- initiatives that work from the grass-roots level up. Policies must involve the people whom they want to empower, and incorporate their ideas. Otherwise it just becomes an imposition of power upon the weak;
- a recognition that the cultural past and future are linked; and
- a recognition of the intimate links between tangible and intangible heritage.

The UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity also recommends and aims to encourage debate in the political, academic and NGO spheres through forums and seminars, because from debate ideas can emerge. By inviting the voices of youth to these events, the importance of the next generation is highlighted, their perspectives and problems are raised, and the next generation of policy-makers fostered and encouraged.

Below are more specific policy recommendations and examples where these recommendations have been successful.

GOVERNMENTS. We urge governments to:

11.1 ensure diversity and cultural pride through education. The potential for maintaining diversity, awareness and cultural pride through education is vast, and it is an important policy area where the government can play a key role. In terms of the need for sustainable consumption (for example, in countries like Australia), primary and high school curriculums must integrate cultural studies with environmental education so that youth are able to critique the social and environmental impacts of consumer culture. Teachings should include educating children/youth about environmentally friendly products; eco-consumer issues; the energy and resources used to produce goods, dispose of waste and compost; plus the concepts of reduce, reuse and recycle (Fien and Skoien 2001:14).

11.2 ensure young people understand the culture of consumerism. It is also imperative that young people become literate in their readings of advertisements. This can be achieved by developing literacy skills in "decoding and encoding" (Fien and Skoien 2001:15) cultural texts like images and signs portrayed by the media and advertisers. This will enable youth to make well-informed decisions about their role and place in the culture of consumerism.

The culture of consumerism, is not only affecting youth in developed nations. It is a global phenomenon and this type of education policy should also be global. For example, the following group submission from the Haatso Youth Club in Ghana highlights the urgency of such policy:

"Globalisation has brought us a life surrounded by mass-production and mass-consumption. We are driven under enormous pressure, into a very consumerist lifestyle, stimulated by transnational corporations as well as commercial mass media. In contrast, we witness at the same time the stark poverty widespread in our region and the world. We see our own cultures giving way to a consumerist monoculture. There is an urgent need to revisit, appreciate and participate in the evolution of our own cultures, which are community-orientated, non-materialistic, eco-friendly and holistic in their worldview. We need to develop our capacity of cultural perceptibility towards creative interaction between cultures."

11.3 ensure the education of language. For governments that have not already done so, legislation that declares its Indigenous languages as official national languages should be enacted. This can help steps towards reconciliation from colonial pasts and restore pride in Indigenous cultures, which were once shunned. For example,

in New Zealand Maori was declared an official language under the Maori Language Act, 1987 (NZ). The Maori Language Commission was established to promote Maori as a living language and as an ordinary means of communication.

Education policy should also provide the opportunity for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth to study the local area's Indigenous languages and knowledge systems. For Indigenous youth, this will help foster ties with their cultural traditions and cultivate a sense of pride. For both groups it will strengthen their understanding about cultural diversity. It will also enable youth to look to the future in a rapidly changing world with a sense of cultural history and thus an identity. For example, in New Zealand, children's centres or 'language nests' have been created where elders come to speak their native tongue to youth whose parents have lost the language. In the school system there are now 60 Maori language immersion primary schools throughout the country. Secondary schooling in Maori has also appeared.[2]

11.4 promote education of cultural diversity. There are many ways to achieve awareness about the positive value of cultural diversity through education. Revising textbooks, reshaping curricula and intercultural teacher training are just some examples. Another includes a project that has been launched by the International Music Council, which aims to promote cultural diversity through music education (UNESCO 2002b).

11.5 investigate potential of cultural tourism. Another contentious area of policy in which the government may play a role are sustainable employment initiatives based on cultural tourism. This can be a positive source of resources for economic and social development, especially in communities of the South. For example, in South Africa the government helped alleviate poverty in some areas by launching a sustainable employment initiative based on craft products produced by the Khoi-San communities (INCP 2002a: 4).

The debate still continues about the pros and cons of cultural tourism. It is a sensitive area and any policy initiatives must be carefully approached. Those against cultural tourism argue that it reduces culture to trivialised entertainment for the global tourist and thus reduces Indigenous peoples to consumer products. Those in favour argue that if it is done in a sustainable and culturally sensitive manner, it can revitalise cultural interest, promote knowledge exchange and a greater acceptance of cultural diversity. It is also argued that it will help alleviate the heavy dependence on primary commodities.

If achieved in a culturally sensitive manner, cultural tourism can be seen as a positive initiative for Indigenous youth from the South. It can create employment while maintaining cultural links, enabling youth to become part of the global community while maintaining their own cultural traditions.

MULTILATERAL INSTITUTIONS

Guiomer Alonso from UNESCO asserts that 96 per cent of the world's people do not have access to the internet and 50 percent have never made a telephone call (INCP 2002b: 5) Thus, the technological challenge for countries of the developing and developed worlds differ. The issue for the developing world is establishing access to basic infrastructure. In the developed world, the challenge is more about reforming existing infrastructure to reflect cultural difference in the population.

Furthermore, in many societies, the influx of foreign cultural products and free flow of information can lead to the erosion of national and minority languages. Software

that can translate information into different languages is a possible solution (UNESCO 2002a: 36).

The positives of technology must also be recognised. Many submissions to IYP's Youth Commission into Globalisation discussed the opportunities which technology provided for young people to express, share and exchange their diverse traditions.

MEDIA

Article 17 of the draft Declaration on The Rights of Indigenous Peoples states that:

"Indigenous peoples have the right to establish their own media in their own languages. They also have the right to equal access to all forms of non-Indigenous media."

A policy solution to help meet these rights includes the media allocating specific slots for Indigenous peoples' programing. For example, Radio New Zealand provides 260 hours of programing per year for the promotion of the Maori language and culture.

NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS

The UNESCO project "Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems in a global society" (LINKS) is part of UNESCO's medium-term strategy for 2002-2007. The projects primary goals include:

a. Strengthening local community control over ecological, cultural and social change by researching into and combining scientific and Indigenous knowledge;

b. Assess the opportunities and constraints of existing educational frameworks in an attempt to revitalise the flow of traditional knowledge between local communities and strengthen the ties between community elders and youth;

c. Develop instruments for protecting Indigenous knowledge by identifying customary rules that govern the access and control of knowledge (UNESCO 2002a).

CASE STUDY: ELDERS OF THE YOLNGU TRIBE

Many programs have been initiated focusing on Indigenous elders teaching the youth. As an old African proverb goes: "When a knowledgeable old person dies, a whole library disappears" (WUSC n.d.).

A program initiated by Indigenous elders of a minority community is in Northeast Arnhem Land by six women of the Yolngu tribe provides an example. The women came together to help the youth of the community, many of whom have low self-confidence and a lack of interest in the Yolngu culture. Substance abuse, drug addiction, teen suicide and TV and video-induced apathy are widespread among the youth in the community.

After much discussion the women decided on a holistic plan of action that emphasised cooperation and reconciliation. They believed in two-way education: Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal. And it was the Aboriginal education that was not given priority by the government. The women wanted to teach the youth about their Yolngu tradition so "that people are proud of who they are and where they come from" (McIntosh 2002: 1).

Yungirrnga, one of the women says: "Each Tuesday and Thursday we go to school to teach the young about Yolngu culture. We take them hunting, show them how to weave, and help them connect with the old people so they can spend time together, just sharing" (McIntosh 2002: 1). One successful recent program involved taking

ten petrol-sniffing youngsters to a two-week retreat where they were shown hunting techniques, heard stories from the elders about the need for discipline, and learned about the importance of the land to the Yolngu people. On their return the women helped the youth find employment in the community (McIntosh 2002: 1).

REFERENCES

Baeker, G. (2000) International Network on Cultural Policy (INCP), *Inventory, Cultural Diversity Challenges and Opportunities,* Quebec, http://80_web7.infotrac.galegroup.com.e…1&dyn=85!xrn_61_0_CA86549471?sw_aep=uow, accessed February 2003.

Belsey, C. (1991) *Critical Practice.* London & New York: Routledge.

Benjamin, W. (1992) "The Task of the Translator." in Hannah Arendt (ed.) *Illuminations*, (1992) Harry Zohn (trans.) London: Fontana.

Delbridge, A., Bernard, JRL, Blair, D., Butler, S., Peters, P. & Yallop, C. (eds) (1999) *The Macquarie Dictionary* 3rd Edition, The Macquarie Library: Sydney.

Fien, J., & Skoien, P. (2001) *Towards Sustainable Consumption in Australia,* Paris, UNESCO, www.unesco.org/education/youth_consumption/country_studies/australia.shtml, accessed December 2002.

Fitzgerald, E. (2000) *Maori in New Zealand: Identity and diverse realities,* University of Wollongong, Centre for Asia Pacific Social Transformation Studies (CAPSTRANS), www.capstrans.edu.au/confpapers/eljonfitzgerald.pdf, accessed December 2002.

Hebdige, D. (1979) *Subculture: The Meaning of Style.* London: Methuen.

International Network on Cultural Policy (INCPa), (2002), *Cultural Diversity in Developing Countries: The Challenges of Globalisation,* Quebec, INCP, http:206.191.7.19/meetings/2002/summary_e.shtml, accessed February 2003.

(INCP), (2002b), *Final Report of the Working Group on Cultural Heritage,* Quebec, INCP, http://206.191.7.19/meetings/2002/similiarities_e.shtml, accessed February 2003.

Kiplangat, C. (2003) *Our Languages are Dying,* New York, Global Policy Forum, www.globalpolicy.org/globaliz/cultural/2003/0224language.htm, accessed March 2003.

McIntosh, I. (2002) "Nurturing Galiwin'ku Youth in Northeast Arnhem Land: Yalu Marrngikunharaw", *Cultural SurvivalQuarterly*, Vol.26. No.2, www.culturalsurvival.org/publications/csq/index.cfm?id=26.2, accessed March 2003.

Ministry of Maori Development (1999) *The Maori Language: The steps that have been taken,* Wellington, Ministry of Maori Development, www.tpk.govt.nz/publications/docs/tetuaomaeng.pdf, accessed January 2003.

Mitterauer, M. (1992) *A History of Youth,* translated by Graeme Dunphy, Oxford: Blackwell.

Sassoon, D. (2002) "On Cultural Markets", in *New Left Review,* vol. 17, Sep/Oct.

Solomon, B. & Scuderi, L. (eds.) *The Youth Guide to Globalisation,* Sydney: Oxfam, 2002.

UNESCO, (2002a), *Local & Indigenous Knowledge,* Paris, UNESCO, http://portal.unesco.org/culture/ev.php?URL_ID=1554&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_, accessed January 2003.
(2002b), *Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity,* Paris, UNESCO, 1, (7-59)

WUSC (n.d.) *Unit 3: Culture and Identity,* Ottawa, World University Service of Canada, www.wusc.ca/deved/Culture.htm, accessed February 2003.

Wyn, J. & White, R. (1997) *Rethinking Youth.* Sydney: Allen & Unwin.

1 In the case of South Africa the concern was with majority rights, not minority ones.

2 See: Culture and Identity: Indigenous Spirituality; www.wusc.ca/deved/Culture.htm.